

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

***YSGOL FRONGOCH
RHYL ROAD
DENBIGH***

School Number: 663-2125

Date of Inspection: 7-10 June 2004

By

***MR M T RIDOUT
Registered Inspector***

Date: 26 July 2004

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

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

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

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

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

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

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

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

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1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Ysgol Frongoch is a community junior school, catering for boys and girls aged from seven to 11 years. There are 239 pupils on roll. The school is organised into eight mixed-ability classes, with two classes in each year group. The average class size is 30. There are nine full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers. Three learning support assistants (LSAs) enhance this provision.

The school is situated on the southern outskirts of Denbigh and shares a site with Ysgol Twm o'r Nant, a Welsh-medium primary school, and the Tŷ'n Fron residential unit, which is an annexe to Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn, a school catering for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The majority of pupils attending Ysgol Frongoch live in the town of Denbigh and a small number live further afield. The school states the majority (75 per cent) of households are relatively prosperous and a minority, (25 per cent) is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Seven per cent of the pupils access free school meals. This is well below local and national averages. There are a few pupils from ethnic minorities and in some cases, these pupils are learning English as an additional language. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language.

The school receives pupils from the full range of abilities. The results of the National Curriculum (NC) assessments at the end of Key Stage (KS) 1 show the vast majority of pupils enter the school with good levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science. Subsequent assessments confirm a significant number of pupils are relatively able and identifies 56 pupils (23 per cent) to have SEN. This is similar to the national picture. Six of these pupils have a statement of SEN.

The school's aims are published in the prospectus and appropriate targets are set for end of KS2 attainment. The school development plan (SDP) identifies plans to improve provision in most subjects and identifies a range of goals to improve whole-school systems, enhance learning resources and improve use of the building and grounds.

The school holds Investors in People accreditation, has attained the Basic Skills Quality Mark and was recently awarded the NAACE Quality Mark for its information and communications technology (ICT) provision.

The previous school inspection was in November 1998.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

This is a highly regarded school; its distinctive ethos and commitment to high standards, together with its energy and drive to improve further the quality of the education it provides ensures pupils receive a good range of learning experiences.

Educational standards achieved by pupils

- In the 54 lessons or parts of lessons observed, standards were judged to be very good in around 12 per cent, good in 57 per cent, satisfactory in 26 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent.
- The standards achieved in the subjects of the NC are:

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

- Progress across KS2 is at least satisfactory. In lower KS2, progress is good overall. In upper KS2, progress is satisfactory when learning is not well enough matched to pupils' needs and more able pupils are not able to fully extend their learning.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress in withdrawal groups and the small number of pupils learning English as an additional language make at least satisfactory progress.
- In 2003, the NC test results showed 77 per cent of pupils attained at least the nationally expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science. These results are well above national averages and close to the average for similar schools with between five and eight per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.
- The three-year average for pupils attaining expected levels in English, mathematics and science is 72 per cent.
- Pupils achieve good standards in speaking, listening reading, numeracy and using ICT across the curriculum. Their standards in writing are satisfactory.

The ethos of the school

- The school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This provision is a particular feature of the school.

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- The overall quality of pupils' behaviour is good. The majority is eager to learn and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of life in the school.
 - Pupils' attitudes to learning are good; particularly in the lower school. However, the older pupils' capacity to demonstrate self-discipline and exercise initiative, responsibility and independence in learning is not yet fully developed.
 - Attendance levels are satisfactory.

The quality of education

- Overall, teaching is good. In the 54 lessons, or parts of lessons observed, teaching was judged to be very good in around 12 per cent of lessons, good in 52 per cent, satisfactory in 31 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent.
- Taken overall, teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, high expectations of discipline and achievement, use a good range of teaching techniques and in most lessons the organisation of learning is managed well.
- There is however, variation in the quality of lesson planning. Although several teachers make effective use of day-to-day assessments against key learning objectives and adjust the work well to suit more and less able groups, this good practice is not sufficiently established across the school.
- The quality of the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress is satisfactory. The school is aware that the good practice established in assessing and analysing progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is not applied as rigorously to key skills or to the foundation subjects.
- The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The overall provision is generally effective in promoting good achievement but there are some shortcomings in implementing the curriculum, particularly in the upper school. There is sometimes a lack of balance between subjects and too little emphasis on pupils' research and investigative work.
- The school does not have a policy or whole-school strategy to promote the development of key skills.
- A good range of extra-curricular clubs, residential activities, educational visits and the very wide range of sporting opportunities, successfully promote high academic and social standards.
- The school offers good personal support and guidance to the pupils in its charge.
- The provision for pupils with SEN is good. This is an effective feature of the school.
- The school has a good partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions.
- The school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.

Management

- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. The objectives identified in the SDP are relevant, there is a clear focus on improving provision and subject action plans are being carefully implemented.
- However, monitoring strategies lack sufficient rigour to ensure appropriate consistency in professional practice.

- Leadership and efficiency are good. There is a clear sense of purpose and direction.
- The quality of leadership provided by governors, headteacher and senior staff is good and the role of curriculum co-ordinators is developing well.
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good.

School improvement

- The school has maintained overall standards since the last inspection and made satisfactory progress in resolving the key issues raised in 1998.
- The school is implementing updated schemes of work in geography, art, music and religious education. However, these are not always fully implemented and shortcomings remain in pupils' achievements in some classes.
- The work of subject co-ordinators has concentrated on developing provision. Although elements of monitoring have been undertaken, and pertinent issues identified, the school acknowledges the need to formalise its monitoring arrangements.
- The resources for science are sufficient and well organised but the evidence from lessons observed, and pupils' recording, indicates 'investigations' are often over-directed with pupils being 'told' rather than being asked to 'find out'.
- Although appropriate in-service training (INSET) was provided for teachers in using the school's assessment database, the use of assessment data by individual teachers to shape teaching, monitor progress and set individual targets for improvement is at an early stage.
- The school has worked hard, and with some success, to gain parents' co-operation in minimising the withdrawal of pupils in term time for domestic holidays.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Standards of achievement are good overall.

- In the 54 lessons or parts of lessons observed, standards were judged to be very good in around 12 per cent, good in 57 per cent, satisfactory in 26 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent.
- Progress across KS2 is at least satisfactory. In lower KS2, progress is good overall. In upper KS2, progress is satisfactory when the learning tasks are not well enough matched to pupils' needs and the rate of work slows. In discussion, more able pupils in Year (Y) 5 and Y6 indicate that they learn a great deal orally but in lessons they are not always enabled to use their skills to fully extend their learning.
- Pupils with SEN, often make good progress, especially where they receive additional support. The small number of pupils learning English as an additional language make at least satisfactory progress and communicate confidently.
- Standards are good in English, mathematics, and science, Welsh as a second language, information technology, history, music, art and physical education.
- Standards are satisfactory in design and technology, geography, and religious education.
- Results in the KS2 NC tests show a steady trend of improvement, particularly over the past four years. In 2003, the results showed 77 per cent of pupils attained at least the

nationally expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science and about one-third of pupils attained level 5. These results are well above national averages and close to the average for similar schools with between five and eight per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

- The three-year average for pupils attaining expected levels in English, mathematics and science is 72 per cent.
- Analysis of the school's NC results, on the basis of gender, indicates a fluctuating picture, although the difference between the performance of boys and girls is relatively small. The school meets or exceeds its end of key stage targets for attainment in English mathematics and science.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Pupils achieve good standards in speaking, listening reading, numeracy and using ICT across the curriculum. Their standards in writing are satisfactory.

- Pupils speak confidently and willingly in a range of subjects. Most speak clearly and their use of specific terminology is good. They listen carefully to their teacher's directions, and to each other, especially when working collaboratively in small groups.
- Pupils develop good skills in reading. They read fluently and with understanding. Pupils read a suitable range of texts to locate information and support their learning across a broad curriculum. In particular, pupils scan print on the computer screen competently.
- Pupils' writing across the curriculum is satisfactory. Although pupils are beginning to write in a variety of styles such as reporting and note taking, few write at sufficient length to develop ideas further.
- Pupils apply their numeracy skills well across the curriculum. They use their mathematical knowledge to measure, draw to scale, collect data and represent information in a variety of graphs in subjects such as science, design and technology, art, history and geography.
- Pupils use ICT very competently to reinforce literacy and numeracy skills and, to a lesser extent, to support graphic and research skills.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This provision is a particular feature of the school.

- Pupils take part in daily worship and regular whole-school Christian assemblies where prayers are spoken and the pupils are positively encouraged to reflect on their own values and the lives of others.
- Pupils visit local chapels and churches and a number of local clergy conduct services in the school, including Harvest and Christmas celebrations. The arrangements for daily worship comply with statutory requirements.
- Pupils have a good grasp of the difference between right and wrong and a well developed understanding of the purpose and need for rules in the school and in society generally.

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- Pupils' social skills with each other and with adults are, with very few exceptions, very positive and friendly. They are courteous and confident and have a sound sense of self-worth as a result of teachers' positive approach to teaching and learning.
 - Pupils are successfully encouraged to develop awareness of the needs of others. For example, they contribute willingly to a number of charities such as "Dr Barnardo's" and enjoy entertaining Senior Citizens in residential homes.
 - The recent implementation of the School Council and the use of Circle Time also successfully contribute to developing pupils' personal and social skills and confidence to question their own values and articulate their views.
 - Pupils work well in pairs and small groups perform confidently in front of mixed audiences, including adults and children, and compete successfully in a few sections of the *Urdd*.
 - The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is well established in the school and permeates the whole curriculum in most subjects. Pupils learn to appreciate the cultural traditions of Wales through their residential experiences at Glan Llyn, the *Urdd* camp, and visits to places of interest such as Llyn Alwen, Plas Newydd, Legacy and the theatre.
 - In geography and history, pupils compare and contrast their home town of Denbigh with Llandudno and study famous 'sons' of Denbigh such as the Myddleton brothers and H M Stanley.
 - Although pupils study the cultural traditions of Hinduism and Judaism in religious education and hear stories and sing songs from other countries in English and music, the multicultural aspect of their studies is at an early stage of development, particularly in geography and religious education.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The overall quality of pupils' behaviour is good. The majority is eager to learn and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. This makes a very significant contribution to the quality of life in the school.

- Pupils behave with increasing maturity and self-discipline both in and around the school. They show appropriate respect, courtesy and consideration towards others, including their teachers and adults visiting the school.
- Pupils have a good ability to sustain interest and concentration. In the lower school pupils have good levels of interest and motivation and they work diligently at their tasks. However, on occasions, such as assemblies, a significant number of mainly older pupils demonstrate a lack of self-discipline and are sometimes slow to settle and attend.
- During a number of lessons observed in the upper school, pupils became unsettled, talkative, and lost interest in the lesson. This was mainly in response to being asked to listen for lengthy periods. However, pupils' response improved once they were involved in making decisions, solving problems or working collaboratively on practical assignments.
- Taken overall, the impact of pupils' behaviour on their standards of achievement is good. The school has high expectations for good behaviour and pupils are clearly guided by a positive set of rules that encourages them to behave sensibly and to show respect for others. Rules are prominently displayed in classrooms and are well understood.

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- The school has a clear policy on behaviour that includes appropriate arrangements to prevent or deal with any incidents of bullying, discrimination or harassment. Rewards play an important part in encouraging good behaviour and pupils' good efforts and achievements are regularly rewarded and celebrated.
 - Positive strategies to promote good discipline and effort are unobtrusive as they are effectively implemented in a quiet and calm manner in most classes. Good use is made in 'Circle Time' in promoting positive attitudes to diversity and pupils are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour, to form opinions, to develop empathy with others and to recognise the consequences of their actions.
 - There have been no exclusions in the last year.

4.3 Attendance

Attendance levels are satisfactory.

- Attendance figures for the three terms prior to the inspection show an average attendance of 93.98 per cent. In the week prior to the inspection overall attendance was 94.5 per cent.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has worked diligently to resolve the problem of withdrawal of pupils for domestic holidays and have adopted suitable strategies to try to secure the co-operation of parents. Parents have responded well and good progress is evident in a marked reduction in the level of unauthorised absence, especially during the summer term.
- The school has not set a specific target to improve attendance but it regularly reminds parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. Expectations and procedures are clearly stated in the prospectus and the Home/School Agreement.
- Although the majority of pupils arrive punctually, a minority arrive late. This disrupts the start of morning school. Late arrivals and the reasons for lateness are systematically monitored through a 'late book'. During the school day, teachers ensure that lessons start and end on time.
- Registration is completed efficiently at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. The school's procedures for recording and monitoring absence are both effective and thorough, and comply with statutory requirements.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

Overall, teaching is good.

- In the 54 lessons, or parts of lessons observed, teaching was judged to be very good in around 12 per cent of lessons, good in 52 per cent, satisfactory in 31 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise in most subjects of the NC. The particular expertise of the SEN teacher has a positive impact on pupils' progress and in general, teaching is most consistent and effective in the lower school.

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- Lesson planning is appropriately guided by schemes of work and where teachers collaborate effectively to plan the content of lessons, and to develop the context and style of learning, the teaching is most effective.
 - Wide variations in the quality of lesson planning are evident in teachers' record books and in the lessons seen. The school is aware of these inconsistencies and has identified facets of effective practice, such as planning in detail the knowledge and skills to be taught in English and mathematics over a week.
 - This good practice is becoming more evident across the school.
 - Taken overall, teachers use a good range of teaching techniques and organisational strategies. In the most effective lessons explanations are clear and challenging questions are used well to ensure pupils think and develop their learning. Good examples of developing mathematical thinking were observed in Y3 and with the more able pupils in Y6, for instance.
 - The characteristics of good teaching observed include a lively pace, a rigorous lesson structure, precise teaching and differentiated group work so that pupils of different abilities make good progress and clear reference to the objectives of the lesson to consolidate learning.
 - Although all teachers have high expectations of both discipline and achievement, and in most lessons the organisation of learning is managed well, teaching is only satisfactory where a narrative style introduces the subject, the planning of the pupils' work is insufficiently rigorous and the lesson does not actively involve the pupils.
 - Across the school pupils seldom research topics in enough depth, make notes and write at sufficient length to express ideas and opinions and to further their knowledge.
 - Teachers regularly evaluate how lessons went, but at present, there is no system within planning to evaluate the progress of groups or individuals against the learning objectives. Although several teachers make effective use of day-to-day assessments and adjust the work well to suit more and less able groups, this good practice is not yet sufficiently established across the school.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The quality of the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress is satisfactory.

- Assessment of the progress of pupils in language and mathematics is rigorous, frequent and implemented consistently by staff.
- The achievement of pupils in these two subjects and science is well recorded in order to note progression through the school.
- Subject leaders are now able to study the trends in progress of all pupils in the school in order to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning. This has not yet impacted on the quality of planning in most subjects.
- The data collected from standardised tests are well used to identify and make provision for pupils with SEN. Information gleaned from assessment is also well used to recognise the most able pupils, and to organise mathematics sets in the upper school.
- Teachers do not analyse language data with sufficient rigour to inform planning for small groups or individual pupils.

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- Teachers do not consistently plan formally for assessment opportunities but lesson observations demonstrate that most teachers are continuously assessing pupils' progress informally and accurately. The school has recognised the need to formalise the assessment system to incorporate this good practice.
 - Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and positively but there is insufficient use made of setting individual targets, so that pupils know what they should do to improve their work.
 - There is satisfactory use of data analysis to enable the monitoring of equal opportunities in relation to gender.
 - In the lower school the system of 'traffic lights' is working well to alert pupils to the need for assessing their own progress. This has not yet influenced work in the upper school.
 - Pupils' progress is efficiently and sensibly recorded and tracked.
 - Pupils have record of achievement (RoA) files which illustrate their school achievements over time. These RoA files accompany from the infants school and are passed on to the high school at the end of KS2.
 - The annual written reports are satisfactory. Parents are told what has been studied and teachers comment on the pupils' progress in the subject. However, reports do not include comments on 'next steps' needed. The school has identified the lack of guidance in reports on how parents can support their children's learning and is developing an improved system. Nevertheless, the school holds three parents' evenings per year and there is a rota of open nights for discussion with parents about children's progress.
 - The staff is aware that the good practice established in assessing and analysing progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is not applied as rigorously to key skills across the curriculum or to the foundation subjects.

5.3 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The overall provision is generally effective in promoting good achievement but there are some shortcomings in implementing the curriculum, particularly in the upper school.

- The planned curriculum is broad. The school has recently undertaken a thorough review of its subject policies and schemes of work; as a result several subject schemes, such as those in information technology, geography and physical education are being implemented this academic year.
- Individual schemes of work provide appropriate progression. There is good emphasis on teaching English and mathematics but generally too few opportunities are developed to promote investigative skills across subjects, particularly in science.
- The content of schemes of work is well developed, particularly in the lower school, through the careful planning of a good range of relevant and challenging learning activities in most subjects. Good examples include a local study of Denbigh in Y4 and work about the Celts and Tudors in Y3 and Y4, which featured projects to develop pupils' design and technology skills.
- In the upper school, and particularly in Y6, too little emphasis is given to independent research and the systematic recording of work. Although there is an informal understanding about how much time should be given to each subject, the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' books clearly reflects a lack of balance and emphasis

between subjects, such as history geography and religious education. Furthermore, the short projects undertaken in design and technology limit opportunities to fully develop pupils' skills.

- The school does not have a policy or whole-school strategy to promote the development of key skills. The updating of schemes of work and current planning, particularly in the lower school, identifies opportunities to use ICT and to a lesser extent to develop literacy and numeracy skills.
- The regular provision of homework promotes good standards and teaching French in Y6 significantly enhances curricular provision. This is a successful and popular initiative. Furthermore, the good range of extra-curricular clubs, residential activities, educational visits and the very wide range of sporting opportunities, including competitive games promote high academic and social standards.
- The school is a socially inclusive community. Pupils have equality of access and opportunity in all school activities, except for those occasions, mainly in the upper school, when more able pupils lack opportunities to extend their learning.
- The curriculum includes a suitable emphasis on the environment and the need for sustainable development. This is most evident in the topics planned in geography.
- Although the school has not formalised its provision for personal and social education, the arrangements are effective and follow Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) guidelines. 'Circle Time' is well established, sex education and education in drug awareness, substance misuse and personal development, including personal safety and relationships are established elements of the curriculum. The recently established school council enables pupils to develop the concept of 'good' citizenship.
- There are no pupils for whom the NC curriculum is modified.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The school offers good personal support and guidance to the pupils in its charge.

- Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and provide sensitively for their personal needs.
- Pupils report that they feel safe and well supported in the school.
- The school lays strong emphasis on good behaviour and agreed values as well as their academic achievement.
- However, the marking of pupils' work is not always sufficiently rigorous or constructive to ensure best quality individual guidance on how a pupil can improve and achieve his or her potential.
- Child protection arrangements are firmly established and fully understood by all staff.
- Sex education is taught discretely with parents' consent.
- There is a good health and safety policy and procedures for promoting the well being, health and safety of pupils are in order. The school has carried out appropriate fire and general risk assessment procedures.
- Two members of staff have first-aid qualifications.

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- Any health or safety factors identified as requiring closer attention by the school were reported to the headteacher during the inspection.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

The provision for pupils with SEN is good. This is an effective feature of the school.

- The SEN co-ordinator (SENCo), who is a part-time (0.5) teacher, manages the organisation and teaching of withdrawal groups to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy particularly well.
- The policy and arrangements for SEN are in line with statutory guidance.
- The systematic assessment of pupils identifies 32 pupils who are supported at the school action stage of the SEN Code of Practice and 18 at the school action plus stage. There are six pupils with a statement of SEN.
- An appropriate list of pupils receiving SEN support is maintained and all pupils have well defined and relevant individual education plans (IEPs). The class teacher and SENCo write these plans and the recent use of ICT has streamlined this process.
- There is regular and effective liaison between the SENCo and class teachers. This enables the focus of support to be varied in line with pupils' needs.
- There are systematic arrangements for the review of IEPs and statements. Parents are kept fully informed and they are invited to contribute to reviews.
- There is good liaison with supporting professionals, including the educational psychologist.
- Pupils with a statement receive support appropriate to their needs. All pupils with SEN are well integrated in the school.
- In the lower school, good account is taken of individual targets in IEPs and the pupils are well supported in building on the work undertaken in withdrawal groups. However, the use of targets and ICT to enhance learning lacks consistency across the school.
- In a few cases, the SENCo provides support for learning within the class for particular pupils. The integration of SEN teaching is a positive development but the organisation of SEN sessions in half-hour units limits the impact of the SENCo's expertise in Y5 and Y6 mathematics lessons for example.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The school has a good partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions.

- The quality of information provided for parents is good. Regular letters, both formal and informal, keep parents well informed about important events and activities. Information is also made available on the school's easy-to-use website.
- The school prospectus is of a high standard, it is informative and well presented. The governors' annual report to parents is comprehensive in content and it is also clearly written and presented. Both documents comply fully with statutory requirements.

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- Parents are highly appreciative of the work achieved by the school, as shown in their positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and take full advantage of the opportunities provided each term to discuss the work and progress of their children.
 - An appropriate home-school agreement has been adopted which fully meets statutory requirements. This has received a positive response from parents.
 - Parents positively support and contribute to school life in a variety of ways. A small number regularly provides help with reading for example, and many lend support for extra-curricular activities and school visits.
 - The Parent Teachers' Association arranges a wide range of social and fundraising activities; substantial amounts of money are raised to provide the school with additional learning resources.
 - The school provides facilities and generates valuable income from a privately run after-school club based in the school. This is a popular provision that caters for pupils attending Ysgol Frongoch and other schools in the town.
 - The school plays an active part in the community; pupils benefit from participation in cultural events such as the Denbigh Festival and the Llangollen Eisteddfod. Such events positively enhance pupils' achievements, particularly in the performing arts. School presentations and special services are well attended both by parents and members of the local community. Pupils visit and entertain the elderly in various residential homes in the town.
 - School life is enriched by educational visits and by visitors to the school such as authors, potters and local residents. Pupils' horizons are also broadened by educational trips abroad, which contribute effectively to the school's life and work.
 - There are good links with the nearby infant school, Ysgol y Parc. The staff work closely and effectively together to ensure the transfer of pupils to the junior school is as smooth as possible. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the secondary school are also well established and meet the needs of pupils and parents well.
 - There is an effective partnership with the local education authority, with the school library service and the health and welfare agencies. For instance, curricular links with a nearby education centre enable pupils to undertake projects to enhance their skills in aspects of design and technology and ICT. Liaison between the primary schools in the town is well established and pupils from other schools sometimes use the ICT facilities at Ysgol Frongoch.
 - The school has an established and mutually beneficial partnership with an initial teacher-training university. It regularly receives students and a teacher is a trained mentor. In addition, the school provides work experience places for students from tertiary colleges and secondary schools.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

The school's partnership with industry is satisfactory. This is similar to the position found at the time of the last inspection.

- The school does not have a policy or formalised strategy to promote links with business; nevertheless it has developed some valuable links. For example, pupils' awareness of the world of work is extended by visits to local businesses and industries.

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- One teacher has participated in an industrial placement.
 - Members of the local community are invited to the school to speak about their work in relation to the school's termly themes. Educational visits, such as to a ceramics company and to centres such as Legacy, Techniquet and Lego in Wrexham, together with the contribution of visitors to the curriculum, help to raise pupils' awareness of technology both past and present.
 - Local businesses and national companies show their support for the school through financial contributions, sponsorship or goods. For example, an international company sponsors a sports' programme.
 - The school's partnership with industry makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' achievement and its curricular provision.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- The headteacher is successfully developing a collegiate approach to school improvement. The scope of self-evaluation is wide ranging and is effective in identifying the ‘big picture’ of strengths and weaknesses across the school.
- The evaluations of staff and governors helpfully inform the strategy for school improvement. This is succinctly and clearly set out in the SDP. The range and nature of objectives is wholly relevant to the needs of the school. There is a clear focus on improving provision.
- A key element in the school’s strategy for improvement is the subject action plan. This is being carefully implemented, such as in several subjects where lesson planning is being developed to implement revised schemes of work.
- Development planning is most effective in securing improvements to resources and materials. Managerial systems are being strengthened and the school is successful in exceeding its end of key stage targets.
- However, the implementation of monitoring strategies lacks sufficient rigour to help ensure appropriate consistency in professional practice and enable the school to clearly identify strategic whole-school priorities to guide the way forward and effect further improvement.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

Leadership and efficiency are good.

- Educational leadership successfully ensures a clear direction for the school’s work. The staff have a clear sense of purpose, they work as a strong committed team and are systematically developing provision, such as schemes of work, with the goal of improving standards further.
- Unforeseen circumstances have resulted in significant changes in personnel during this academic year. These changes have been very carefully managed and the headteacher has been particularly successful in reshaping the roles and responsibilities of senior staff and maintaining continuity in learning for those classes affected.
- The school has clearly defined aims and values that are positively reflected in its ethos. There is strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities. This is evident in the targeted support for pupils with SEN and ‘catch-up’ groups in literacy and numeracy. However, although strategies such as ‘setting’ are implemented to enhance achievement, enrichment or extension activities are not always fully developed for more able pupils.
- The quality of leadership provided by governors, headteacher and senior staff is good. The senior staff provide increasingly effective leadership in the upper and lower school.
- The roles and responsibilities of curriculum co-ordinators are developing well. Having focused on the review and improvement of provision, a positive start is being made in monitoring quality and standards across the school.

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- The school is well organised and in general efficient use is made of resources such as staff, money and time. However, the large upper ‘sets’ formed for mathematics in Y5 and Y6 result in over-crowded classes; these impose limitations on teaching.
 - The organisation of timetables sometimes results in an imbalance in the amount of time given to subjects. This is compounded by a lack of effective curricular monitoring. Furthermore, efficiency is reduced where teachers do not fully involve support staff and the SEN support teacher in the lesson.
 - Financial planning is closely linked to the school’s objectives and the arrangements for monitoring income and expenditure are secure.
 - The steps taken to ensure best value and evaluate the impact of key spending decisions, such as the development of the ICT suite and the provision of additional teaching in music, are well considered.
 - Day-to-day administration is efficient, effective and unobtrusive. Whole-school routines are well organised and efficient.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good.

- The school is well staffed, there being the equivalent of 9.5 full-time teachers, including the headteacher and two part time teachers. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. In addition, three LSAs contribute well to this provision, with a particular emphasis on supporting pupils with SEN.
- Members of the teaching and ancillary staff, such as midday supervisors, have job descriptions; those of teachers are less specific than those for non-teaching staff. However, there are no job descriptions for LSAs.
- The impact of induction, performance management and continuing professional development is satisfactory. Newly qualified teachers are well supported by designated mentors and all staff receive appropriate guidance through the staff handbook.
- Teachers have personal development files but the INSET provided does not effectively match individual teachers’ professional needs with those of the curriculum and the whole school, or those identified during the inspection.
- One senior teacher is pursuing an NPQH course.
- Performance management systems have been commenced with the headteacher but the process has not yet involved other staff. Because of the lack of formality in implementing performance management, deadlines for targets are not being set.
- The accommodation is ample for the pupils attending the school, but individual classrooms are small for the number of pupils in the classes, in particular the older pupils. This restricts movement, for example, development of role-play or practical activities such as in science, design and technology and art. Too little use is made of work areas alongside some classrooms. There is limited storage space.
- The school is carefully maintained and clean.
- Displays in classrooms and corridors are attractive and relevant to stimulate the learning of the pupils.

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- Parking space for buses and taxis at end of the school day is restricted but the headteacher is implementing an improved system to control traffic.
 - Overall, there are enough resources of good quality to ensure all pupils follow the NC fully. The computer suite is well thought of by staff and pupils alike, but its use for individual research is underdeveloped.
 - The library is being re-modelled and will be fully operational in September 2004. This, in turn, has affected opportunities for pupils to pursue individual investigations.
 - Conditions beyond the school's control limits development of the grounds as a pleasant outside area for pupils.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

English

Standards of achievement in English are good overall.

Standards are good in speaking, listening, and reading and satisfactory in writing.

Good features

- At least two thirds of the pupils are making good progress in speaking and listening.
- Those in the lower school listen carefully and have good recall of previous work. They are making good progress in interpreting arguments and marshalling their thoughts to produce clear, well-considered spoken answers. An example of this is Y3 pupils' dialogues based on their text "Bump in the Night".
- Pupils use and understand literacy terms confidently when discussing texts.
- All pupils make good progress, in relation to their ability, in reading. Most read aloud with competent expression and intonation. They have a good grasp of the setting, plot and characterisation of the texts they read. Pupils can predict how a story might end using both their knowledge and their imagination.
- Many pupils in Y4 and Y5 respond positively to the challenging work set for them, perceiving the differences between fact and opinion. Their dialogue work demonstrates correct script layout and imaginative development of the characters, stemming from the class novel "Charlotte's Web."
- Pupils have sound knowledge of various verse forms such as cinquains and haiku.
- In their work on "Bullies and Blacklegs", pupils in Y5 demonstrate mature understanding of the conflicts in the novel and sensitivity to the characters' responses.
- Some pupils read widely and give clear accounts of why they prefer certain books and authors. More able pupils in Y6 produce thoughtful work when deconstructing novels such as "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and "The Silver Sword".
- All pupils use the contents and index facilities correctly and know the difference between fiction and non-fiction.

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- Pupils in the lower school are making good progress in writing in a variety of styles such as diaries, reports, instructions, letters, persuasive writing, narratives and descriptions.
 - Most pupils, when given the opportunity, write creatively and are making sound progress in expressing their feelings in writing.
 - In Y5, pupils work well at text level, understanding dramatic conventions and script writing and adding relevant stage directions. Many pupils are beginning to write humorously and with less inhibition.
 - Many Y6 pupils analyse newspaper reporting and layout and know the differences between biography, autobiography, narrative and description.
 - The small number of pupils learning English as a second language make at least satisfactory progress. They are gaining in confidence in using the language, particularly in oral skills and their written work is developing steadily.

Shortcomings

- Although the pupils use draft books (though not all Y6), the finished work of over half of them shows careless spelling and punctuation.
- Older pupils, in particular the more able, do not write at sufficient length, depth or variety.

Mathematics

Standards of achievement in mathematics are good overall.

Good features

- In Y3, pupils are competent with addition and subtraction within 100 and enthusiastically calculate in multiples of two, three, 10 and 50, for example. They can double and treble numbers to 100 and most confidently recognise simple number patterns and relationships.
- The more able pupils understand place value, including hundreds, tens and units well; they round numbers to the nearest 10 and use their knowledge of number bonds and multiplication tables to aid their calculations.
- Pupils in Y4 have a good knowledge of the two, three, four, five and 10 times tables, they halve and double numbers to 100, have an appropriate understanding of place value to 1,000 and confidently sort numbers into sets of multiples of four and five for instance.
- Pupils have a developing understanding of fractions and mixed numbers. The majority record mixed numbers from diagrams accurately.
- In Y5, pupils develop a good knowledge of fractions, decimals and percentages, they estimate and measure accurately in centimetres and metres and use co-ordinates to plot shapes on a grid when investigating shapes. The majority use appropriate mathematical terms correctly and have a good knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes, including reflective symmetry.
- Pupils know how to calculate the area of irregular shapes in square centimetres and can identify lines of symmetry in repeating patterns.
- In Y6, pupils have a good understanding of areas and perimeters, and the different types of triangles. They successfully use a protractor to measure acute and obtuse angles to the nearest degree and calculate area and volume using appropriate formulae.

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- By the end of the key stage, the more able pupils have a good knowledge of number, such as multiplication patterns, they answer questions about graphs and charts well and have a good knowledge of the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages. These pupils use mathematical knowledge well to solve number problems mentally and they confidently explain their strategies.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings in pupils' knowledge of mathematics but in general pupils are sometimes slow to think mathematically, recognise alternative strategies and explain their strategies for calculations and problem solving.

Science

Standards of achievement in science are good overall.

Good features

- Pupils in Y3 confidently identify a range of common materials and clearly describe their properties using appropriate vocabulary including 'opaque', 'transparent' and 'translucent'. They successfully further their knowledge of forces by investigating magnets and springs, find out about the properties of fabrics such as waterproofing and observe the permeability of rocks and soils.
- Pupils name and understand the functions of teeth, distinguish between harmful and less harmful foods and have a sound understanding of the link between plaque and decay. They can name a variety of light sources and know how shadows and reflections are formed.
- In Y4, pupils successfully further their knowledge of friction through structured investigations, such as measuring the force needed to move an object on different surfaces. They record their results carefully and present their findings in a graph using ICT.
- Pupils group living things and know how to construct and use a branching key. They are knowledgeable about electricity when describing a circuit and distinguishing between conductors and insulators. Pupils have a developing knowledge of the human skeleton.
- Pupils in Y5 identify the properties of a variety of liquids and solids. They know that some materials have several properties and that heating and cooling can change materials. They observe changes relating to temperature such as ice melting and know that some changes are reversible and others are irreversible.
- Pupils have a developing knowledge of life cycles, can name the parts of a plant and through investigating the growth of beans, they identify the conditions for germination and healthy plant growth. They have a good knowledge of the characteristics of healthy living; they understand the effect of exercise on pulse rate and have a developing knowledge of the major organs and structures of the human body.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good knowledge of life cycles, habitats and food chains. Their knowledge of materials and physical processes is developing well and the more able pupils use a good range of scientific terms correctly.
- Across the key stage, when given the opportunity, pupils collaborate effectively and show a good capacity to plan investigations. They make predictions based on prior knowledge, systematically carry out tests and learn the need for accurate and reliable data.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings in pupils' knowledge of science but their skills in planning a scientific inquiry, presenting the results and drawing conclusions are not always fully developed, particularly in Y6. Furthermore, pupils in Y6 do not record their work sufficiently in science.

Welsh second language

Standards of achievement in Welsh as a second language are good.

Good features

- Pupils are confident in using Welsh for incidental greetings and performing in front of the school and in school concerts.
- They take their duties as *Helpwr Heddiw* (a pupil chosen each day to undertake many responsibilities) seriously. This enables pupils to develop good levels of self-confidence in speaking.
- Pupils respond positively to the good quality of Welsh spoken by most teachers. They listen attentively and, consequently, they have good pronunciation and intonation.
- They are acquiring a satisfactory range of vocabulary, everyday phrases and sentence patterns in asking for and giving personal details, understanding and giving directions and expressing likes and dislikes.
- Pupils in the lower school act out their own telephone dialogues in a lively manner, and role-play a shopkeeper and customer conversation fluently.
- In Y5, pupils translate increasingly complex sentences accurately. They can count well beyond 20 in Welsh, and know the vocabulary for a range of colours, weather conditions, the days of the week, the seasons, and articles of clothing.
- Most can read familiar and simple new words and sentences accurately. They make good progress in writing complete sentences and confidently read and write postcards using the concise form of relevant verbs.

Shortcomings

- Many pupils in Y6 are not making sufficient progress in speaking, reading and writing.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement in design and technology are satisfactory.

No lessons in design and technology took place during the inspection. Evidence is drawn from finished products, photographic evidence, examination of teachers' plans and pupils' recording, and discussion with pupils. In the upper school, pupils benefit from attending a technology centre to undertake specific projects.

Good features

- In Y3, pupils confidently describe choosing materials and how they made models of houses and jewellery, linked to their study of Celtic times. They know materials can be joined in different ways and their recording clearly demonstrates a developing knowledge of the construction of packaging.
- Pupils in Y4 successfully incorporate electrical circuits into a board game and use information technology to design the logos. They further their knowledge of structures through making models of Tudor houses and confidently describe the stages of joining the wooden frames.
- In the lower school, pupils record their designs, have a developing knowledge of the designing and making process and make appropriate evaluations of their products.

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- In Y5, pupils make well-finished models of moving toys, including a cam, and models of musical instruments. They gain skills in using specialist tools and knowledge of joining materials, such as in the structure of stringed instruments
 - Pupils in Y6 further their knowledge of structures. They recall designing bridges and have a basic understanding of the use of ICT to control a model vehicle, and to measure changes such as temperature.

Shortcomings

- In discussion, pupils in the upper school indicate they have a limited understanding of the designing and making process. They have little awareness of the need to select appropriate materials, review and modify designs against a specification, investigate products and to consider the needs of the customer or user when developing a design.
- Across the key stage, pupils seldom use ICT at the design-making stage and their skills in working with textiles and food technology are underdeveloped.

Information technology

Standards of achievement in information technology are good overall.

Although most classes were observed working in the computer suite, little direct teaching of information technology took place. Evidence is based on the lessons observed, a review of teachers' planning, pupils' electronic files and information from discussions with pupils.

Good features

- Across the school, pupils have well-developed keyboard skills, they skilfully manipulate the mouse to control events and acquire good levels of competence in operating a range of programs. Pupils confidently use tool bars, menus and editing techniques and know how to save, retrieve and print their work.
- In Y3, pupils know how to combine text and graphics and there are good examples of the use of data handling where they have produced graphs in science and geography. Records and displays indicate pupils successfully input instructions to a simulation program to create shapes and they are currently learning to use e-mail.
- Pupils in Y4 confidently describe how they use the editing functions of a word processing program. They confidently manipulate text and graphics, for example when creating a branching key or database in science and profiles in history. Pupils also improve their skills in presenting information based on data collected in a study of the High Street in Denbigh.
- In Y5, pupils build appropriately on their skills with text and graphics. They demonstrate good skills in manipulating text and graphics for instance, when creating posters linked to work in geography and science.
- Pupils in Y6 know how to navigate selected websites. They scroll through information, clearly describe operations such as 'cut and paste' and know how to add a web address to the 'favourites' menu. Pupils explain how they construct a simple slide sequence to present information and recall their work in a newspaper project.

Shortcomings

- In upper KS2, pupils' competence in using data handling and modelling programs is less well developed than their skills in working with text and graphics. Discussion with pupils

indicates their knowledge of the features of spreadsheets and multi-media programs is at an early stage.

History

Standards of achievement in history are good overall.

It was only possible to observe a small number of lessons in history during the inspection. Standards are judged on the evidence of planning and records, pupils' previous work and discussions with them.

Good features

- Pupils develop a sense of chronology by looking at changes in their own, and in their family's lives through an extended topic about 'Houses and Households'.
- Many pupils have clear knowledge and understanding of the past and how it has influenced their own lives. For example, they understand the contribution made by important Welsh figures to British history.
- In Y3, pupils are knowledgeable about the Celts and have good understanding of why they settled in Wales and their ways of life. They also demonstrate intelligent problem solving skills when interpreting information on the Roman invasion and its effect on the Celts as well as more long-term influences.
- In Y4, pupils have produced work of a high standard on Henry VIII and Tudor life in general. They contrast the homes and life-styles of the rich and poor in Tudor times and the present day and are beginning to use the historical skills of enquiry and comparison well.
- Pupils in Y5 study the Victorian and Edwardian periods with particular focus on extending their knowledge and understanding of the differences between sections of society and between then and now. Their work on the conflict between employer and employees based on Penrhyn Castle shows mature involvement with the topic and people's responses.
- Pupils have good understanding of the effect inventions of the Edwardian era have had on modern life.
- Discussion with some pupils in Y6 indicates that many have a detailed recall of a very narrow aspect of the Second World War and that they are making satisfactory progress in understanding cause and effect and the difference between secondary and primary sources.

Shortcomings

- The good progress made in the lower years is not consolidated in Y6 because pupils do not record their work sufficiently.

Geography

Standards of achievement in geography are satisfactory overall.

It was only possible to observe a small number of lessons in geography during the inspection. Standards are judged on the evidence of pupils' previous work and discussions with them.

Good features

- In Y3, pupils confidently distinguish between physical and human features in the local environment. They identify features on maps of the school and the town, demonstrate developing understanding of how to use a key and interpret map references and they can

identify hot and cold weather regions on a world map and name several countries in Europe.

- Pupils in Y4 develop their mapping skills appropriately through drawing clearly annotated maps of their journey to school and develop the skills of geographical enquiry well when considering whether the town centre should be closed to traffic. They successfully collect data and form opinions about the local environment.
- In Y5, pupils can name and locate rivers such as the Severn on a map. They understand terms such as ‘source’, ‘erosion’ and ‘estuary’ and can describe the process of silting in an estuary.
- Pupils satisfactorily develop map skills, gather information about the features of Llandudno and make comparisons with Denbigh and they form opinions through considering a range of views about the impact of the neighbouring housing development.
- In Y6, pupils can describe the impact of a bypass scheme, name coastal features and describe physical processes such as erosion. They have a basic knowledge of the features of a mountain environment.

Shortcomings

- In the upper school, pupils’ work and discussions with them indicate their enquiry skills and ability to interpret information sources and use a wide range of geographical vocabulary are limited.
- Pupils’ knowledge of land use, physical processes and the influence of climate on human activity is underdeveloped, their knowledge of developing countries is limited and their skills in interpreting maps are insufficiently developed.

Art

Standards of achievement in art are good overall.

Good features

- Pupils use sketchbooks effectively throughout the school; consequently they make very good progress in observational drawing.
- In Y3, pupils have a very good understanding of human and natural patterns and have produced good rubbings of examples of each. For example, they look closely at patterns on an Indian throw and emulate their own choice of patterns well.
- Pupils simplify their drawings of their ‘special object’ and successfully produce a monoprint using a wide variety of media.
- In Y4, pupils make good progress in applying shade and tone to their drawings. They look carefully at composition and symbolism in Tudor art and use what they have learned well to create their own collage of what is important to them. In this work, they utilise an interesting range of materials to produce detailed picture portraits.
- As a result of their visit to Plas Newydd pupils in Y5 make well-considered leaf sculptures that are carefully sewn, and produce some very detailed drawings with good use of perspective.
- They study the flower work of Matisse and Van Gogh and, using thoughtful contrasting colours, produce their own pictures and carefully structured paper models of flowers.

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- In Y6, pupils have good understanding of the art of Hundertwasser; many produce good work of their own based on the local abbey ruins, employing similar techniques but adding their individual options, for example, string prints, and their own selections of materials.
 - Throughout the school pupils are keen to improve their work, they take pride in the finished product and illustrate their work in other subject areas well, including the use of computer graphics in some instances.

Shortcomings

- Although pupils make satisfactory progress in three-dimensional art and textile work, the range of work is limited.

Music

Standards of achievement in music are good overall.

Good features

- Pupils sing in tune, with energy and maintain the tempo well. They perform confidently without self-consciousness.
- In the lower school, pupils listen attentively to recorded music and discuss at length the effects of the techniques in a piece called 'A Rainy Day'. They recognise a slow start, crescendo and describe how the music falls away.
- Pupils work constructively in pairs to change both volume and speed when attempting to re-create a mood. They clap in rhythm accurately with a variety of music.
- Pupils know and understand a fairly broad range of musical terms that they use frequently and accurately. A good example of this is in Y4 when pupils appraise the texture and pulse of a piece.
- All pupils in Y3 and Y4 learn to play the recorder. They keep good time and most can read a number of notes and simple time signatures correctly.
- Within their topic on the Tudors, these pupils recognise a madrigal and are articulate on what they like or dislike about it.
- Pupils in Y5 compose their own response to 'The Caravan' and succeed in creating the effects well by playing pitched and non-tuned percussion, a piano and recorders. They understand and play ostinati and drones correctly.
- Pupils play carefully as an ensemble and many pupils can maintain their line in two-part singing.
- In Y6, pupils listen carefully to recorded music and deduce its relevance to their work on evacuees in history and to their novel on refugees in English.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not record their work in music.
- Pupils in Y6 make too little progress in composition and appraising a wide repertoire of music to sufficiently expand their appreciation of music from different cultures.

Physical education

Standards of achievement in physical education are good overall.

Although no lessons in gymnastics or dance took place during the inspection, evidence is drawn from records of the school's sporting achievements. Furthermore, the scheme of work for physical education provides full coverage of the NC programmes of study. This provision includes swimming instruction, residential opportunities for adventurous outdoor activities and very good opportunities for competitive sports. Participation in team games and the good range of sports clubs available to pupils has a very positive impact of the standards they achieve.

Good features

- Across the key stage, pupils have a good understanding of the need to 'warm up' groups of muscles before exercise and to 'cool down' afterwards. They understand the impact of exercise on the human body and know that regular exercise contributes to a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils in Y3 demonstrate good control of movement when participating in a variety of warm-up exercises, including skipping, hopping and jumping. They listen and obey instructions and show good hand-eye co-ordination when practicing the shot put.
- In Y4, pupils concentrate and persevere particularly well to improve their tennis skills. They observe and evaluate the work of others and carefully follow instructions.
- In Y5, pupils observe the demonstration of the skills of rounders and the majority bowl and receive appropriately. Pupils demonstrate a competitive spirit and a sense of fair play in team games. When practicing athletic skills they satisfactorily improve their technique for exchanging the baton in a relay race.
- In response to questions, pupils in Y6 demonstrate a secure knowledge of the fielding and batting skills associated with team games, including rounders and cricket.
- By the end of the key stage, the vast majority of pupils can swim at least the expected 25 metres.

Shortcomings

- In the upper school, pupils are sometimes slow to follow instructions and lack commitment to practice and refine their skills.

Religious education

Standards of achievement in religious education are satisfactory overall.

Good features

- In the lower school pupils express their feelings as new members of their school, describe their family and their friends and explain why they themselves are special.
- They look at Hindu symbols and create a collage of what symbolises the best in their own lives.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of stories from the New Testament including the miracle of the wedding at Canaan, the story of Bartimeus and they sensitively apply the meaning of these stories to their own communities.

- They study the lives of famous people who have made significant contributions to the world and know about the role of special books, such as the Bible, play in religious thinking.
- Having analysed the story of ‘The Good Samaritan’ pupils play the ‘moral dilemma’ game sensibly and debate, in small groups, how they would deal with various issues relevant to their lives. They have a good understanding of a ‘parable’.
- In the upper school, pupils study characters of the Old Testament including Moses, Noah and Joseph and aspects of Judaism. They understand the Ten Commandments and make a satisfactory list of their own rules for today’s society.

Shortcomings

- Pupils have limited knowledge of religious practices, places of worship and the lives of children growing up in different faith communities.
- Pupils in the upper school study religious education at too superficial a level. Their work is limited in scope and they do not sufficiently build upon information retrieval skills or study religious artefacts.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The school has maintained overall standards since the last inspection and made satisfactory progress in resolving the key issues raised by the previous inspection.

The five key issues are shown in bold type below:

- **address shortcomings in subjects in which pupils achieve satisfactory standards such as geography, art, music and religious education;**

The school is implementing recently updated schemes of work in these subjects. This is having a positive impact on standards, particularly in the lower school. However, schemes of work are not always fully implemented and shortcomings remain in pupils’ achievements in some classes.

- **further develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring their subject;**

Since the appointment of the present headteacher the work of subject co-ordinators has concentrated on developing provision. Although elements of monitoring have been undertaken and pertinent issues identified, the school acknowledges the need to formalise its monitoring arrangements to help secure greater consistency in teaching and learning.

- **provide more support for teaching the practical investigative aspects of science in Y5/Y6;**

The resources for science are sufficient and well organised. The subject co-ordinator has undertaken significant professional training and the science scheme of work has been re-written. Training for the whole staff in teaching the practical and investigative aspects of science is planned next term but the evidence from lessons observed, and pupils’ recording, indicates activities are often over-directed with pupils being ‘told’ rather than being asked to ‘find out’.

- **provide teachers with INSET on accessing the computer database for target setting and monitoring pupils’ progress;**

Appropriate INSET was provided for teachers. The database is used well to inform end of key stage target setting, setting in mathematics and to target provision for slow learners. However, the use of assessment data by individual teachers to shape teaching, monitor progress and set individual targets for improvement is at an early stage.

- **take steps to secure the fullest possible support from parents to minimise the withdrawal of pupils for domestic holidays;**

The school has worked hard, and with some success, to gain parents' co-operation in this matter. The level of unauthorised absence is now minimal and the drop in attendance for the summer term is much less pronounced. Nevertheless, overall levels of attendance are now below the figures for 1997/98.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

In order to raise standards and further improve the quality of education, the school and the governing body, with the support of appropriate agencies, should build on the strategies identified in the SDP to:

- continue to raise standards in design and technology, geography and religious education;
- improve standards of writing across the curriculum;
- improve the consistency of teaching and learning, particularly in upper KS2, and give particular attention to:
 - developing pupils' independence and their enquiry and research skills;
 - strengthening lesson planning to identify progression in the learning objectives;
 - using assessment data and day-to-day assessments to shape the content of lessons for pupils of different abilities;
- continue to develop and refine schemes of work, with particular emphasis on whole-school planning for the development of key skills, and ensuring appropriate balance is maintained across the curriculum;
- implement systematic and rigorous monitoring that is linked to key whole-school priorities.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Ysgol Frongoch
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	7 – 11 years
Address of school	Rhyl Road Denbigh Denbighshire
Post-Code	LL16 3DP
Telephone Number	01745 812410

Headteacher	Mr Gareth Davies
Date of appointment	1st January 2002
Chair of Governors	Mr Colin Hughes
Registered Inspector	Mr Michael T Ridout
Dates of inspection	7–10 June 2004

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>					
Year group	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	57	60	59	63	239

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	9	2	9.5

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	25.2 : 1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	29.9
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.188 : 1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>		
	KS2	Whole school
Summer 2003	93.23	93.23
Autumn 2003	94.48	94.48
Spring 2004	94.23	94.23

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

END OF KS2: 2003

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2003			Number of pupils in Y6: 53									
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5
<i>English</i>	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	11	51	36
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	42	47
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	5	12	38	40
<i>Mathematics</i>	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	23	47	28
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	46	30
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15	43	40
		National	0	2	1	0	0	0	4	18	42	33
<i>Science</i>	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	9	57	32
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	62	30
		National	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	9	48	39

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	72	In the school:	77
In Wales:	70	In Wales:	71

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

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

- The inspection team consisted of three inspectors who worked for 10 inspector days (over four days) gathering first-hand evidence. In total, 54 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. Inspectors observed classes and evaluated the pupils' work.
- Inspectors attended registration sessions and school assemblies and observed break times. All teachers were observed teaching several times. Discussions were held with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, representatives of the governing body, parents and others both during the inspection and initial inspection visits.
- All the available work and records of a representative sample of at least three pupils from each class, plus the work of a sample of pupils with SEN were scrutinised. A representative number of pupils were heard to read both formally and informally. Discussions were held with groups and individual pupils to ascertain their views about the school and their knowledge in subjects including Welsh, design and technology, information technology, history, geography and religious education.
- A large amount of documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection.
- The registered inspector held a meeting attended by six parents before the inspection and considered 63 parents' responses to a questionnaire.

- No lessons in design and technology took place during the inspection. Few lessons in history and geography were observed and only a narrow range of work was observed in physical education. Pupils were observed using the information technology suite but little direct teaching of information technology took place.
- At the end of the inspection the main findings of the inspection were discussed with the senior staff. A short time after the inspection, meetings were held with staff and governors to report the findings of the inspection.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr M T Ridout	Rgl	The school and its priorities; main findings of the inspection; standards in subjects and areas of learning; teaching; curriculum; provision for pupils with SEN; quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement; leadership and efficiency; progress since the last inspection.	Mathematics; science; design and technology; information technology; geography; physical education.
Mrs M Meredith-Jones	Team	Standards in key skills; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; assessment recording and reporting; support, guidance and pupils' welfare; staffing, accommodation and learning resources.	English; Welsh as a second language; history; art; music; religious education.
Miss E Edwards	Lay	Behaviour and attitudes; attendance; partnership with parents, the community, schools and other institutions; partnership with industry.	

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