

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

**FORDEN CHURCH-IN-WALES
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

For den
Welshpool
Powys, SY21 8NE

School Number: 666/3016

Date of Inspection: 11th – 12th December, 2001

PHILLIP EDWARDS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR: W227/15669

29th January, 2002

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: T/66/01P

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

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

The term "reception" is applied to the year-group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of five during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year-group of pupils who attain the age of six during the academic year and so on to Y13 — the year-group who attain the age of eighteen during the academic year.

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

Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; Key Stage 2 of Y3 to Y6; Key Stage 3 of Y7 to Y9; Key Stage 4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The following five-point grading scale is used to represent the main judgments in the report:

1. **Very good** : many good features, some of them outstanding
2. **Good** : good features and no major shortcomings
3. **Satisfactory** : good features outweigh 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

- Forden Church-in-Wales Primary School is situated in the village of Forden near the town of Welshpool in the county of Powys. It lies in the area administered by Powys County Council. It has a roll of 78 pupils aged three to eleven years; the majority come from Forden and the remainder from the surrounding area. In general terms, the school describes three-quarters of the area it serves as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged, with a quarter economically disadvantaged. The annual intake covers the full ability range. Approximately 7% of pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school dinners. The majority of pupils come from homes where English is the main or only language spoken. Twenty-one pupils are identified by the school as requiring special educational needs (SEN) support, two of whom have a statement.
- The school has high aspirations for its pupils, with a mission statement and an appropriate set of aims to promote their social, moral, emotional, physical and intellectual development. It was last inspected in the summer term 1996.
- The school has an appropriate mission statement and has clear aims and objectives agreed by the head, staff and governors; these contribute to a shared sense of purpose and a strong commitment to raising standards of pupils.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The Main Findings of the Report

- Forden Church-in-Wales Primary School is a caring, friendly school with a strong 'family' ethos.
- The educational provision for the under-fives taken overall is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. Standards achieved in the six areas of learning are:

Area of Learning	Nursery	Reception
Language Literacy and Communication Skills	Good	Good
Personal and Social Development	Good	Good
Mathematical Development	Good	Good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Good	Good
Physical Development	Good	Good
Creative Development	Good	Good

- In both key stages, pupils' standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) and religious education are as follows:

Subject	KS1	KS2
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Welsh (as a second language)	Good	Satisfactory
Design and Technology	Good	Good
Information Technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Very Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Good
Music	Good	Good
Physical Education	Good	Good
Religious Education	Good	Very Good

- Pupils in KS1 achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT. In KS2, they achieve very good standards in listening and writing and good standards in all the other key skills.
- Standards of achievement were judged to be good or better in approximately 75% of lessons observed, with 5% very good, 70% good and 25% satisfactory.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good overall, with their moral and social development very good. The school has a busy and purposeful atmosphere which fosters sound attitudes and values; it effectively promotes racial equality through its clear emphasis on equal opportunities and commitment towards promoting the self-esteem of all pupils.
- Standards of behaviour and pupils' attitudes are very good throughout the school. There is a happy and orderly atmosphere in the school and relationships between adults and pupils are friendly and respectful.
- Attendance rates are satisfactory. Despite the severe effects of foot-and-mouth disease, levels of attendance have been above 90% for the last three terms.
- The quality of teaching is good overall in the early years and both key stages. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was judged good or better in approximately 78% of lessons, including 9% where it is very good, 69% good and the remaining 22% satisfactory. The effectiveness of lesson planning is satisfactory. Planning for the widely differing abilities of pupils is variable across the key stages.
- The overall quality of the school's assessment, recording and reporting procedures is good. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are good levels of oral feedback on specific pieces of work. However, teachers' comments on pupils' written work are not

sufficiently informative to help pupils and their parents understand what they need to do next in order to raise their standards of achievement.

- The overall quality of the curriculum provided by the school is good and meets statutory requirements. A wide range of educational visits and activities in the local community enhance the richness of pupils' learning through extra-curricular experiences.
- The school provides a safe and happy environment in which pupils receive good support and guidance for their health and welfare.
- The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good and they make good progress relative to their ability. They are all fully included in the life of the school, including assemblies, visits and extra-curricular activities and they receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum (NC).
- The school has developed a good and productive relationship with parents and the community, schools and other institutions.
- The links with industry are good. There are good strategies in place including 'The World of Work' to forge and establish links with industry and business. The school benefits from extending teachers' skills and extending the curriculum for pupils.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. Good systems are in place to ensure that there is regular monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. Realistic targets are set to raise pupils' performance, especially in the end of key stage tests. The school action plan includes a good overview of the progress made by the school since the last inspection. Despite the small number of teaching staff, systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the core subjects are good. Members of the governing body work closely with the headteacher to monitor progress, and appropriate spending decisions are made to secure school improvement.
- Leadership and efficiency are good overall. The head works diligently both as a teacher and leader and provides very good direction and inspiration to the school community. The leadership role of the governing body is developing well. Responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum is shared effectively by all teachers, including the teaching head, although opportunities for monitoring standards of teaching and learning formally in their subject responsibilities is limited. The head and governors have been very effective in managing and procuring all available resources to enable the school to manage with an increasing pupil population. The school development plan (SDP) is appropriately linked to budget setting.
- Overall, the provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources in the school are satisfactory.

- There are an appropriate number of teaching and non-teaching staff. They are well qualified and work well together as a team to meet the demands of the NC and the daily life of the school. The cleaner in charge ensures that there is a clean and pleasant environment. Lunchtime supervisors are effective and efficient.
- The accommodation is inadequate for the number of pupils on roll and the curriculum provided. The building is in unsatisfactory decorative and structural condition. Staff do their utmost to arrange furniture and displays of work so that pupils are given as stimulating and colourful an environment as possible but this does not answer the fundamental problems posed by an old and inconveniently arranged building. Storage space is very limited. There is no space for a staff room, and the headteacher's office is small and cold. The school has a suitable hard surfaced play area that is well used for playtime activities and games. Pupils also have access to an all-weather pitch and use the adjacent community centre for physical education and instrumental music practice. There is no separate, enclosed play area for children under five and access to the playground from the main gate is not sufficiently demarcated from the access to the community centre.
- Displays of pupils' work are attractive and well used to celebrate their achievements and effort. Resources for learning are satisfactory in quality and quantity. Lack of space in the school area means that there is an inadequate supply of big toys and wheeled vehicles readily available for children under five.
- The effectiveness of routine administration and organisation is smooth and efficient and enables the school to function as a happy, well-organised and harmonious community.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards of Achievement in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Standards of achievement were judged to be good or better in approximately 75% of lessons observed, with 5% very good, 70% good and 25% satisfactory.

- The educational provision for the under-fives taken overall is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. Standards achieved in all the six areas of learning are good.
- In KS1, standards are good in English, mathematics, science, Welsh as a second language, design and technology, information technology, history, geography, art, music, physical education and religious education. In KS2, standards are very good in history and religious education, and good in English, mathematics, science, design technology, information technology, geography, art, music, physical education. They are satisfactory in Welsh as a second language.

- Pupils with SEN make good progress relative to their ability.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Pupils in KS1 achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT. In KS2, they achieve very good standards in listening and writing and good standards in all the other key skills.

- The majority of pupils in both key stages develop good speaking skills. They talk about their work in a manner appropriate to their age; they speak clearly and confidently in a variety of contexts. They willingly enter into interesting discussions.
- Pupils listen well in their lessons and in assembly. In class, they respond to teachers' questions readily, and speak clearly and audibly. In KS2, they give very good regard to each other's contributions in all areas of the curriculum when they discuss their learning activities in small or large groups.
- In all classes, pupils achieve good standards of reading; they read for pleasure and extract information from the Internet and some reference books for subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils demonstrate good writing skills for a range of purposes. In both key stages, they use interesting language to add interest and vitality to their work. This is very evident in KS2 where some pupils are able to write very well at length, often accurately without a need to redraft their work.
- Standards in numeracy across the curriculum are good. Pupils use a variety of graphs to interpret statistics in history and geography; they measure and calculate accurately and estimate reasonably, for example, in their work in design and technology.
- Computers are used frequently in all classes to support learning. Pupils' ICT skills are generally good; they redraft their writing where appropriate, write control programmes and access the Internet for information.
- SEN pupils make good progress in key skills across the curriculum relative to their age and ability.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good overall, with their moral and social development very good.

- The school has a busy and purposeful atmosphere which fosters sound attitudes and values; pupils are helpful and are kind to each other.
- Pupils participate enthusiastically in the daily life of the school and also in the wider community; they undertake appropriate initiative and responsibilities willingly when given the opportunity. Moral development is successfully promoted through daily routines and specific occasions, such as circle-time sessions. They know the difference between right and wrong and are generally polite and courteous.
- Daily acts of collective worship make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development and meet statutory requirements. They are orderly and meaningful occasions where a suitably reverent atmosphere is created through the use of music, praise and prayer and moral and religious themes are considered. Singing, sometimes in harmony, makes a positive contribution to the worship.
- Relationships are very good at all levels; pupils work and play harmoniously together and develop very good social skills. The school is a happy community and staff are good role models and succeed in creating a caring ethos.
- The school effectively enhances pupils' personal and social development through a wide range of extra-curricular activities and appropriate visits linked to school themes. A sense of belonging and respect is evident in the school's daily routine.
- Pupils are very much aware of those less fortunate than themselves and raise money for nominated charities.
- Pupils learn to value themselves and show tolerance and respect for others. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of the heritage, culture, language, art and local history of Wales and appreciate the cultural traditions and language of other countries.
- Overall, pupils respond very well to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school effectively promotes racial equality through its clear emphasis on equal opportunities and commitment towards promoting the self-esteem of all pupils.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

Standards of behaviour and pupils' attitudes are very good throughout the school.

- There is a happy and orderly atmosphere in the school, and relationships between adults and pupils are friendly and respectful.
- Pupils are courteous both in the classroom and the school yard.

- The school has appropriate guidelines including a home-school agreement to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying.
- Pupils themselves have written and agreed to their own code of conduct.
- Older pupils show kindness to new pupils and those younger than themselves.
- Good behaviour is encouraged by a rewards system and by examples of courtesy and kindness shown by the staff.
- No bullying was seen during the inspection.

4.3 Attendance

Attendance rates are satisfactory.

- Despite the severe effects of foot-and-mouth disease, levels of attendance have been above 90% for the last three terms.
- The school conforms to statutory requirements for registering pupils.
- Parents understand and fully co-operate with the procedure in respect of explaining absences.
- Whilst no specific targets have been set to improve attendance, the home-school agreement includes a commitment to this end by parents.
- The school works closely with the LEA's Welfare Officer.

5 QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

During the inspection the quality of teaching was judged good or better in approximately 78% of lessons, including 9% where it is very good, 69% good and the remaining 22% satisfactory.

- Teachers and pupils display mutual respect and have positive and productive relationships. This has a good effect upon the ethos of the school and gives pupils the confidence to improve their learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils.
- Children under five receive a good start to their education; the quality of teaching they receive is good and well planned. They settle in extremely quickly and receive sensitive and caring support from the teacher. When available, the support assistant and other adults make a positive contribution to the quality of learning.

- The quality of teaching is good overall in the early years and both key stages. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the requirements of the NC and religious education. Where teaching is at its best, learning objectives are suitably matched to pupils' age, ability and prior attainment, and the planned activities are varied to sustain pupils' concentration and ensure good cross-curricular links with other subject areas. Pupils are praised for both effort and achievement, and teachers' interventions both support and accelerate their learning.
- Where the teaching is satisfactory in lessons, some of the above features are present but also some deficiencies, such as unclear learning objectives and overlong introductory sessions. On these occasions, pupils usually become restive and lack concentration, with insufficient time available for them to really get to grip with their tasks, and review and consolidate what has been learned. Occasionally, lack of space impedes pupils' accessibility to resources.
- Teaching for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good, including the contribution made by the non-teaching assistants and other adults; they have equal access to the whole curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy learning Welsh as a second language, including a good range of Welsh songs, owing to the positive emphasis given to teaching the language by teachers, particularly the enthusiastic *athrawes fro*.
- Display is effective; it highlights useful information and celebrates pupils' work in all areas of the curriculum. Suitable use is made of homework to support pupils' learning.
- The effectiveness of lesson planning is satisfactory. Planning for the widely differing abilities of pupils is variable across the key stages.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The overall quality of the school's assessment, recording and reporting procedures is good.

- A clear policy for the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' work provides good guidance to inform teachers' planning of future work. There are manageable and purposeful systems for the regular assessment and recording of pupils' progress, which are consistently implemented.
- Teacher assessments of pupils' standards of achievement in the core and foundation subjects of the NC are accurate and consistent. Samples of pupils' work are moderated according to NC criteria and collated in subject portfolios; these are successful in giving teachers a common understanding of expected levels of attainment across the curriculum.
- Appropriate tasks and formal assessments are administered regularly; these provide accurate data to track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Well-

targeted analysis of this data enables the school to evaluate its contribution to the improvement of teaching and learning and to make accurate predictions of individual pupils' achievement at the end of both key stages.

- Pupils are made adequately aware of assessment criteria before they complete their tasks. There is good development of systems which encourage pupils to evaluate the quality of their own work and progress so that they are able to play a positive part in the setting of appropriate targets in order to tackle areas of difficulty.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are good levels of oral feedback on specific pieces of work. However, teachers' comments on pupils' written work are not sufficiently informative to help pupils and their parents understand what they need to do next in order to raise their standards of achievement.
- Individual pupil portfolios, containing samples of assessed work, are well used as a source of evidence of the quality of work achieved and inform teachers of areas which require reinforcement. Used in conjunction with the results from a range of standardised tests and records of teachers' assessments, they enable the school to track progress and act as a basis for discussion with parents.
- The requirements of the SEN Code of Practice are fully met and pupils on the SEN register make good progress. Pupils with SEN are regularly assessed and the findings are effectively used to identify progressive learning targets.
- There are regular consultation meetings with parents and an annual written report. Parents are given a clear indication of achievement and progress in subjects across the curriculum and future learning targets are shared with parents in order to support pupils' progress. Pupils are given opportunities to write their own evaluation of their performance and progress after each project completed and on the school report. Records of achievement are kept for each pupil; these build into an informative cumulative record of a pupil's academic and personal achievement and progress across the school.

5.3 Curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum provided by the school is good and meets statutory requirements. The school has effectively addressed the key issues identified in the last inspection report.

- The quality of educational provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. There is good emphasis on raising the levels of children's skills in language and communication and on developing their personal and social skills.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant for pupils in KS1 and KS2. NC requirements are met in all subjects and there are good arrangements to deliver the

personal and social education curriculum. Appropriate curriculum time is allocated to all subjects of the NC.

- All subjects have suitable policies and well-adapted schemes of work. Teachers' long-term and medium-term planning is detailed and well focused upon ensuring that there is suitable coverage of the programmes of study of NC subjects and that subject-specific skills are addressed. However, the quality of teachers' short-term planning is inconsistent across the school. In the best practice, specific learning objectives are well identified in lesson plans and ensure that there is a clear focus on intended outcomes and that assessment opportunities are well linked to planning.
- Planning to promote the development of key skills across the curriculum is good. Cross-curricular links between subjects are very well identified and this is one of the strengths of the school. Teachers identify plentiful opportunities to deliver the key skills and to make cross-curricular links in an interesting and stimulating way; pupils respond well to this provision and apply their skills with increasing confidence as they mature.
- Specialist teaching in English and mathematics in KS2 is well organised to ensure that the curriculum in these subjects is well planned and delivered. Subject co-ordinators in literacy and mathematics have a good overview of progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Accurate whole-school targets are set for improvement. Staff meet regularly to review schemes of work and identify areas requiring further development.
- Activities and tasks set in lessons are appropriately matched to the learning needs of pupils. Targets are appropriately set and pupils are encouraged to develop their skills of self-evaluation in playing a positive part in setting targets for improvement. Pupils are well challenged in lessons and they have equal access to every aspect of school life.
- Good home-school links ensure that pupils make appropriate progress in areas such as reading. The Home-School Agreement is effective in involving parents in the progress made by their children. The school has implemented an appropriate sex-education policy.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective and sensitive. They have good access to the full range of learning experiences provided by the curriculum and are well challenged to meet the expectations set by the NC end-of-key-stage tests.
- A wide range of educational visits and activities in the local community enhance the richness of pupils' learning experiences. There is good use of the local environment to develop links in several curricular areas. Pupils have good access to a variety of extra-curricular activities to develop their interests in areas such as sport, music, writing and information technology. Older pupils also have good opportunities to make visits to places further afield, such as the Jorvik Centre in York.

- There are many good opportunities to develop the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* in a number of subject areas such as art, history, geography, music and literacy. Pupils have good levels of awareness of the values and traditions of other cultures and world religions through their work in literacy, religious education, history and geography.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The school provides a safe and happy environment in which pupils receive good support and guidance for their health and welfare.

- Pupils have good relationships with each other and with members of the staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Each pupil in the school is valued equally.
- The school has a range of policies on matters such as discipline, child protection, bullying, health and sex education, and there are relevant procedures so as to provide for pupils' welfare.
- Girls and boys have equal opportunities in every aspect of the curriculum and school life.
- The school monitors the academic progress and personal development of the pupils effectively.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good.

- A policy document is in place that sets out procedures for identifying and assessing the special needs of pupils. The procedures follow the recommendations of the national Code of Practice (CoP) and these are systematically carried out. All relevant documentation is carefully recorded and staff use pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) appropriately to plan their teaching.
- The school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), who is a mainstream teacher, undertakes her responsibilities conscientiously and ensures that the special needs register is kept up to date. Statements of special educational need are reviewed in accordance with statutory requirements.
- The school also has one full-time and two part-time non-teaching assistants (NTAs) who ably support pupils, either as a group or individually, throughout the school.
- The school has effective procedures for early identification of SEN. The school works closely with parents who are involved at all stages with their children's progress. Teachers in consultation with the SENCO devise tasks for pupils to support their

individual needs as identified in the individual education plan. Pupils are making good progress relative to their ability.

- All staff are committed to a policy of inclusion and provide good role models for pupils, who learn to respect and understand each other's strengths and needs. SEN pupils are all fully included in the life of the school, including assemblies, visits and extra-curricular activities, and they receive their full entitlement to the NC.
- Valuable assistance in meeting all aspects of the special needs of pupils is provided by the local education authority's support services and other outside agencies. The school and the local high school provide good support for a gifted pupil, who also attends the Powys Writers' Squad.
- The named governor is fully informed and involved in the SEN arrangements and procedures, and his professional expertise in education psychology is an asset to the school.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and the Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The school has developed a good and productive relationship with parents and the community, schools and other institutions.

- A formal home-school agreement contains meaningful aims and objectives which foster good relationships.
- Parents play an active role in supporting the school, including raising additional funds. Some parents also help with classroom activities.
- Effective arrangements are made for parents to visit the school to discuss development and receive reports on their children's progress.
- Close links are established with the community by inviting parents and residents to attend school concerts and other events which are held in the adjoining community centre. Pupils also take part in the village pantomime and entertain the elderly, and the school band plays in the annual Welshpool festival.
- Full use is made of community resources, in particular the expertise of individual members who are able to contribute to pupils' education.
- Effective social, administrative and curricular links, especially in mathematics and English, have been established with the secondary schools which receive the pupils. Links with the local playgroup are also beneficial.
- Local agencies and institutions including those providing initial training for teachers are very supportive of the school. Pupils benefit from the experiences.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Links with industry are good.

- Although the school does not have a written policy for partnership with industry, there are good strategies in place including ‘The World of Work’ to forge and establish links with industry and business.
- The school has developed a productive partnership with the utility suppliers of water and electricity. The local supermarket and builders’ merchant also provided useful support for a cookery project involving Y6 pupils.
- Effective links with industry and business are being fostered in conjunction with the Education Business Partnership. A local bank and the school have reciprocal arrangements to examine each other’s management system. Arrangements have also been made for pupils to examine the banking system. Good use has been made of the experiences to develop career awareness amongst pupils.
- The school benefits from links with industry and business in extending teachers’ skills and extending the curriculum for pupils.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- Good systems are in place to ensure that there is regular monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. Realistic targets are set to raise pupils’ performance, especially in the end-of-key-stage tests. A wide range of data is analysed to set appropriate whole-school, key-stage and year-group targets.
- The school’s targets for its performance in the NC assessment tests have been successfully met. Target-setting is regarded as central to achieving school improvement; targets are set for year-groups and for individuals and there is a good degree of encouragement for pupils to evaluate their own performance, to identify their own criteria for self-evaluation and to devise strategies to meet the targets set.
- The school action plan includes a good overview of the progress made by the school since the last inspection. Weekly staff meetings to measure progress made towards targets promote the culture of self-criticism and planning for improvement that characterises the school.
- The school makes good use of information from baseline, NC tests and standardised tests to set appropriate targets and to track the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. Identification of strengths and weaknesses has led to several

initiatives, such as the introduction of the mathematics and literacy schemes and the provision of specialist teaching in these areas in KS2, which are designed to promote higher standards of achievement, especially at the end of the key stages.

- Despite the small number of teaching staff, systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the core subjects are good. Detailed records are kept identifying the strengths and weaknesses observed. The strong cross-curricular links which are identified in planning enable co-ordinators to monitor strengths and weaknesses in many of the foundation subjects in practice.
- Teachers have a good level of understanding of expected levels in the core and foundation subjects of the NC. School portfolios of moderated, annotated work are being developed to provide guidance and support in assessment activities, and good progress is being made in this area. Regular updating and monitoring of individual pupil portfolios of assessed work ensure that co-ordinators can identify areas of strength and weakness within their subject responsibilities.
- Staff have appropriate opportunities to attend INSET courses to enhance their professional development and to secure school improvement; they share the information gained with their colleagues.
- Termly reports to the governing body on the progress being made toward the targets set in the school development plan give governors a good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Members of the governing body work closely with the headteacher to monitor progress, and appropriate spending decisions are made to secure school improvement.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

Leadership and efficiency are good overall.

- The head works diligently both as a teacher and leader and provides very good direction and inspiration to the school community. She is personally involved in many aspects of the school's life and work and is a positive influence on the standards and the caring ethos of the school. The head has recently attended the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers, which recognised her effective leadership qualities.
- The school has an appropriate mission statement and has clear aims and objectives agreed by the head, staff and governors; these contribute to a shared sense of purpose and a strong commitment to raising standards of pupils.
- The governing body (GB) takes an active interest and is well informed by the head and staff about the work and life of the school. It meets regularly to discuss the curriculum and progress and is actively involved with the school and its pupils. Appropriate minutes are kept of meetings of governors and staff. The leadership role

of the governing body is developing well, and staff work as a team to share responsibilities.

- Responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum is shared effectively by all teachers, including the teaching head, although opportunities for monitoring standards of teaching and learning formally in their subject responsibilities is limited. Appropriate attention has been given to preparing policies and schemes of work for the NC and religious education.
- The head and governors have been very effective in managing and procuring all available resources to enable the school to manage with an increasing pupil population. The SDP is appropriately linked to budget setting.
- The effectiveness of routine administration and organisation is smooth and efficient and enables the school to function as a happy, well-organised and harmonious community.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

Overall, the provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources in the school is satisfactory.

- There are an appropriate number of teaching and non-teaching staff. They are well qualified and work well together as a team to meet the demands of the NC and the daily life of the school. There is a good range of teaching experience, and deployment is appropriate. Classroom support staff and visiting teachers make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- There are appropriate job descriptions for all staff and an effective approach to the induction of newly-qualified teachers who are given a good programme of development and support.
- Formal arrangements enable staff to discuss performance and personal professional development. The INSET programme considers the needs of the school as identified in the school development plan as well as the needs of individual members of staff. Staff share information from INSET courses with their colleagues.
- The cleaner in charge ensures that there is a clean and pleasant environment. Lunchtime supervisors are effective and efficient. Day-to-day administration is conducted smoothly and efficiently.
- The accommodation is inadequate for the number of pupils on roll and the curriculum provided. The building is in unsatisfactory decorative and structural condition; the infants' toilets are old and the drainage system gives off an unpleasant odour. Toilet facilities for the junior girls offer little in the way of privacy for those approaching or

reaching puberty. Dampness is penetrating into the plasterwork of the entrance hall and other areas of the school and there is a potentially dangerous arrangement of doorways into the KS2 classrooms. The school's heating system is unreliable; classrooms in the newer area of the school are often chilly. Staff do their utmost to arrange furniture and displays of work so that pupils are given as stimulating and colourful an environment as possible but this does not answer the fundamental problems posed by an old and inconveniently arranged building.

- Storage space is very limited, and this has become worse with the need to turn the library area into another classroom to accommodate the growing number of pupils. As a result, there is no library area where pupils can browse or read quietly; teachers have inadequate space to store equipment and resources and classrooms become cluttered as a result. There is no space for a staff room and the headteacher's office is small and cold. Staff have a small area where they can make hot drinks but have no space where they can spend their breaks together.
- The school has a suitable hard surfaced play area that is well used for playtime activities and games. Pupils also have access to an all-weather pitch and use the adjacent community centre for physical education and instrumental music practice. There is no separate, enclosed play area for children under five, and access to the playground from the main gate is not sufficiently demarcated from the access to the community centre.
- Displays of pupils' work are attractive and well used to celebrate their achievements and effort. They are suitably linked to the curriculum and make a significant impact on the quality of the learning environment. Despite the unsatisfactory condition of the accommodation which is detrimental to the well-being of pupils and staff, pupils make good progress as a result of the good quality of education provided by the headteacher and staff.
- Resources for learning are satisfactory in quality and quantity. There is good provision of information technology hardware and software which is well used. There is an adequate supply of books and other resources for learning which are generally accessible despite storage difficulties. The lack of a library area has an impact upon the development of good reading habits in both key stages. Lack of space in the school area also means that there is an inadequate supply of big toys and wheeled vehicles readily available for children under five.
- The local environment is well used to enhance teaching and learning; there is a good range of visits and field trips, which are well used to forge cross-curricular links. Visitors to the school, such as poets, artists and musicians, make a significant impact on pupils' learning.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards Achieved by Pupils

Provision for Children Under Five

The educational provision for the under fives taken overall is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. Standards achieved in the nursery and reception class are good overall. Children under five make good progress.

Good Features

- In the nursery and reception class, the teacher observes children closely every day and her good assessments about what children know and understand ensure that the children make at least satisfactory and often good progress in all areas of learning. Teachers' sensitive and supportive interactions enhance and extend the children's knowledge and skills across an enjoyable sequence of activities and tasks. They achieve good standards in personal and social, creative and physical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards of achievement are overall good in mathematical development, language, literacy and communication skills.
- Although some children enter the nursery class with poor communication skills they soon make good progress in speaking and listening. In the reception class, they become attentive listeners and are enthusiastic when speaking the repetitive elements in a shared story such as 'The Gingerbread Man' and when puppets are taken out of a story sack. They can express opinions and make choices. They benefit greatly from planned and spontaneous adult conversations as they engage in structured play and role-play activities. The Welsh language is introduced to children on entry to school; they learn to reply to simple questions and have a sound basis for future learning.
- Children and adults enjoy sharing books. The use of interesting texts in a variety of presentations helps all children to develop a love of reading. In the nursery, children enjoy turning the pages and looking at the pictures and in the reception class, children use pictures to support their understanding and show they are able to sequence events by indicating which character is coming next in a big book. Children in reception make good progress in reading using a range of cues to predict meaning; they are supported by a developing knowledge of sound-letter relationships.
- All children show a good awareness of the purposes of writing, and nursery children experiment with marks and symbols as words to accompany their pictures. In reception, they sequence pictures correctly to show they understand the main events in a story. They are taught how to form letters correctly and their fine motor skills improve. Many can overwrite and underwrite, and emergent writing with one child is beginning to develop. Children use developmental writing well to communicate their thoughts and ideas.
- Personal and social development is good. There are high expectations for children's progress and achievement, and teaching is well matched to their stages of

development. The nursery and reception children are organised well and a good programme of personal and social development helps children to work, play and co-operate successfully. From their first days in school, children listen to instructions well and are confident in choosing their own activities. Children know the daily routines, co-operate and learn to take turns. They have good relationships with adults and treat each other and their environment with respect. Their response to new learning situations shows they should develop good independence by the age of five. Children locate toys and other resources to support their play. They enjoy tidying up and are aware of the differences between right and wrong.

- Mathematical development is good. Children begin to sort and match shape according to colour and kind, with the help of an adult. Their recognition of number is good and at the beginning of the reception year, they count up to ten and beyond. Reception children can count to ten and begin to recognize coins up to 10p. They sort and match objects in practical activities and develop understanding of one-to-one correspondence. Children become aware of different shapes when they cut out stars. Nursery children's concept of capacity is developing through filling containers with water. Nursery and reception children measure out ingredients in cups carefully and mix to make gingerbread biscuits.
- Nursery children develop a good knowledge and understanding of events and people in their world. They are taught to develop good observational skills. Older children select materials and equipment with growing independence and use such skills as cutting, sticking, joining and building for a variety of purposes. Nursery and reception children have ample opportunities to use a variety of interactive computer software and are very adept at controlling the mouse.
- Physical development is good overall. Opportunities are provided to support the development of both large and fine motor skills. Early years children have timetabled opportunities to use large equipment at the adjoining playschool. No-one was observed using them during the inspection owing to inclement weather. Children use a Teddy Bear story as a stimulus to reasonable efforts at making tall and wide shapes and co-ordinate their hands reasonably well to a song "touching head, shoulders, knees and toes". They handle pencils, paintbrushes, and malleable materials safely in their creative work, with developing control and increasing dexterity, for example, making and decorating recognizable Christmas shapes from salt dough. Older children select materials and equipment with growing independence and use such skills as cutting, sticking, joining and building for a variety of purposes.
- Creative development is good. Children draw pictures using computers and learn to paint atmospheric colours. Children learn simple songs in English and Welsh and sing a good range of number and action rhymes tunefully. They know the actions to the rhymes. They sing nursery rhymes confidently in English and in Welsh. They respond to suggestions in music and movement sessions, and attempt to imitate movements, with the guidance and direction of adults. Children decorate their home corner with Christmas decorations. They paint, draw cut and stick regularly.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

English

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages. Standards of writing in KS2 have several very good features.

Good Features

- Pupils have good speaking skills in both key stages. They can express their ideas fluently and play a full part in class discussions. As they mature, their vocabulary shows good progress; they choose imaginative and colourful adjectives and metaphors to enhance their oral and written work. In KS1, pupils answer questions in complete sentences. By the end of KS2, they speak confidently, expressing themselves clearly and articulately in subjects across the curriculum.
- Listening skills are good in KS1 and very good in KS2. Pupils listen carefully to each other and to their teachers. They learn to take turns to express their views and, by the end of KS2, they use well-reasoned and logical arguments to put forward their opinions and ideas. Listening skills are enhanced by the strong value that is placed on every individual in the school.
- There is good development of subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum. KS1 pupils know what an author and an illustrator do and by the end of KS2, pupils can explain the purposes of different parts of their reading and topic books; most are aware of the uses of indexes and glossaries.
- Standards of reading are good in both key stages. Most pupils read fluently and accurately, using appropriate expression and pronunciation. In KS1, pupils make good progress in developing their phonic skills, and pupils with special educational needs are well provided with strategies designed to increase their confidence and extend their reading activities.
- By the upper end of KS2, many pupils are proficient and engaged readers who have developed decided tastes for different genres of writing and for different authors. Their prediction skills are appropriately developed and they can use texts to develop their ability to infer and deduce. Pupils read with understanding; they use a good range of non-fiction books to locate information to extend their knowledge and understanding of the topics they study.
- Comprehension skills are well developed in both key stages. Pupils can extract accurate information from texts and other sources, including CD-ROMs and the Internet. They record their findings appropriately for use in their writing activities.

- By the end of KS1, pupils have a growing ability to construct sentences correctly and to begin to structure a story plan. A significant number of above average and average attaining pupils write independently and make good use of speech marks, commas and capital letters.
- Pupils in both key stages show confidence and enjoyment in tackling extended writing tasks; by the upper end of KS2, there are good and sometimes very good examples of extended writing in all areas of the curriculum.
- Writing skills are well developed in KS1; pupils have a good understanding of the structure and sequence of a story and above average pupils make good progress in writing extended stories, such as an account of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus.
- By Y4, pupils' imaginative writing shows a good use of interesting images. Ideas are sensitive and well expressed and pupils start to write poetry in a range of styles. Their work on kennings is expressive and well linked to their work on the Vikings. Descriptive images are carefully and aptly chosen to express ideas. Pupils make good progress in securing their accuracy in spelling and have a growing range of vocabulary, which they use in the correct context.
- By the end of KS2, pupils write for a wide variety of purposes and have a good level of understanding of the appropriate style to use to appeal to different audiences. Some of their writing is striking; letters of sympathy sent to President Bush after the September 11th attacks show a maturity and command of language that is sometimes very good. Empathetic writing on their World War II topic in history shows insight and a good ability to use language persuasively. Their descriptive accounts are perceptive and acute and, in the best examples, they write humorously.
- Y5 and Y6 pupils make good strides forward in their writing of poetry, and some of their poems have been published in a national newspaper. They have a very good understanding of different poetic forms, and their poems on Dunkirk and on the Poppies of World War I are often profound in their sentiments and very moving. During the inspection, pupils wrote a poem about Advent and the coming of Christ, describing Him as "a light to break up the darkness". They use metaphor and alliteration confidently and choose words and phrases with care and good judgement. The very good cross-curricular links identified by teachers ensure that good and very good quality writing is produced in subjects such as history, geography, science and religious education.
- Pupils make good progress in planning, drafting and redrafting their written work, often using IT word-processing programs to help them develop their editing skills. They become more self-critical in analysing and reviewing the quality of their work as they mature, and their evaluations of projects are often well focused and accurate.

- Presentation of written work is good in both key stages. Handwriting is neat, legible and well-formed; pupils use paragraphs appropriately and take pride in the appearance of their work. They make good use of computer graphics to enhance the presentation of written work.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Mathematics

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good Features

- KS1 pupils have a secure grasp of place value and can order number accurately. They understand the principles of addition and subtraction and can apply these principles well to simple problems.
- Pupils can recognise odd and even numbers and can count upwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens. They understand the concept of halving and doubling.
- KS1 pupils have a good understanding of money and can recognise the value of a variety of coins. They use simple mathematical vocabulary accurately and in the correct context.
- KS1 pupils can clearly identify a variety of 2D and 3D shapes; they make progress in KS2 in their understanding of the properties of these shapes, including lines of symmetry and calculating perimeters and areas.
- By the end of KS1, pupils achieve good standards in their mathematical investigations and record their findings appropriately in rows and columns. They make a good start to data handling and can record their findings in simple graphs.
- In KS2, pupils develop good estimating skills and have a secure understanding of measuring in standard and non-standard units.
- Recall of multiplication facts is good. Pupils make good progress in applying their knowledge to a variety of problems, including those in other curricular areas.
- KS2 pupils have a good understanding of simple and compound fractions. They recognise the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages.

- KS2 pupils have a good knowledge of shape, space and measure. They can identify and measure a variety of angles accurately and they develop their understanding of calculating the areas of a variety of shapes.
- In KS2, pupils show growing confidence in tackling problems in mental mathematics. They respond well to challenging questioning and are ready to examine different strategies by which they can arrive at a reasonable solution.
- Pupils collect and collate data with increasing confidence; they can plot and analyse graphs and pie charts of progressive difficulty in KS2. Problem-solving in subjects such as history is well focused on the interpretation of graphs.
- KS2 pupils enjoy the challenge of investigative work; they share their ideas and findings with each other.
- Good use of ICT tools enables pupils to extend their mathematical skills, and they approach their investigations with increasing confidence. Pupils present their work in mathematics neatly and accurately.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Science

Standards in science are good in both key stages.

Good Features

- Younger pupils in KS1 observe mini-beasts methodically. They predict what they may, will or will not see in different habitats such as soil, grass or a wall. They carry out an appropriately planned investigation to test predictions of what a caterpillar will eat.
- They observe local pond life and animal habitats and have a good awareness of the natural and made worlds.
- Pupils in KS1 investigate circuits through experimenting with wires, batteries and bulbs in a structured way. They begin to realise that electricity needs a complete circuit linked to the correct terminals of a battery to flow and light a bulb and that the circuit can be broken. They are well aware of ways electricity is useful in society and have a growing awareness of the safety measures that can be taken in the home and near pylons to avoid electric shocks.

- Pupils in KS2 have a good knowledge of the early history of ballooning. They carry out well-conceived investigations on how air can propel a balloon along a piece of string and make reasonable estimates on the weight a helium filled balloon will carry.
- They have a good understanding of forces through carrying out investigations on pulling a brick across different surface textures. They measure force in Newtons accurately and offer reasoned explanations for why the human body is lighter to lift when submerged in water.
- Pupils in KS2 have a good knowledge of light travelling in straight lines, how it reflects and the human eye works. They are well aware of the meaning of transparent, translucent and opaque.
- They have a reasonable idea of personal health and safety, including the adverse effects of drink-driving and smoking. Pupils have a good knowledge of the organs of the human body, including those of the human reproductive system.
- They investigate successfully how far smells will travel in still air and draw clear graphs to show the time against distance; they show a good understanding of fair testing through investigations with floating and sinking, where they recognise variables and what should stay the same.
- By the end of KS2 pupils are very familiar with good practice when carrying out investigations. For example, they predict whether plastic cups are better than tin cups to conduct sound through a tight connecting string. They ensure the test is fair and extend the investigation to testing round corners.
- Older pupils in this key stage have a good knowledge of the changing state of materials. They understand that ice can become water when heated and that the process can be reversed, but that this is not the case with all materials.
- Pupils learn to classify animals and plants using appropriate keys.
- A group of older pupils in KS2 investigate and compare their lung capacities, methodically using a spirometer. They have a good recall of how we breathe with our lungs. They enter data confidently, ready for it to be transferred to an Excel program on the computer, then choose and create an appropriate graph in order to make comparisons.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Welsh (as a second language)

Standards are good in Welsh in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

Good Features

- The majority of pupils listen attentively to teachers, respond enthusiastically to questions and work well with each other. Pupils have appropriate experiences of incidental Welsh to enable them to appreciate its important place in the life of the school.
- Pupils can sing a range of Welsh songs, including carols, confidently from memory and with clear diction.
- At the beginning of KS1, the majority of pupils build on the sound start in the early years. They make steady progress, using an appropriate range of questions and answers, and they understand familiar words and phrases.
- They can recognise and name a range of colours; they count to twenty confidently.
- As pupils progress through the key stage, they write short sentences to consolidate their oral work. Standards in reading and writing are commensurate with their different stages of development.
- Younger pupils in KS2 demonstrate appropriate proficiency in recalling previous work and make satisfactory progress.
- Later in KS2, pupils begin to develop increasing confidence in simple conversations, based on a dialogue. They learn how to ask for a Christmas present and learn seasonal vocabulary.
- Pupils at the end of the key stage listen well and make sound efforts to say and repeat sentence patterns. Pronunciation is good overall.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils have a wide repertoire of Welsh songs they can sing with good intonation. They are presently making good efforts to learn the Welsh national anthem.

Shortcomings

- By the end of KS2, pupils do not make extended observations in conversation and discussion, for example when sharing experiences or conveying information exploring ideas and offering points of view.
- As older pupils progress through the school, there is a significant variation in their ability to read, understand and write across a range of tasks and contexts.

Design and Technology

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good Features

- A limited number of design and technology lessons were seen during the inspection, but from talking to teachers and pupils, and scrutinising pupils' work, it is evident that standards of achievement are good.
- KS1 pupils have good recall of focused practical tasks where they learn new skills such as applying a syringe to enable them to open the door of an animal's lair.
- Pupils make clear designs for their projects and annotate illustrations with correct vocabulary.
- By the end of KS1, pupils have a clear understanding of the design process. They consider the task set and use information purposefully to support their ideas, for instance in their use of boxes to construct an animal's den with an opening door. They fit the syringe carefully and are keen to explain how the process works.
- In Y3 and Y4, pupils make good progress in the design process. They consolidate their knowledge of the topic they are studying in history and are learning to fold paper to make Viking long boats. They attach the sail competently and make good efforts to reproduce the carved prow.
- Continuing the Viking theme, Y3 and Y4 pupils make Viking coins and brooches, using embossed metal sheets and card; these are carefully decorated with typical Viking designs and are well displayed with their collage work on Viking ships.
- At the lower end of KS2, pupils work together to design and make a game with a Christmas theme. They discuss and decide on the most interesting game they can devise and use magnets on a line to challenge pupils to find Santa's presents. Pupils devise the rules of the game and use ICT tools to help present their objects.
- Upper KS2 pupils make good use of technical vocabulary; they discuss ways of making vehicles which will move for a specified distance and are aware of problems which they might encounter. Clear, annotated designs successfully illustrate pupils' ideas and there are good comparisons with other vehicles.
- Topic work on World War II promotes design ideas for Anderson shelters and for parachutes. Pupils test the parachutes carefully and produce written evaluations of their work, suggesting ways in which they might improve their designs so that they are fit for the purpose.

- Upper KS2 pupils are keen to use their skills to improve their learning environment. They have collaborated on designing and making colourful blinds for their classroom windows.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Information Technology

Standards in information technology are good.

Good Features

- Pupils develop their information technology skills steadily in a variety of contexts with increasing confidence and competence as they progress through the key stages. Pupils benefit from a weekly visit to the local high school technology centre where they steadily improve their IT skills.
- Pupils in both key stages are clearly aware that control is integral to everyday devices, such as listening centres. The oldest pupils can use logo effectively and use repeat functions to produce a desired outcome.
- Pupils in KS1 can use a word-processor to produce sentences that communicate meaning well.
- Many in KS1 can search a CD-ROM purposefully to access information across the curriculum.
- Pupils in KS1 combine images with text to achieve more interesting and informative presentations. By the end of KS2, word-processing skills are firmly established and pupils become adept at redrafting written composition on screen.
- KS2 pupils give a sequence of accurate instructions to make their screen cursor move in different directions. They show that they can apply and extend this knowledge effectively.
- Pupils use database programs to store and present data in a variety of contexts. They choose appropriate styles of graphical representation to present information, and make valid interpretations from them. They recognise that poor quality data leads to unreliable results.
- Many pupils are able to use CD-ROMs and the Internet to gather information related to their work in, for example, history, geography and science.

- Pupils become more confident and able to use models or simulations to investigate and solve problems.
- Pupils in both key stages use word-processing well to draft and redraft work. They use different font styles and colours to make good presentations and are able to use a spell check and find-and-replace and cut-and-paste facilities to help match their work to an audience.
- At the end of the KS2, pupils design and make an effective Power Point presentation using sounds and images in sequence. They can access the Internet and download images for topic work.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

History

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

Good Features

- In KS1, pupils understand the concept of the passage of time; they use the correct terminology to describe periods of time and can point out events on their time-line.
- KS1 pupils identify the differences between past and present through the use of a variety of sources, such as Victorian household artefacts. They reflect well on differences in lifestyle, for instance, they can explain how different homes in the past were because they had no electricity.
- Good provision of visits reinforces pupils' understanding of life in the past and how change occurs over time. A visit to Erddig Hall enabled KS1 pupils to take part in role-play based on the differences in class and occupations in a Victorian household.
- In KS2, history is very well used as a vehicle to deliver a wide range of skills across the curriculum. Pupils cover a wide range of periods, and their knowledge and understanding of the past are very good. They are aware that the historical process is influenced by continuity as well as change and they know that change takes place at different rates, in relation to the significance of events taking place.
- Pupils converse intelligently and articulately about the past; they use subject-specific terminology very well and many pupils read widely about historical events which interest them. They make very good use of artefacts, illustrations, books and CD-ROMs to acquire greater knowledge, and they extract accurate information about the problems of the period they are studying.

- Project work in KS2 encourages a significant number of very good responses. Pupils have a wide knowledge of the Tudor period in Wales and in England, and their work shows the development of very good enquiry and research skills. Project work is well presented; graphics programs are used to illustrate and enhance the presentation. Pupils' evaluations of the quality of their projects are perceptive and well focused.
- Pupils' writing skills are very well encouraged and enhanced by their tasks in history. Y3 and Y4 pupils write a monk's prayer which clearly shows the terror evoked by the Viking raids. Y5 and Y6 pupils write about the experiences and fears of evacuee children very perceptively and show a very good degree of empathy. Their poems on World War I and on Dunkirk are very moving and very well crafted. Diaries written in the style of Pepys demonstrate a good awareness of the appropriate style of language that should be used.
- Pupils have a sufficiently good command of their material that many of them could write a highly amusing interview with Henry VIII and each of his wives, conducted by a famous American chat-show host. This piece showed a very secure knowledge of the facts and they could construct arguments, such as Anne Boleyn or Henry himself might have used. They showed a very good insight into character.
- Pupils have good levels of understanding of the nature of historical evidence. A discussion in Y3 and Y4 about Viking burial customs showed that they were aware that wood would not last as long as bone or metal and that historians had to work with gaps in the evidence; they understand the interpretation of these sources very well.
- Pupils recognise the importance of using evidence to substantiate opinions. Their investigative skills are very well developed through the use of a variety of sources, such as the illustrations of Dore in their study of the Victorian period. Upper KS2 pupils are able to compare sources and have a very good awareness of the fact that different points of view can be validly held on a range of historical problems and events. Work on World War II shows a good ability to detect bias in sources and they have the confidence to offer reasonable opinions about why there might be different viewpoints. A visitor who spoke to pupils about the Zulu Wars inspired them to record points for and against the Wars and they showed a good degree of understanding that there were two valid points of view.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding are enhanced by the visits they make to museums and other sites of historical importance. This ensures that pupils have a very good awareness of the particular development of the historical process in Wales.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good Features

- In KS1, pupils have a good understanding of plans and simple maps, and they recognise the importance of direction.
- KS1 pupils have a good knowledge of the local environment and are developing a secure grasp of geographical vocabulary. They can use maps well to compare the village of Forden with Newtown and can identify the main differences between them.
- KS1 pupils begin to use their data-handling skills in geography; they draw simple graphs to record their knowledge through an IT graph software package.
- In KS2, map work is good and is well reinforced by their work in history. They can compare land use in their own area with that in the Netherlands.
- Pupils' work on Africa and India is enriched by the wide range of cross-curricular references made in planning. Map work on Africa is good and pupils go on to write a travel article about holidays and the effects of tourism in Africa, comparing the good and bad effects well.
- In their study of village life in India, pupils can extract relevant information from a range of sources of evidence. They have good knowledge of how living in areas of natural hazard such as volcanoes and areas prone to flooding would influence patterns of building and ways of life.
- Good cross-curricular links enable pupils to use their ICT skills to access a wide range of relevant information from CD-ROMs and the Internet; they store this information appropriately. Good use is made of atlases and reference books.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Art

Standards in art are good in both key stages.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 experiment with mixing colours to create interesting patterns. They imitate the art-in-nature style of the artist Andy Goldsworthy by mixing and blending colours effectively with real wood and leaves to create their own images.

- They create good quality observational drawings during a visit to the stately home of Erddig.
- Pupils print on fabric and paper; they create a large colourful woven picture using plastic, fabric and paper.
- Early on in KS2 pupils mix repetitive green and brown colours to create a stained glass window effect in the style of the Victorian artist William Morris.
- Pupils experiment with silhouette paintings of Viking ships against the sunset, with some pupils able to show good perspective.
- They go on to painting good landscape impressions of Monet's 'Water Lilies'. They create successfully the water reflections and lilies floating on the water.
- Pupils make interesting and colourful scratch drawings using layers of wax and paint.
- Older pupils work with a local artist, Andrew Logan, to make a very good quality three-dimensional cross decorated with pebbles and glass.
- Pupils in KS2 make three-dimensional masks based on images they have downloaded from the Internet. They paint lifelike portraits of kings and queens based on portraits painted by old masters.
- They produce effective computer art paintings in the style of David Hockney.
- Pupil use sketch books effectively to experiment with and improve their drawing skills.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

Standards in music are good in both key stages. Few lessons were observed during the inspection, but conversations with staff and pupils, together with scrutiny of music performed during assemblies and in extra-curricular activities, enable a secure judgement to be made.

Good Features

- When singing in assembly and practising as a school, pupils sing tunefully and with good diction. Pupils listen to and learn well-known works of famous composers, when music is played in class and assemblies.

- The majority of pupils listen attentively when appraising music performed by their peers.
- Pupils in KS1 sing joyfully and confidently. They know, and can sing from memory, a wide range of songs in both Welsh and English, with appropriate control of breathing, posture, diction, dynamics and pitch. They often sing in harmony or as a round.
- Younger pupils in KS2 experiment with a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments well. They can name them, and play high, low, quiet and loud sounds with good control and pace. They go on to compose and perform background music to complement a recitation of a pupil's poem. They play carefully as the poem is read and the outcome is reasonably effective to reflect the mood of the poem.
- Older pupils in this key stage sing unaccompanied and in two-part harmony well. They keep the rhythm and intonation of their parts and produce a pleasing melodious sound.
- A significant number of interested pupils read music notation well when playing the trumpet, cornet, trombone and euphonium. They play a range of Christmas carols confidently, with good dynamics in four parts.
- The whole school takes part in concerts and church services where their contribution raises the standard of these events as well as improving pupils' skills as performers.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical Education

Standards in physical education are good in both key stages. Few lessons were seen during the inspection. Discussions with pupils and teachers and scrutiny of available evidence enabled a judgement to be made.

Good Features

- The vast majority of pupils reach the expected good standard of swimming by the time they leave school. Many gain distance and safety awards.
- Pupils do well in competitive games such as netball, hockey and seven-a-side football.
- Pupils improve their ball skills such as sending and receiving steadily. Pupils learn the importance of giving a good throw to enable a partner to catch and of keeping the eye on the ball.

- Younger pupils in KS2 understand the importance of warm up and cool down during physical activities. They have good awareness of the quickening of their pulse rate during exercise and the benefits of keeping fit.
- During a dance lesson, pupils create a very good dance representation of war and conflict. They build up and evaluate movements to recorded music to express the elements which create hostility, develop them to a war situation, then resolve the conflict using effective gestures and shapes. The final performance is of a very good standard.
- All pupils have equal access to extra-curricular activities in netball, rugby, and hockey which have a positive effect on overall standards.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious Education

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

Good Features

- Pupils have a good understanding of the main tenets, festivals and stories of the Christian faith. They can recall many stories from the Bible and are learning to relate and compare them with events in modern times. Pupils make good progress in using appropriate religious vocabulary.
- In KS1, pupils have good sequencing skills; they can retell the events of the Nativity confidently.
- KS1 pupils are familiar with stories from the Old and New Testaments, and they link the skills learned with those acquired in history and geography.
- KS2 pupils have a very good level of knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs, practices and festivals of other world faiths, such as Islam and Judaism. They understand how religion has had a profound influence upon the life of men across the ages and are prepared to consider the effect that people's prejudices have upon the development of society.
- Pupils' very good writing skills in KS2 are very well applied to their work in religious education; they write prayers for a variety of purposes, showing sensitivity and respect for beliefs other than their own. Poems written on religious themes and on man's experience of war and conflict are reflective, profound and thoughtful, showing a maturity that is often striking. Their thoughts on the events of September 11th and on

possible American responses to them show concern for others and genuine care about the welfare of the victims. Some are anxious that the American response should be a morally justifiable one.

- There is good recognition of the contribution to humanity made by figures such as Martin Luther King and Mother Teresa. They are also very knowledgeable of the contribution made to Wales and the Welsh religious tradition by figures like Bishop William Morgan and Mary Jones.
- At the upper end of KS2, pupils hold very good quality discussions on what qualities would make a perfect world for them at Christmas. They recognise that the value of hope, love and sharing is greater than receiving presents, going to parties and having school holidays. They justify their views eloquently and record their conclusions well.
- Pupils develop their social, moral and cultural skills very well in KS2. They adapt these skills in practical ways through their behaviour, attitudes and responsibilities in the daily life of the school. They know the importance of carrying out school rules and have a strong awareness of the difference between right and wrong.
- Pupils are aware that people have the right to hold beliefs different from their own and that they are entitled to receive respect for their beliefs.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

There were six key issues for action identified in the previous report.

Develop approaches to raise standards of achievement in pupils' reading to match their needs and ability range and to encourage reading for different purposes

Standards of reading in early years, KS1 and KS2 are now judged to be good. Pupils read widely and for different purposes such as accessing the Internet for information.

Continue with the successful cross curricular initiatives across National Curriculum areas to ensure better consistency in the quality of pupils' work

There is ample evidence of cross-curricular links being continued in all subjects. These often enhance pupils' understanding of the subject in hand by being placed in a relevant context.

Extend and broaden provision for SEN pupils to secure more improvements in their language skills

All SEN pupils have equal and inclusive access to the curriculum suitable to their particular needs. They work with their peers developing their language skills according to guidance laid down in their IEPs and agreed between the teacher and SENCo. They often receive additional focussed support from support assistants and LEA support staff.

Develop the school development plan so that it includes medium and long-term objectives and provides for future curricular development, including references to their financial implications

The school development plan gives detailed guidance for the medium and future curricular development. There are some references to financial implications.

Develop a policy on assessment, recording and reporting, to ensure that it more directly informs the teaching and the learning

Assessment, recording and reporting are now accurate, consistent and informative. Pupils help set targets, which make them relevant and achievable.

Continue with the development of policies and schemes of work to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum

The school has produced appropriate policies and schemes of work which meet the requirements of the NC 2000.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The school needs to:

- raise standards of achievement in Welsh at KS2;
- develop and refine procedures for the marking of pupils' work to ensure consistency in practice across the school and for ensuring that pupils and their parents understand the next step forward in their learning;
- ensure that teachers' short-term planning consistently identifies learning objectives and that targets set are specified, stepped and measurable;
- continue to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators, to include all foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, to ensure that they have a clear overview of standards in their areas of responsibility;
- address the health and safety issues identified in the report.

The inspection team would like to thank the headteacher, staff, governors, parents and pupils of Forden Church-in-Wales Primary School for their kind hospitality, willing co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection period.

APPENDIX A

Basic Information about the School

Name of School	Forden Church-in-Wales Primary School
School Type	Voluntary
Age-Range of Pupils	3 - 11 years
Address of School	Forden Welshpool Powys
Post Code	SY21 8NE
Telephone Number	01938 580334

Headteacher	Mrs. Christine Robinson
Date of Appointment	September 1995
Chairman of Governors	Fr. Anthony Hirst
Registered Inspector	Mr. Phillip D. W. Edwards
Dates of Inspection	11th – 12th December, 2001

APPENDIX B

School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of Pupils in Each Year Group</i>									
Year Group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of Pupils	5	12	14	8	8	5	10	14	76

<i>Total Number of Teachers</i>			
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time Equivalent (fte)
Number of Teachers	4	0	4

<i>Staffing Information</i>	
Pupil : Teacher (fte) Ratio	19 : 1
Average Class Size	19
Teacher (fte) : Class Ratio	1 : 1

<i>Percentage Attendance for Three Complete Terms Prior to the Inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Term 1	96	96	94	95
Term 2	89	89.7	91.2	90
Term 3	93.1	92.8	90.2	92

Number of Pupils Excluded during Twelve Months prior to Inspection	0
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APPENDIX C

Results of National Curriculum Assessments

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2001	Number of pupils in Y2:
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	71%	In Wales:	81%

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2001	Number of pupils in Y6:
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 in was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included	

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:	100%	In the school:	100%
In Wales:	68%	In Wales:	68%

APPENDIX D

The Evidence Base of Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors over a period of two days.

- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governing body.
- 10 parents attended a meeting with two members of the inspection team.
- 20 questionnaire responses were analysed and summarised.
- All documentation submitted by the school was analysed and discussed, including the school development plan, policy and curriculum documents and teachers' planning files.
- Pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school and during the midday and other breaks.
- At various times during the day, inspectors took the opportunity to talk to pupils and to discuss their work.
- 50 lessons or part-lessons were observed.
- Pupils were heard reading and were examined in their knowledge and understanding of English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- A wide range of pupils' written and other work was examined in each class.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' work with class teachers and examined assessment records.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher, curriculum co-ordinators and other staff.
- The work of pupils with special educational needs was examined, including those in the SEN units.
- Minutes of meetings and documents relating to the financial management of the school were discussed.
- Budget figures were examined and discussed with the headteacher.
- Attendance and pupil records were inspected.
- Inspectors attended acts of collective worship.

APPENDIX E

Composition and Responsibilities of Inspection Team

Team Member	Subject Responsibilities	Aspect Responsibilities
Mr. Phillip Edwards	Provision for Children Under Five Science Welsh Information Technology Art Music Physical Education	Context Main Findings of the Report Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Behaviour and Attitudes Teaching Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs Leadership & Efficiency Progress Since Last Inspection Key Issues
Mrs. Anne Newman	English Mathematics Design and Technology History Geography Religious Education	Main Findings of the Report Assessment, Recording and Reporting Curriculum Quality of Self Evaluation and Planning for Improvement Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources Key Issues
Mr. Richard Thomas		Main Findings of the Report Attendance Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare Partnership with Parents and the Community, Schools and Other Institutions Partnership with Industry Key Issues