

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10
INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS ACT 1996**

**Ysgol Dinmael
Dinmael
Corwen
Conwy
LL21 9PP**

School Number: 662/2119

Date of the Inspection: 12 – 14 January, 2004

**By
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Registered Inspector: W129/13002
Date: 15 March, 2004
under ESTYN contract number : T/135/03P**

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CURRICULUM AND KEY STAGES NOMENCLATURE

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through the school was introduced in 1989. It is intended that this system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory education until the age of 18 should facilitate communication amongst schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of progression.

The term "Reception" (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) whose fifth birthday will occur during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is used for the year group of pupils whose sixth birthday will occur during the academic year and so on until Y13 - the year group whose 18th birthday will occur during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Age	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 includes Y1 and Y2; KS2 includes Y3 to Y6; KS3 includes Y7 to Y9 and KS4 includes Y10 and Y11 (the last year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The following five point scale is used to represent the main opinions in the report as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some particularly good.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features that 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

The school is located in the rural village of Dinmael, near Corwen, and most of the pupils come from the village and the rural areas surrounding it. The area is described as one that is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged; none of the pupils are entitled to receive free school meals.

During the inspection period there were 26 full-time pupils and two children who are receiving nursery education on the school register. They represent the full range of ability. Welsh is the main language spoken in the homes of 25% of the pupils. By now 75% of the pupils speak Welsh to first language standards. There are two pupils on the Special Educational Needs [SEN] register, including one who has a statement of SEN.

The school implements the language policy of the Local education Authority [LEA], namely Conwy, and the school is categorised as being naturally Welsh-speaking. This means that Welsh is the main medium of the life and work of the school but the aim is to ensure that all pupils are fluently bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary sector.

The School Development Plan [SDP] includes the following matters:

- monitoring progress in English spelling;
- trialing a new mathematics scheme in Y3 and Y4;
- evaluating the effectiveness of assessment systems;
- analyzing national test results in order to include them in individual pupils' targets.

The school was previously inspected during the spring term, 1998. The head has been in post since 1984.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

The community within the school is homely and welcoming and there is an appropriate emphasis on respecting people and property and on fostering good values and attitudes.

- The general quality of the provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make good progress with the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Standards in the six areas of learning were as follows:

Language, literacy and communication skills	Good
Personal and social development	Very good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Good

- In Key Stage[KS]1 and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the National Curriculum [NC] subjects and in religious education are as follows:

	KS1	KS2
Welsh	Good	Good
English	-	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology and communication	Good	Very good
History	Satisfactory	Very good
Geography	Satisfactory	Good
Art	Good	Good
Music	Very good	Very good
Physical education	Satisfactory	Good
Religious education	Good	Good

- During the period 1999-2002, the percentage of pupils in KS2 achieving at least level 4 in the NC tests and assessments in Welsh, English, science and mathematics was higher than the national average. In 2003, as the number of pupils eligible to be tested was lower than five, a synopsis of the results is not included in this report.
- In KS1, during the period 1999-2003, the percentage of pupils achieving at least level 2 according to teachers' assessments in Welsh, science and mathematics was higher than the national average.
- The school's results compare favourably with those for the county.
- In the key skills across the curriculum, the children under five achieve good standards in literacy and numeracy and in their use of information technology and communication [ITC]. Standards in Welsh are good across the two key stages with the exception of writing in KS1, and standards in English are good in oracy and reading and satisfactory in writing. In both key stages, standards are good in numeracy. In ITC, standards are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.
- The quality of the teaching was good in 62% of the sessions that were observed, very good in 12% and satisfactory in the remainder. The effective teaching is characterised by the setting of interesting tasks, clear aims, appropriate pace and searching questioning that encourages pupils to provide extended oral answers. In the satisfactory lessons in KS1 lessons, the introductions to lessons are sometimes over-long and group activities are not planned in sufficient detail.
- The curriculum provided by the school is balanced and of good quality. It conforms in full with the requirements of the NC, the Desirable Outcomes for children under five and the agreed syllabus for religious education. Clear schemes of work have been prepared and these support and provide guidance to enable the teachers to plan effectively. In the best practice, the short-term planning is thorough and provides a good range of stimulating learning experiences, but there are some that do not consistently identify, in sufficient detail, what the pupils are intended to achieve.

- Good use is made of homework to support and reinforce the learning and the school fosters pupils' bilingual skills, in English and in Welsh, effectively. Personal and social education [PSE] is well emphasised within the provision, and equal opportunities are provided for all.
- Pupils' team skills are promoted effectively in the school's physical education programme and by arranging collaborative activities with other agencies.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good. The joint acts of worship promote their spiritual and moral understanding. The wide range of extra curricular activities including Urdd activities, residential visits and sports, enriches the pupils' learning and fosters their personal and social development. An effective emphasis is placed on fostering attitudes such as friendship and respect for others and towards the environment. The pupils develop a growing awareness of the wealth and variety that is to be found in other cultures, and the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is given constant and prominent attention.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- The quality of the assessment, recording and reporting to parents is good. An effective assessment policy and procedures have been established, especially in the core subjects, and the teachers respond regularly to the pupils' work. In the best practice, the pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve the standard of their work. However, the strategies for assessing progress in the foundation subjects are inadequate.
- The quality of the provision for pupils with SEN is effective. They make firm progress and achieve good standards.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is very good and is one of the school's strengths; its partnership with industry is good.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. The SDP is a very effective management tool and includes clear priorities for development. The aspects included in the plan place an appropriate emphasis on curricular issues and on the tasks that need to be fulfilled to maintain and raise standards. It is evaluated regularly and regular reports are presented to the governors on the progress made. Individual targets are set for all the pupils, which are followed throughout their school career, and modified as is deemed necessary. Targets are set and publicised in all the core subjects in accordance with the statutory requirements.
- The school is managed well and its budget administered efficiently. The head undertakes her managerial and educational responsibilities very effectively. The staff co-operate well and demonstrate a substantial commitment to the school.
- The school has responded positively to all the key issues identified in the report of the 1998 inspection and there have been clear improvements. In one or two instances, further improvements are necessary.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

- The children under five achieve very good standards in their personal and social development and standards are good in the other six areas of learning.
- In KS1, in the core subjects, pupils' standards of achievement are good in oracy and in reading, and satisfactory in writing in Welsh. Standards of achievement are good in mathematics and science. In KS2, pupils achieve good standards in all the aspects of Welsh. In English, standards in speaking and in reading are good and are satisfactory in writing. Standards are good in mathematics and science.
- In the foundation subjects, KS1 pupils' standards of achievement are good in ICT and in religious education, are very good in music and are satisfactory in history, geography and physical education. In KS2, standards are very good in history, music and ICT and are good in all the other subjects.
- There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The pupils with SEN make good progress in accordance with their age and ability.
- In the NC 2003 assessments, the school's KS1 results, based on teachers' assessments, were higher than the national average in Welsh, science and mathematics. No pupil achieved Level 3.
- In KS2, in 2002 and 2003, 100% of the pupils achieved level 5 in each of the core subjects.
- In KS1 and KS2, the pupils' results compare favourably with those of pupils in similar schools.

3.2 Standards in key skills

The children under five achieve good standards in the key skills across the curriculum. In KS1 and KS2, standards in Welsh across the curriculum are good, with the exception of writing in KS1, where standards are satisfactory. In KS2, standards in English are good in speaking and in reading and satisfactory in writing. Standards in numeracy are good in both key stages. Standards in ITC are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

- The children under five make good progress in applying their developing skills in literacy and numeracy and in their use of ITC in and across the six areas of learning.
- In KS1, the pupils achieve good standards in speaking and in reading in Welsh. They make competent use of a good range of subject terminology and the vast majority speak confidently and with good expression. In some subjects there is an over-dependence on worksheets and this has a restricting effect on pupils' independent writing.

- In KS2, the pupils listen well during lessons. They attend to the teachers' presentations and to the contributions of other pupils. They are ready to answer questions and frequently respond using extended and relevant sentences in both languages. The vast majority of pupils regularly produce good pieces of descriptive and factual writing in Welsh to support their learning in the various subjects. They use books and other texts skilfully as sources of information in both languages. Their ability to discuss and share ideas and views is developing well.
- In KS2, standards in writing are satisfactory in English. Spelling and syntax weaknesses have a negative effect on the work of a significant number of pupils.
- In KS1 and KS2, numeracy skills are applied well in the context of several areas of the curriculum. The pupils produce frequency charts, handle data, use graphs and undertake a variety of measuring activities in subjects such as science, geography, history and design and technology.
- Overall, the pupils' ability and confidence in the use of ICT software and equipment to find and present information across the curriculum is good in KS1 and very good in KS2. They use their word-processing skills effectively in writing activities and to support and extend their work in most of the NC subjects. All the pupils are familiar with the use of interactive white boards. In KS2, the pupils use the World-wide Web to develop their investigation skills and to prepare a multi-media presentation about a school in Lesotho with which their school is twinned.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

- The school satisfies the statutory requirements to provide a daily act of corporate worship. There is an appropriate emphasis on Christian values and this contributes very well to the pupils' spiritual development. During the religious services and during some lessons, opportunities are provided for pupils to participate on an individual basis, to reflect and to discuss their feelings. They respond sensitively and sincerely to music and to the work of authors and artists.
- The school has successfully created a community that is extremely caring and welcoming where positive attitudes are promoted especially well. The pupils show that they have a secure understanding of the difference between right and wrong and they realise the need to respect and interact with others, whatever their background and racial origins. The pupils understand why prejudice is harmful, and that they should value variety. They take part on a regular basis in money-raising activities to support good causes and charities.
- The pupils' social awareness is promoted very well. The pupils are courteous and kind in their dealings with each other. They co-operate effectively in pairs and in groups and they are good at sharing resources and ideas with each other. Their social skills are also fostered through their involvement in a range of extra-curricular activities and through the school's close links with members of the local community.

- The Welsh language and the culture of Wales are given a prominent role in the life and work of the school. The Welsh dimension of the curriculum is promoted positively, especially in the context of music, and in the work of authors and artists. The pupils perform publicly in services, concerts and eisteddfodau and participate in a range of Urdd activities. Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures gained, in the main, through their work in subjects such as English, geography, history and religious education.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

Pupils' behaviour is good in the early years and across the two key stages.

- All the pupils relate well to each other and co-operate in a friendly manner. They are also courteous in their dealings with all members of staff and with visitors.
- The school promotes understanding and tolerance, and sets high expectations. No instances of bullying, sexism or racism during the inspection. There have been no instances of pupils being excluded from the school.
- A popular pilot scheme to promote behaviour and effort has been introduced. The emphasis is on praise rather than punishment, and team points, stars, certificates are awarded, and instances of good behaviour and effort celebrated in the morning services.
- Occasionally, some KS1 pupils do not respond to instructions and do not concentrate on their tasks. Some pupils sometimes tend to be over-boisterous in their play during break times.

4.3 Attendance

Attendance levels are very good, and percentages of 100% are frequently achieved.

- The school conforms with the statutory requirements and differentiates appropriately between different kinds of absences.
- Letters and telephone calls are received to explain every absence.
- There are no instances of unauthorised absences, and no pupils are absent on a regular basis.
- Pupils arrive at school punctually and the timetable runs smoothly throughout the day.
- Although they have not set quantitative targets for attendance, the governors regularly monitor this aspect of the school's work.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Quality of teaching

The quality of the teaching was good in 60% of the sessions observed, very good in 12% and satisfactory in 28%. In KS2, the quality of the teaching was consistently good or better.

- The teachers' knowledge about the subjects they teach, and about the Desirable Outcomes and the six areas of learning for the children under five, is good.
- In the most successful lessons, the specialist knowledge of the teachers is very apparent and high expectations are set for the pupils. They are encouraged and stimulated to give of their best. The quality of the teachers' questioning is very good; it is adapted skilfully to meet the requirements of the varying age groups and leads pupils to reason and to offer explanations. They frequently respond enthusiastically and at length.
- Lessons are planned with care to provide a variety of experiences for pupils and to ensure that the tasks set meet the needs of the varying ages and abilities. Pupils are given good support and appropriate use is made of encouragement and praise.
- Very effective use is made of a good range of resources and equipment to enrich and reinforce the work that is being introduced. The planned and effective use of group and paired work provides consistent opportunities for pupils to co-operate.
- In the satisfactory lessons, where the teaching is less effective, there is an over-emphasis on whole class teaching and on the use of worksheets at the expense of developing pupils' ability to present their ideas and observations in an organised manner and in a variety of forms. During these lessons, the expectations set are too low and the pupils do not complete a sufficient amount of work.
- At times, the tasks set for groups are not sufficiently challenging.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

The school's arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress are good in the core subjects. The quality of reporting to parents is also good.

- The developing skills of the children under five are regularly assessed and recorded in the six areas of learning. The information gathered enables staff to monitor children's all-round development and plan for their needs.
- Appropriate use is made of the accredited Baseline Assessment scheme with children of reception age.
- In both KS1 and KS2, there are secure arrangements for assessing progress in the core subjects. Assessments take place twice a year and the tasks are conscientiously annotated and filed by the teachers in order to provide a clear record of pupils' progress from Y1 to Y6.

- Teachers refer to NC criteria and engage in discussion in order to ensure accuracy and consistency in their assessments. Moderation procedures at Cluster and LEA levels assist teachers in making sound judgements about pupils' attainments at the end of each key stage.
- The information gathered from assessments and standardised tests is carefully recorded and used purposefully to monitor pupils' progress, particularly in aspects of literacy. From their analysis of the data collected, teachers are able to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses in aspects of their learning and plan the next suitable steps for them in order to promote higher standards.
- Pupils have their own personal target booklets that note the targets agreed following discussions with teachers. Pupils are encouraged to improve on their previous best at all times. Pupils' work is marked regularly and in the best practice they are given clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Assessing pupils' progress and achievement in the foundation subjects is undertaken once a year but work in these subjects is not yet assessed according to NC standards.
- Examples of pupils' work, and other records of personal achievements, are filed from year to year to provide a complete, rounded picture of each pupil.
- There are effective arrangements for reporting, and discussing, the progress pupils make with parents. The detailed end-of-year written reports received by all parents are of good quality and are reviewed formally with the class teachers. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents, there was evidence that they also appreciate the regular, informal exchange of information about their children's progress.

5.3 Curriculum

The provision of the curriculum is good in the early years and in KS1 and KS2.

- The provision for children under five is generally good. It is at its best when the three and four-year-olds experience well-planned activities in sessions together. The scheme of work planned for the children under-five is appropriate and, taken overall, the curriculum provided for them successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes in the six areas of learning.
- In KS1 and KS2, the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. Schemes of work are of good quality and provide a clear framework for teachers to plan progression and continuity in each subject.
- The curriculum is organised through a cycle of themes common to the five schools in the Uwchaed Cluster. Close co-operation between the teachers of these schools enables them to produce effective long and mid-term plans for teaching which form a sound basis for planning lessons in mixed-age classes.
- There are two mixed-age classes in the school, one for each key stage. For most of the week, children of reception age are taught alongside KS1 pupils. Overall, teachers succeed well in providing suitably differentiated tasks for the range of abilities in their classes. This is a very good feature of the provision in KS2.
- In KS2, pupils who are new to the school benefit from the curricular activities provided in a language centre for two days a week. The school succeeds in its aim to ensure that pupils

become bilingual. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is promoted very successfully through the life and work of the school.

- Teachers' short-term lesson plans indicate a good awareness of opportunities to develop key skills. However, there is no guidance to ensure progression and continuity in the development of these skills and at times, they do not provide enough guidance for the effective development of the lesson's aims.
- Homework is a regular extension of schoolwork and serves to reinforce aspects of the pupils' learning, for example, by reading to and with parents.
- The arrangements for pupils' personal and social development (PSE) are effective although the different elements of PSE are not formalised into a specific programme.
- Numerous educational visits, the contribution of visitors to the curriculum and the good range of extra-curricular activities, all enrich pupils' learning significantly and make a very good contribution to their development. This is a strong feature of the school. Individual pupils also benefit from instrumental tuition from a visiting teacher.
- The school is a highly inclusive community. This is reflected in the quality of relationships throughout the school. Pupils have equality of access and opportunity within the curriculum provided. There are no pupils for whom the NC is modified.
- The provision for pupils with SEN is effective and they have access to the full range of learning experiences.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The quality of the support and guidance provided for pupils is very good.

- The community within the school is organised and very caring, where pupils are fully valued. The teachers respond well to the pupils' needs and they are well supervised during the day, including the break intervals.
- The school has clear child protection policies and procedures and the teachers are familiar with them.
- Suitable emphasis is placed on equal opportunities and social inclusion in the school's activities and programme of work. Pupils' personal and social development, including sex education, is promoted throughout the school.
- The pupils are aware of the need to eat healthily, to care for their own health and safety and that of other pupils.
- Items of school equipment are inspected regularly and fire drills held every term.
- Members of staff regularly update their first-aid qualifications.

5.5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

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

- The school's policies and procedures relating to SEN are systematically followed in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice for Wales.
- The arrangements for assessing and identifying pupils with SEN are effective. Good use is made of teachers' assessments results, and of standardised and diagnostic tests to identify learning difficulties.
- Administrative matters and records are maintained in detail by the headteacher who fulfils the role of SENCO. Governors take an appropriate interest in SEN provision and outcomes, and the governor with responsibility for SEN is effective.
- At the time of the inspection, two pupils had been identified with SEN. A statement of SEN is maintained for one pupil, and the other pupil is supported at the school action stage. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) clearly identify learning needs and details of programmes to be followed. Parents are involved in the termly review of targets set.
- There is close liaison between the class teacher and the support teacher who is employed for two hours every week. In withdrawal sessions, the well-focused help to pupils with specific difficulties enables them to gain in confidence and make appropriate progress. In class lessons, individual needs are carefully assessed in relation to the learning tasks being undertaken by peers and effective support, or modification of tasks, is provided.
- The school receives helpful advice on SEN matters from the LEA, and from other professionals when requested.

5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions

All these partnership are very good and this is one of the main strengths of the school.

- The school's aims receive the enthusiastic support of the parents. They are very ready to support educational and social functions and through the Parent-Teacher Association, raise funds to purchase additional resources.
- The parents praise the information they receive about their children's work and education and feel at ease to contact the school to discuss any worries they may have.
- The school handbook and the governors' annual report to parents conform to all the statutory requirements.
- The school plays a very important role in the life of its local community. Much of the extra-curricular activity is based on these very close links. Gifts are distributed to the elderly at thanksgiving and these are very much appreciated.
- A number of visitors come to the school to share their specialist knowledge with pupils. Some visit weekly to help with literacy, numeracy and craft work.
- There is effective co-operation with the pre-school nursery unit that shares the use of one of the rooms in the building.
- The benefit derived from the school's participation in "Clwstwr Uwchaled", a group of five similar rural schools, is very evident. Subject specialisms are shared to develop teaching

resources on a joint basis, schemes of work are discussed and themes for specific terms run concurrently.

- Educational and social benefits have stemmed from the twinning arrangements with a school in Lesotho. The heads of the respective school have been on exchange visits and resources and attractive artefacts have been exchanged. The pupils' ICT skills have been developed through preparing a multi-media presentation for parents, governors and other residents of the area to celebrate these links.
- Appropriate social and academic links have been established with the two secondary schools to which Y6 pupils transfer at the end of their period in the primary sector. The school is proud of the fact that so many pupils maintain their links with the school after they have transferred to secondary level.
- The school participates prominently and successfully in the various Urdd activities.
- Sports skills, especially those relating to hockey, are developed through making extensive use of the Sports Council of Wales' scheme, Campau'r Ddraig. A member of staff has won a county award for her commitment to the scheme and the pupils play skilfully with the many items of equipment provided through the scheme.
- The curriculum is enriched, the health and safety of pupils promoted and good citizenship encouraged through the school's numerous links with other institutions, including charities, health promotion services, cultural bodies, the police and the specialist staff of the LEA.
- Students are occasionally placed in the school for work experience purposes.

5.7 Partnership with industry

The partnership with industry and the world of work is good.

- The promotion of these links is listed as one of the current priorities in the SDP. A variety of appropriate local businesses are named as being sources that can enrich current themes.
- The staff occasionally visit industrial enterprises as was the case when the Uwchaed Cluster's KS1 teachers visited a local factory to gather information about the 'Clothes' theme.
- A number of food producers have been contacted to promote aspects of Healthy Eating, and as a result of these arrangements, Ysgol Dinmael KS1 pupils came together with another school to listen to a talk on Hygiene and Healthy Eating given by a representative from a large supermarket. Project work in the classes was based on this visit.
- There have been regular links with a nearby fish farm. Visits are arranged to local farms to reinforce the pupils' understanding of one of the main industries of the area.
- The pupils' entrepreneurial understanding of the older pupils has been developed by giving them a prominent role in planning and running a car boot sale to raise money and to collect resources for a school in Lesotho. The pupils selected and priced the items to be sold and were responsible for handling the substantial sums raised.

- The school continues to benefit from the gifts that were received as part of a project on the improvements to the nearby A5. These include a mobile classroom that is located in an old contractor's office and a community playground that is adjacent to school grounds.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

- The school has established an effective range of procedures to evaluate standards achieved and the quality of its provision. There is good teamwork in the process of auditing the curriculum and other aspects of the life and work of the school.
- The rolling programme to evaluate standards in subjects and the systematic analysis of relevant data enable the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning, and so determine appropriate priorities for action. The current target to improve standards in pupils' spelling in English exemplifies this process well.
- School development planning is very effective; it is based on the secure identification of objectives that lead to improvements which are incorporated in the detailed SDP. The intended outcomes of planning are reviewed in terms of their effect on pupils, staff and resources, and governors are able to monitor progress on SDP targets every term.
- The audit is also a means of identifying teachers' professional development needs. As a result, a good programme of training features in the SDP and is well-matched to teachers' individual needs as well as the needs of the school.
- The current targets for school improvement are appropriate to the needs of the school. In every case, details are provided about the person or persons responsible for their implementation, the timetable for completion, the necessary resources and resulting costs.
- The school has responded positively to the key issues identified in the report of the 1998 inspection. There are clear improvements in the majority of them, but in one or two instances, such as the assessment of the foundation subjects, further improvements are necessary.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

The quality of the school's leadership and efficiency is good.

- The head, who is responsible for teaching a class, is extremely committed to her teaching duties and to her management responsibilities. The provision in both contexts is of a high quality. She provides sensitive and caring leadership. Under her leadership, the school has received the Investors in People standard. Members of staff work in close co-operation and demonstrate a high degree of commitment to the school.
- The school has clear aims that are well supported by the parents.
- Day to day administration and management are very good. The school is run smoothly, for the good of the pupils, teachers and parents.

- The school makes consistent progress in achieving the targets set in the SDP. The process used for monitoring the required outcomes is appropriate.
- The governors have a good awareness and a lively interest in the work and life of the school. They play an active part in the planning. They have contributed to and are familiar with the school's core documentation. They occasionally visit the school during school hours. Meetings of the finance sub-committee are held as necessary.
- Written and oral information is provided for the governors about curricular matters and self-evaluation arrangements.
- The school's financial resources are managed well. There are close links between the expenditure decisions taken and the priorities identified in the SDP. The school has a fairly generous surplus; the sums involved have been earmarked for supporting and realising proposed educational priorities.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The provision for staffing, accommodation and learning is good.

- Teachers are appropriately qualified to teach pupils of primary age and they are effectively deployed. Good use is made of their particular strengths to teach music and science, and this has a positive effect on standards in those subjects.
- The two full-time teachers and one part-time teacher conscientiously undertake responsibilities for co-ordinating all subjects and aspects of school life. They attend a comprehensive range of professional development courses to support their curriculum work and also benefit from working alongside LEA advisors on matters specific to the school.
- The small numbers of latecomers to the school, who are learning Welsh, receive valuable support from a member of the community.
- The qualified NNEB provides invaluable support for children under-five for three afternoons a week.
- The school is well served by the ancillary staff, caretaker and secretary. The midday supervisor provides effective leadership with some Dragon Sports activities during the lunch break.
- The in-service training [INSET] of staff members is directed by the requirements of the SDP or the individual development needs of the teachers. The teachers report back to their colleagues about the courses they have attended.
- Over the years the school building has received appropriate attention, with a mobile classroom being added and the old school house being converted into a library a store and office. Although it is not large, the space available is adequate for the current number of pupils attending the school. The school hall conveniently serves as a dining hall.

- With the exception of one of the windows at the rear, which is beginning to deteriorate, the general fabric of the building is in good order and has no major deficiencies. The building and schoolyard are maintained in a clean and tidy condition. There is a good surface to the hard play area.
- The attractive displays, photographs of school activities and artefacts use up the limited space that is available in the main building. Effective use is made of the additional space provided in The Workshop cabin for subjects such as design and technology, science and art.
- Despite the efforts made to improve the drainage and to provide a level field for sports, the field continues to be waterlogged and its surface inappropriate for the purpose for which it was intended. The school has managed to overcome this problem effectively by making use of the swimming pool and school hall in a nearby town.
- Although the school is very aware of the need to provide a separate play area for the children under five, to date the relevant plans have not been implemented.
- The school's learning resources are appropriate and are of an acceptable quality to meet the needs of the curriculum. Resources are examined with care and the school regularly reviews its resources and the related costs.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

7.1 Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The overall provision for the children under-five is appropriate to their needs and they children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

- There are six children under five, two of nursery age and four of reception age. Nursery children attend school part-time for three afternoons a week. Reception children attend full-time, spending most of their time being taught alongside pupils in Y1 and Y2. When the nursery children are in school, all the under-fives are taught together under the supervision of a qualified NNEB.

Good features

The children achieve good standards in developing language, literacy and communication skills.

- The children under-five listen well to the adults leading their activities and follow instructions willingly. They follow stories shared with interest, make comments that show their understanding of what they see and hear and recall songs and rhymes readily. Those who are learning Welsh respond positively to the new experience.
- Nursery children know that written symbols have sound and meaning. They handle books correctly as they browse through picture books independently. Reception children are beginning to recognise some familiar words in books and they practise their emergent writing skills in a range of situations.

The children achieve very good standards in their personal and social development.

- The three-year-olds have settled confidently into their school routines. They play together with a sense of purpose, interact well with adults, participate happily in activities shared with reception children and know the idea of 'taking turns'. When they have dinner at school, they cope very well.
- The four-year-olds socialise easily with older pupils who are mindful of the need to care for them. They confidently take part in activities located a bus ride away from the school. The children co-operate well together, for example, when making a floor jigsaw, and they are able to concentrate responsibly on their specific tasks when working alongside pupils in Y1 and Y2.
- They are helpful at tidying up times and manage their personal hygiene independently. They make very good efforts to undress and dress themselves for physical education activities.

The children achieve good standards in the area of mathematical development.

- Children of nursery age take part in singing number rhymes and counting songs to establish early mathematical concepts. They develop one-to-one correspondence with the table settings in the home corner and when dressing-up.
- Reception children recognise numerals on a number line of teddies and correctly identify a number before and after the ones given. They make and draw sets of objects, and touch-count up to four and five correctly. They can continue patterns using different colours, and recognise and name the shapes of triangle, circle and square.

The children are developing good knowledge and understanding of the world.

- The children under-five have a basic understanding of the changing features of weather patterns and seasons of the year. They learn terms to describe the weather and know that clothes are usually matched to weather conditions.

- Nursery children know they live in the countryside and have some understanding of the different jobs people around them do.
- Reception children begin to appreciate ideas about schools in the past compared with their present experiences. They know about places in their local community such as chapel and church, and participate in school celebrations to mark Harvest and Christmas. They also develop knowledge about the different way people live in places far away, like Lesotho.
- Reception children know that the seeds and bulbs they plant will grow into flowers.
- They are developing confidence in using the computer independently; they control the mouse well to move images on the screen.

The children achieve good standards in their physical development.

- The children under-five engage in a variety of small-scale activities that enable them to gain mastery of manipulative skills and develop hand-eye co-ordination successfully. For example, they use construction toys, jigsaws, scissors and a variety of mark-making tools. Reception children control their pencils well as they practise overwriting, and they colour with good attention to boundary lines.
- Nursery children enjoy sharing playtimes outdoors with other children. Reception children develop control and co-ordination of their bodies as they make different shapes and movements during PE activities. They balance themselves well as they practise the steps for a traditional Welsh dance.

The children achieve good standards in creative development.

- The children under-five sing songs and rhymes in Welsh confidently and enjoy playing roles as they sing. Reception children learn to listen to music and to describe the sounds they hear when they participate in daily assemblies. They have opportunities to use some simple percussion instruments and are able to move around rhythmically in response to music played on an audiocassette.
- The children use a range of media and tools to create their own images. Some of their outcomes are effectively incorporated into a large-scale collage. Reception children are developing a sense of colour through experimenting with colour mixing.
- Nursery children choose suitable character clothes and ‘props’ for their role-play, which they enjoy and sustain well.

Shortcomings

- At times, reception children experience their curriculum in contexts that are prematurely formal. This limits the opportunities they have to learn and to establish concepts through appropriate, well-structured play.

Welsh

In KS1, standards of achievement are good in oracy and in reading and satisfactory in writing. In KS2, standards are good in every aspect of the work.

Good features

- In KS1, the pupils show that they have increasing confidence as they express themselves orally, using appropriate vocabulary to express their ideas and standpoints. In general they maintain their concentration as they listen to whole class presentations and they talk confidently with each other and with adults. Standards are good.
- Most of the pupils read at a level that is in keeping with their age and ability. The pupils discuss and respond well to the stories they read together.
- Pupils' writing skills are satisfactory. They write descriptive pieces and record factual information. Most of them organise their ideas and are aware of the basic requirements of punctuation. They make appropriate progress with punctuation and in their use of varying constructions, conjunctions and adjectives.
- In KS2, the pupils listen intently to presentations. Their working vocabulary is increasing and they use appropriate terminology with growing confidence. They discuss aspects of their work confidently with adults. They are very ready to ask questions and to offer comments. A significant number of pupils extend their comments confidently during class discussions.
- The pupils make good progress with their reading. The vast majority read meaningfully and with good intonation whether the content of their reading is stories, factual information or poetry. They show that they have a good appreciation of the fiction that is presented in their class and their ability to read aloud extracts from literature is a particular strength. In the Welsh lessons and in cross-curricular work, they are developing their ability to read for information regularly and effectively. Most of them can express opinions about events and characters from books.
- The pupils write in a range of different forms. In addition to writing stories, they can describe, express opinions, outline processes and write creatively. They are aware of the fact that idioms and comparisons improve their writing. The more able pupils use a variety of sentence forms and present interesting content when they are writing about their ideas and experiences. The vast majority have an appropriate understanding of spelling and punctuation.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, the pupils do not produce a sufficiently wide range of written work.
- In KS1 and KS2, a small number of pupils do not pay sufficient attention to spelling and punctuation.

English

Pupils achieve good standards in oracy and reading, and satisfactory standards in writing.

English is introduced formally as a subject at the beginning of KS2.

Good features

- Pupils listen attentively and with interest in their lessons. They speak clearly, and often at length, when contributing ideas and comments in class discussions. Pupils are able to justify their opinions and deal with the observations of their classmates courteously. They respond readily to questions and instructions, and express themselves confidently when speaking with visitors.
- Their reading skills develop well. In group reading sessions, individuals read aloud with suitable expression and use a variety of strategies effectively to decode unfamiliar words and establish meaning from the text. They are aware of different types of fiction and can analyse texts to understand, for example, how authors develop characterisation throughout a story.
- Pupils know how to use the library classification system and ICT-based sources to search for and access information.
- By the end of KS2, pupils have experienced writing in a range of different forms and for different purposes. Their writing includes, for example, diaries, letters, book reviews and personal narratives.
- They use their understanding of some of the elements of persuasive writing successfully and are accustomed to drafting and redrafting their work, using word-processing skills well for this purpose.
- Pupils demonstrate a satisfactory awareness of the need to use appropriate punctuation accurately in all their writing. They're ability to write in standard English is developing satisfactorily. Pupils' handwriting skills and work is generally presented neatly.

Shortcomings

- The quality of pupils' writing work is often marred by inaccurate spelling. The school has recently implemented strategies to improve spelling skills but it is presently too soon to see the effects of these strategies in pupils' writing.
- Pupils are not writing in English frequently enough in order to produce well-crafted pieces of extended work, both creatively and factually

Mathematics

Standards of achievements are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils have a good grasp of numeracy skills. They respond well to oral tasks, correctly identifying missing numbers in sequences to 10 and 20, counting in twos, and recognising the concept of zero. Pupils in Y1 use the number fans to find two numbers which add to totals within 10, and Y2 pupils do the same within 20.
- Younger pupils map the correct answers to addition and subtraction operations with single-digit numbers. Older pupils find patterns in a 100 square, count forwards and backwards in tens and begin to establish their understanding of place value by identifying what each digit represents in two-digit numbers. They double and halve numbers within 20.

- Pupils use non-standard methods to measure the length and weight of objects, make accurate simple money calculations, and tell the time to o'clock and half-past the hour.
- They readily identify a number of 2 dimensional (2D) and 3D shapes and describe their properties. Pupils use their knowledge of directional movement to program the Roamer and present data collected in the form of block graphs by using a suitable computer program.
- In KS2, pupils have a good level of competence in mental mathematics. They respond quickly and accurately to questions and demonstrate understanding, appropriate to their ages, when dealing with number, money, capacity, square numbers and prime numbers.
- Pupils are developing good skills in investigating numbers and searching for patterns; they work methodically and confidently.
- In Y3 and Y4, pupils consolidate their understanding of place value, and progress to adding and subtracting in hundreds, tens and units. They apply their knowledge of multiplication tables to aid their calculations using the four operations.
- In Y5 and Y6, pupils are able to use fractions to describe and compare proportions of a whole, for example, in the context of diagrams or money. They deal competently in dealing with more complex calculations and with negative numbers. They make reasonable estimates and use the calculator sensibly.
- During KS2, pupils develop their understanding of the standard metric units for measuring length, mass and capacity, and solve problems using the 24-hour clock. They identify different types of angles and calculate the radius and diameter of circles.
- Pupils handle data competently and use the computer to good effect to create a range of different graphs. They know how to interpret the information presented and are able to formulate their own questions. The work is of a good standard.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, pupils do not readily use alternative strategies when calculating mentally.
- In KS2, pupils make insufficient use of jottings that explain their way of thinking as they solve calculations or problems.

Science

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- In both key stages, pupils have good investigative skills and they work systematically and they successfully develop a systematic approach to their work. They make good progress in their ability to plan a fair test and to predict an outcome.
- In KS1, when they investigate a variety of materials, pupils observe and record their observations with care. They classify, separate and compare materials, using their senses effectively when describing their characteristics, and they discuss appropriately within their groups.

- They are aware of the changes that occur in substances that are frozen and they know that these changes can be reversed.
- They know the difference between living and non-living things and can describe the main characteristics of a range of objects. They know what is required to maintain life in plants.
- Pupils' knowledge about light is good and they know how to construct a circuit and how a bulb lights up.
- In KS2, pupils make good progress in most aspects of the work and can provide appropriate explanations of scientific concepts. They record their findings in a variety of ways, including the use of ICT, and can offer appropriate explanations for their observations.
- Their knowledge about the human body and its organs is good and they have an increasing understanding of the links between food and health.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the power of gravity and of the effect of forces and friction on movement. The younger pupils can describe why some objects sink while others float and the older pupils investigate the effects of various forces in water.
- They offer sensible answers to questions when they investigate the sources of light and reflections.
- In their study of food chains, the pupils show that they have an increasing understanding of the producer, the predator, the prey and the user.
- By the end of KS2, the pupils have a good knowledge about various kinds of habitats and the manner in which plants and animals adapt to their surrounding environment.

Shortcomings

- At times, pupils do not discuss and improve their investigative work to a sufficient extent.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Pupils, in both key stages, understand the importance of the design process and make good use of it when planning their tasks.
- In KS1, the pupils produce original designs and make a variety of good quality products, using a variety of materials.
- They plan and measure with care, selecting and using appropriate materials and tools.
- The pupils' making skills are developing well. The vast majority have successfully produced good quality 'desk tidies' and photo frames. They produce models of trucks incorporating wheels and axles. They evaluate progress at various stages and consider how they can make improvements.

- In KS2, pupils refine their design, making and evaluating skills. They discuss their initial ideas and consider how they can be developed; they use planning sheets to record their ideas.
- In KS2, pupils show that their knowledge of mechanisms such as pulleys, gears and pneumatic systems is good as they construct tipping lorries and as they build a cage to go up and down a tower. They prepare their designs with care and select appropriate materials as they produce Roman sandals and a bag to hold swimming gear.
- In food technology, the pupils use their investigative skills to produce a pizza and a matching container.
- Pupils are aware of the need to work safely when they are using tools and of the need for hygiene when they are handling food.
- Pupils are aware of a range of techniques and can adapt these, along with their scientific and mathematical knowledge, effectively in undertaking their tasks.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

Judgements are based on observing pupils using information technology through work in a range of subjects, scrutiny of pupils' work and talking with them.

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 are developing confidence in manipulating and controlling a range of devices and applications. Their keyboard and mouse control skills are good and they can save and print their work.
- They use word-processing to enhance the presentation of their written work, for example, their class prayers and accounts of visits they have made.
- They draw straight lines and curves, and create colourful pictures of their friends using an art package. They use suitable programs to reinforce science facts in words and pictures, to develop early mapping skills, and they display information in the form of simple block graphs.
- Pupils are able to select and control on-screen images, as when they dress the teddy, and use simple control technology when they instruct the 'Roamer' to make a series of moves in different directions. They use some of the functions of the interactive whiteboard in literacy and numeracy work.
- In KS2, pupils are very confident and competent users of basic computing skills such as loading, saving, retrieving and saving. All pupils save work to their own individual files.

- They work very successfully in a range of programs that support learning in the majority of NC subjects. For instance, they organise, reorganise and analyse ideas as they compose a simple tune, and use data-handling facilities to sort and represent data collected through investigations in science and history.
- Pupils make effective use of word-processing to draft and redraft work and to write formal letters. They change the size, style and colour of fonts and combine text and graphics using clip-art in order to add impact to their work, as for example, when they write stories for pupils in KS1 and design a poster.
- They are competent in using a variety of information sources such as selected web sites and CD-ROMs to search for information, and they use a search engine effectively.
- Pupils are accustomed to using the interactive whiteboard. They have learnt to manipulate text, pictures and sound in order to make successful Power Point presentations.
- Pupils talk about and describe their visit to a technology centre to acquire experience in the use of control and sensing.

Shortcomings

- No major shortcomings were observed during the inspection

History

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS1 and very good in KS2.

Good features

- Visits to locations of historical interest enrich pupils' knowledge and grasp of historical concepts in both key stages. They make good use of historical terminology.
- In KS1, pupils can refer to the differences between the past and present in their own lives and in the lives of others in contexts within the scope of their experience. By studying artefacts, photographs and books, they acquire an appropriate understanding of the way we learn about the past. Their knowledge about aspects of the Victorian era is good.
- Pupils discuss stories about historical characters and are beginning to appreciate why people acted in particular ways and what were the results of their actions.
- In KS2, the range and depth of pupils' knowledge progresses very well and there is a corresponding development in their investigate skills in history. Pupils have a firm grasp of the periods they have studied and can recall, very well, facts relating to their current and previous studies.
- Their knowledge of chronology is evident, for example, in their naming of dates relevant to the Tudors and the Victorian era in addition to dates and events that are important in the history of their own locality.
- After visiting the Llanberis Slate Museum, they carry out effective investigations into the events that contributed to the great strike and display an understanding of cause and effect as they record their conclusions. By writing in a variety of ways about the information they have gathered, they extend their understanding of the characters and events of that period.

- As a result of being involved in experiences that enabled them to re-live the period, they have a good awareness of the history of the Celts. They can describe their way of life and compare it with the present. They are very familiar with the difference between primary and secondary sources of information.
- They discuss living conditions in the Victorian age, differentiating between the living conditions experienced by the rich and the poor. They collect detailed information about their school in that period and use their ICT skills to produce a graph comparing the average number of children in a Victorian family with the current average. They use a range of sources to investigate this period and express what they have learnt very effectively.
- They have acquired detailed knowledge about O.M. Edwards, his background and his contribution to the schools of Wales, especially in the context of his influence in eradicating the 'Welsh Not'.
- Pupils have gathered a great deal of information about the Tudor period and can recall a wide range of facts about that period. They have a very good understanding of how the events of the period influenced the lives of the common people. When discussing sources of information, including the Internet and relevant videos, they can interpret the information, expressing their opinions and showing empathy.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, pupils' awareness of the passage of time and of chronology is not sufficiently secure.

Geography

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, by discussing which pupils live close or very close to the school and those who live far and very far from it, pupils begin to understand the concept of simple mapping. Their awareness of their own locality is developing appropriately. They use the relevant geographical terms when describing their locality and refer to nearby towns and villages. They can differentiate between a village, a town and a city.
- Pupils gather data and produce a graph illustrating their mode of travel to school. They can describe and provide reasons for that which is displayed.
- They recognise the seasons; they put them in order and know about the characteristics of each one. They observe, describe and record the variations in the weather in their area using appropriate symbols.
- In KS2, through their study of Lesotho, the pupils show a firm awareness of the main physical and human variations between Wales and a less well-developed country. Their knowledge and understanding were significantly enriched by the visit to their school by a teacher from Lesotho.
- Pupils mapping skills and their ability to use an atlas develop appropriately across the key stage. They can read and interpret a variety of maps, making use of symbols and a key, scale, co-ordinates and grid references.

- Pupils discuss aspects of conservation, justifying their opinions in simple terms. They show that they have a developing awareness of the influence of man on the environment, especially in the context of their own locality, and can discuss ways of improving their environment effectively.
- When discussing the dependence of this country on food imports, pupils use a range of appropriate vocabulary, including the names of the various continents. They make good use of ICT to gather information and to display their findings.
- Their recording skills are good and they record their findings appropriately.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, pupils' knowledge is superficial and Y2 pupils do not undertake tasks that are sufficiently challenging.

Art

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Pupils' appreciation of art is enhanced, in both key stages, through the attractive displays of their own work and that of famous artists that are evident throughout the school. All the pupils have an art portfolio, which illustrates the variety of their work and the progress they make.
- In KS1, pupils work with an appropriate range of media and techniques, including paint, pencils, crayons, print making materials and pastels.
- From the earliest stages of KS1, pupils mix colours well and show that they have a firm awareness of colour, tone and pattern in their work. This is evident, for example, in their paintings emulating the style of Vincent van Gogh.
- Pupils observe carefully, manipulating objects as part of that process. They use suitable vocabulary to describe surfaces before going on to experiment themselves, concentrating on textures. They make good use of soft pencils, crayons and charcoal to produce their pictures.
- In KS2, pupils are familiar with the work of a wide range of artists including David Hockney, Rembrandt, Picasso and Kyffin Williams and use their techniques successfully to create pictures and designs of a high standard.
- The pupils paint with increasing control, selecting the colours that most effectively match the images they are creating. Their work frequently reflects accurate observation and attention to detail.
- With the assistance of a specialist in the field, who visits the school regularly, a significant number of the pupils produce weaving of a high quality and this is displayed attractively as part of the school's art exhibition.
- The pupils make good use of ITC to record their imaginative creations in pictorial form.

- Pupils evaluate their work sensibly and from a wide perspective.

Shortcomings

- At times, pupils' ability to evaluate their own work and that of other artists is insufficiently developed.

Music

Standards of achievement in music are very good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- In both key stages, pupils are very good at focusing their listening on the musical elements in all their musical activities. They talk about what they hear and what they do using appropriate music vocabulary.
- Pupils have a good sense of rhythm, pitch and pulse. They echo-clap rhythmic patterns of increasing complexity accurately, and imitate short vocal patterns correctly. In KS1, pupils successfully keep the pulse as the tempo of the piano music changes.
- Pupils sing tunefully and understand that good posture, good diction and effective breath control will improve their performance. Pupils in KS1 are able to respond to instructions to 'colour' their singing with suitable dynamics and in KS2, pupils perform with a sense of occasion. They sing a three-part round confidently.
- Pupils listen attentively to a wide range of music in assemblies and in their music lessons. They recognise the pieces of music they hear, name the composers and make appropriate distinctions within the musical elements.
- In KS1, pupils respond to the music they hear by describing the images evoked by the sounds. In KS2, pupils describe the main characteristics of the excerpt heard and express preferences for different parts, giving reasons for their choices. They demonstrate their understanding of the term 'texture' when applied to music.
- Pupils in KS1 choose from a range of percussion instruments and create short, lively group compositions. The focus of each little piece is determined by the element or symbol on the faces of dice, cast by the pupils in turns.
- In the KS2 class, two groups of pupils confidently use a computer program and the interactive whiteboard to compose tunes, using a limited number of notes and the structure of AABA. This is suitable for playing on the recorder, learnt by all pupils in KS2. Older pupils are able to create a descant for music composed in this way.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical education

During the inspection, one dance lesson was observed in KS1 and one swimming lesson in KS2. On the basis of the evidence seen, standards are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils benefit from the good indoor provision, a school hall for dance lessons and a swimming pool, which is located in a nearby town.
- In both key stages, the pupils are aware of good practice and of the importance of safety. They pay good attention to the need to engage in warm up exercises at the beginning of lessons.
- During dance lessons, KS1 pupils practise movement patterns that lead to the performing of a traditional folk dance. They respond well to the teacher's instructions and they act appropriately to suggested ways of improving their work.
- Pupils move in lightly, showing increasing control over their bodies. They combine an appropriate variety of movements and respond in a disciplined manner to recorded music.
- In KS2, during the swimming lesson, pupils listen carefully to instructions and work hard to improve their skills.
- The most proficient group, which swims at the deep end, refine their front and back strokes effectively and work on specific exercises to improve their breast stroke.
- Pupils in the other group also work confidently in the water and use a variety of pushing techniques to develop efficient swimming skills.
- The vast majority can swim at least 25 metres safely and appropriately without support.
- Pupils' performance skills are improved effectively through the extra-curricular work, the games and the play activities that are organised by the school and the community.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, the periods when pupils are not working energetically are over-long and they do not make effective use of the extensive space that is available to them.

Religious education

Standards are good in both key stages.

- Acts of collective worship make a very positive contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of work in religious education.
- Pupils in KS1 understand the nature and relevance of a number of Christian festivals and participate in celebrations, such as Harvest Thanksgiving and Christmas, to mark these.

- They enact the ceremony of infant baptism, led by a visiting local Minister, and know that this is a special family celebration. They also know that families, and the school community, usually have rules to guide their daily living.
- They are familiar with a number of events and characters from the Bible and know that Jesus taught people messages by telling them stories.
- Pupils compose a class prayer and thoughtfully explore ways in which they can feel happy, safe or sad.
- In KS2, pupils acquire good knowledge of events and personalities in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. They understand that Jesus was a religious leader.
- Pupils explore and explain appropriately the present day significance of parables told by Jesus and offer thoughts and points of view in a mature manner about the moral messages. For example, they reflect on the nature and importance of friendship as they study the parable of The Good Samaritan.
- Pupils produce imaginative pieces of writing when they describe the events of a New Testament story as seen through the eyes of several different characters.
- Pupils are developing an awareness of world faiths other than Christianity. They talk about various artefacts and practices associated with Judaism, and about the symbolism of light, for instance, celebrated in different festivals such as Divali.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, the amount and variety of work recorded by pupils is rather limited.
- In KS2, pupils are insufficiently secure in their knowledge of world religions studied other than Christianity.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the last inspection

The school was last inspected in May, 1998. The key issues for action identified in that inspection report were as follows:

- fully implement the new assessment policy in order to assess pupils' achievements and progress more systematically against NC criteria;
- further improve standards of handwriting and presentation throughout the school;
- establish formal procedures to enable co-ordinators to monitor pupils' standards of work;

- review the contents of the Governors' Annual Report to Parents in order to fully comply with WO requirements;
- implement a system for the appraisal of teachers.

Since the last inspection the school has addressed all of these issues and there has been a good measure of improvement. The process of implementing the Assessment Policy is a continuous one. Effective procedures have been established to assess pupils' achievements and progress in the core subjects. However, pupils' progress and achievement in the foundation subjects have yet to be assessed systematically using NC criteria. By the end of KS2, pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are generally good. The school's self-evaluation procedures include a detailed programme of regular analysis of pupils' work and assessments in the core subjects, and a rolling programme for auditing standards in the foundation subjects. The information gained enables staff to monitor pupils' standards of work carefully and identify areas that need further attention. The most recent Governors' Annual Report to Parents complies fully with the statutory requirements. The school implements the appropriate procedures for the performance management of teachers. In addition, all who work at the school are included in the process of self-evaluation. The school's good practice in improving the quality of management systems has been recognised by the granting of Investors in People status.

8.2 Key issues for action

The school needs to:

- continue to maintain the high standards that currently exist and attend to the shortcomings that have been identified in the subjects where pupils' standards of achievement are satisfactory;
- attend to the weaknesses in the teaching identified in section 5.1 of the report;
- improve the strategies for assessing the foundation subjects;
- continue to develop monitoring and evaluation strategies to ensure that they are useful instruments for improving the quality of the teaching and the learning and moving the school forward.

APPENDIX

School Data

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of school	Ysgol Dinmael
School type	Voluntary
Age range of pupils	3-11

School address	Dinmael Corwen Denbighshire
Post code	LL21 OPP
Phone number	01490 460240

Head	Mrs Margaret D Edwards
Date of appointment	September 1984
Chair of governors	Mr Dwyfor Jones
Registered inspector	Ms Lisa J Davies
Date of inspection	January 12 - 14 2003

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year Group	N [fte]	R	Y1	Y2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6	Total
Number of pupils	2	4	6	3	5	3	3	1	27

<i>Number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent [fte]
Number of teachers	2	1	2.1

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil: teacher ration [ptr] excluding nursery and special classes	13:1
Pupil: teacher ratio [pta] in nursery classes	3:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	13
Teacher: Class Ratio	1.1:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	Reception	KS 1	KS 2	Whole school
Term 1 – Spring 2003	93.5	97.2	94.8	95.2
Term 2 – Summer 2003	98.2	99.9	97.4	98.5
Term 3 - Autumn 2002	97.2	97.6	96.2	97.0

Percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals	0%
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Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to the inspection	0
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C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments 2002

National Curriculum Assessment Results KS1 ; 2003
As the number of pupils who were eligible to be assessed at the end of KS1 was more than four but fewer than ten, only performance indicators are included.

Percentage of pupils achieving at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh [first language], according to teachers' assessments

In the school:	100	In Wales:	80
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Results of National Curriculum Assessments KS2: 2003

As the number of pupils who were eligible to be assessed at the end of KS2 was fewer than five, a synopsis of the information is not included.

D	Pupils who have been exempted under statutory arrangements from part or the whole of the National Curriculum
A	Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
N	Pupils who have failed to register for reasons other than absence
W	Pupils working towards level 1

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

- The school was inspected by a team of three inspectors, including one lay inspector over a period of six inspection days.
- 25 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- A number of pupils, representing the various ages and abilities, were heard reading. Their work was discussed with a cross-section of pupils.
- Samples of pupils' written and practical work, across all the subjects, were inspected.
- The inspectors held discussions with the teachers about a wide range of matters relating to the work of the school. The school's planning documentation and a wide range of files and minutes were inspected.
- 14 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 15 completed questionnaires were returned.
- A meeting was held with the school governors before and after the inspection.

D. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Name	Role	Sections of the report	Subjects [Section 7]
Ms L J Davies	Registered Inspector	1; 2; 3.1; 3.2; 5.1; 5.4; 6.2; 6.3; 8.1; 8.2.	Welsh; science; design and technology; history; geography; art; physical education
Mrs I R Steeds	Team Inspector	3.2; 4.3; 5.2; 5.3; 5.5; 6.1; 6.3; 8.1	The Early Years; mathematics; English; information

			technology; music; religious education.
Mr J Roberts	Lay	4.1; 4.2; 5.6; 5.7.	

The inspectors wish to thank the school governors, head, staff, pupils and parents for their willing co-operation during the inspection.