

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

**GARTH PRIMARY SCHOOL
MISSION ROAD
GARTH
MAESTEG
CF34 0ND**

SCHOOL NUMBER: 672 / 2129

DATE OF INSPECTION: 4TH - 6TH NOVEMBER 2002

BY

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REGISTERED INSPECTOR: W0 87 / 16248

DATE: 23 DECEMBER 2002

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: C/T/05/02P

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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:

	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; 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 shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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PART 2: THE INSPECTION SCHEDULE

1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

The school is located in the small village of Garth, some two miles to the south of Maesteg. It occupies a spacious site and comprises of two separate buildings for infant and junior aged pupils. Both buildings date from the 1970's and the designated primary school resulted from the amalgamation, in 1994, of the former infant and junior schools.

There are 255 pupils on roll of whom 30 attend the nursery. Children initially attend the nursery on a part time basis but from November attend full time. The number attending the school has remained relatively stable over the last few years. Most pupils come from the immediate vicinity of the school and the school describes its intake as comprising the full range of ability and being neither particularly advantaged nor disadvantaged. The school has identified 53 pupils (21%) as having special educational needs, (SEN). In keeping with the Local Education Authority policy none has a statement of special educational needs. Sixty-six pupils (26%) are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals. English is the language spoken at home by virtually all pupils and none speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard.

The aims of the school, as detailed in the School Development Plan (SDP), are to create a happy, caring environment where children can take advantage of the best facilities available to enable them to make the most of their abilities.

The school was previously inspected in July 1997 and has successfully addressed the key issues highlighted in the report.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

This is a good school with some very good features. Relationships are very good and the school has a warm caring ethos. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good and they are supported well by their teachers and all non-teaching staff. It is an improving school and standards have recently been raised substantially under the very good leadership of the headteacher.

- The educational provision for the early years is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. All children make good progress. Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows.

Areas of Learning	Standards
Language, literature and communications skills.	Good
Personal and social development	Good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the World	Good
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Good

- Standards in the National Curriculum (NC) subjects and religious education are as follows.

Subjects	KS1	KS2
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Good	Good
Welsh, second language.	Good	Satisfactory
Design & Technology	Good	Satisfactory
Information Technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Music	Good	Good
Art	Good	Good
Physical education	Good	Very good
Religious education	Good	Good

- The standards of achievement reflect the progress pupils make. It is consistently good in KS1 but more variable in KS2. However, progress by the end of the key stage is always at least satisfactory in KS2 and good in English, science, information technology, history, geography, music art and religious education. Pupils make very good progress in physical education.
- Standards of achievement in KS1 are always at least good and very good in 9% of lessons. Standards of achievement in KS2 are very good in 8% of lessons, good in 28%, satisfactory in 52% and unsatisfactory in the remaining 12% of lessons.
- The school's NC assessment results show a significant improvement over the last three years. The results of teachers' assessment (2002) at the end of KS1 indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with National and local results. They are also about average for similar schools in Wales, based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The NC assessment (2002) results in English and science in KS2 are well above National and local results and well above those for similar schools in Wales. The results in mathematics, however, are below National and local levels and those for similar schools in Wales and this consequently lowers the total number of pupils at the school achieving level 4 in the three core subjects.
- Overall pupils' standards in the key skills of listening, speaking and reading are good. Skills of writing are satisfactory. There is too little evidence of extended writing across the curriculum and too much of the work is based on the completion of worksheets. Pupils' information and communications technology (ICT) skills are good and used well to support their learning. Pupils' numeracy skills are variable but satisfactory overall. These skills are used well in some classes but only used incidentally in others. There is no whole

school policy plan in place for the development of key skills across the curriculum.

- The school's provision for pupils with SEN is good. Effective procedures are in place for the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties and these pupils are supported well in class and during small group withdrawal sessions.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 92% of lessons. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good in approximately 16% of lessons, good in 56%, satisfactory in 20% and unsatisfactory in 8% of lessons. The quality of teaching in the early years classes is always good. The quality of teaching in KS1 is good in about 70% of lessons and very good in the others. The quality of teaching in KS2 is more variable with some unsatisfactory teaching. However it is always good and often very good in Y6.
- The overall quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good with some very good aspects. Pupils' progress is very effectively tracked throughout the school and challenging but realistic targets for improvement are set. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is good, homework is set regularly and has a positive impact on standards. Reports to parents are good and comply fully with statutory requirements.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. The curriculum for the early years children is good. These children experience a rich and varied curriculum based on the six areas of learning. The curriculum for pupils in KS1 is very good and tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. The curriculum for pupils in KS2 is of a good quality overall and generally prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and very good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils behave very well and respect each other, their teachers and all other adults in the school. Relationships are very good and well sustained within the school's warm, caring ethos. Lunchtimes are harmonious social occasions when pupils socialise in small groups. Older pupils look for opportunities to exercise initiative. Acts of collective worship are an integral part of school life and pupils are well aware of those less fortunate than themselves.
- The culture and heritage of Wales and Y Cwircwlwm Cymreig is enhanced through the curriculum, visits to the locality and further afield and through school events, such as the St. David's Day eisteddfod. Pupils also have a good understanding of other cultures and are tolerant of different points of view and opinions.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good and a major strength of the school. Staff have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and these are very largely met. The high standard of behaviour and self-discipline has a very positive effect on the quality of learning in classes and the standards pupils achieve.
- The provision made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is very good. The school is a caring, supportive community and all staff, including the non-teaching staff, give a great deal of attention to ensuring pupils' wellbeing.
- Pupils' attendance is satisfactory but punctuality, particularly during wet days, remains a problem for the school.

- The quality of the school's self-evaluation procedures and planning for improvement is very good. The SDP provides a clear direction for the work of the school. It is a useful working document and details how improvements are to be undertaken, as well as success criteria. The school's self-critical culture is an integral part of the processes adopted for improvement and has resulted in the substantial raising of standards recently.
- The quality of leadership is very good and the school is efficiently managed. The headteacher provides the school with very good professional leadership and is supported very well by the deputy head and the staff, including the non-teaching staff. The governing body (GB) is actively involved in the self-evaluation processes and in prioritising objectives for the school. Individual governor expertise is well used. Curriculum co-ordinators carry out their responsibilities efficiently.
- The school is appropriately staffed and resourced. The generous adult-pupil ratio and the active support of all non-teaching staff makes a very worthwhile contribution to pupils' learning. Routine administration is undertaken efficiently by the school administrative officer and the day-to-day running of the school is carried out with the minimum disruption to teaching.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

- The educational provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children in both the nursery and reception classes make good progress.
- Pupils' standards of achievement in KS1 are good in all the NC subjects and religious education.
- Standards of achievement in KS2 are more variable. In the core subjects, standards in English and science are good. Standards overall are satisfactory in mathematics, where pupils' progress is adversely affected by insufficient emphasis being given to suitably differentiated and challenging work in the early part of the key stage. Standards are good in information technology, geography, history, music, art and religious education. Standards are satisfactory in Welsh second language and design and technology. Standards are very good in physical education.
- In KS1 standards are always at least good, and very good in 9% of lessons. In KS2 standards are very good in 8% of lessons, good in 28%, satisfactory in 52% and unsatisfactory in the remaining 12% of lessons.
- The school's NC assessment results show a significant improvement over the last three years. The results of teachers' assessment (2002) at the end of KS1 indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with National and local results. They are also about average for similar schools in Wales, based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The NC assessment (2002) results in English and science in KS2 are well above National and local results and well above those for similar schools in Wales. The results in mathematics are below National and local levels and those for similar schools in Wales and this consequently lowers the total number of pupils at the school achieving level 4 in the three core subjects.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Standards in key skills across the curriculum are good overall.

- Standards in key skills in the early years are consistently good. There is a very good adult to child ratio and consequently children have very good opportunities to listen to, and speak with, adults. Most children engage readily in conversation and many can speak confidently in front of the whole class. They are beginning to recognise and use number and to use computers with the support of an adult.
- Pupils' listening skills in both key stages are good and often very good, particularly in those lessons where teaching is good and pupils are well motivated.
- Most pupils in both key stages talk confidently about their work and experiences, although a minority of younger pupils lack self-confidence and are more reticent, particularly to speak aloud to the class. Standards of reading are also good and most pupils report that they read regularly for pleasure and to find information.
- Pupils' writing skills across the curriculum are generally satisfactory but there is little evidence of extended writing in subjects other than English. There is an over emphasis on the use of worksheets that require only short answers and this adversely affects pupils' ability to develop their writing skills.
- Pupils in KS1 have a good Welsh vocabulary relative to their age and speak confidently. They are beginning to write simple words and phrases and, several, show good speaking and writing skills. However, the good progress evident in KS1 is not maintained through KS2 and, overall, pupils' speaking, writing and reading skills are satisfactory in this key stage.
- Pupils, in both key stages, use their developing numeracy skills in subjects such as science and geography in KS1 and Y6, but opportunities across the curriculum tend to be incidental rather than planned in other classes. Standards overall are satisfactory.
- Pupils make regular and frequent use of their developing ICT skills in virtually all subjects. Younger pupils are well supported by adults and all pupils receive help and support when necessary, as for example in being taught new skills, such as the use of spreadsheets. This is an example of good practice and individual expertise being developed well. Overall, pupils have good ICT skills.
- The school recognises that it does not have a whole school plan for the development of key skills.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good, their social development is very good. Pupils' response to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

- Pupils have well-established patterns of behaviour based on an awareness and understanding of accepted values and respect for themselves and others in the school community. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to explore their own views and that of others through classroom discussion. Older pupils understand that differences of opinion exist within their community.
- Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and are an integral part of the school day. They are suitably reverent occasions and incorporate suitable opportunities for reflection. Pupils sing enthusiastically and participate in the school prayer.
- All pupils know and understand the difference between right and wrong and act accordingly. They are well aware of the consequences of their actions and older pupils, in particular, respect others' needs and feelings. Moral issues are explored in school assemblies and in circle time. Pupils support a wide range of charities and learn about people less fortunate than themselves.
- All pupils have very well developed social skills and all individuals, including all adults and pupils in the school, relate very positively to each other. Pupils work together very effectively and share views and opinions in class and during break times. Lunch is a harmonious social occasion when pupils interact positively. Older pupils look for opportunities to exercise initiative and are particularly observant of the needs of younger pupils.
- The curriculum, and the good range of extra-curricular visits, provide pupils with a good understanding of their own culture and traditions as well as that of other countries and societies. Pupils are well aware of social differences, racism and prejudice, that can exist in the wider community but within the school appreciate cultural diversity and act accordingly.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

Standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good and a major strength of the school.

- The high standards of behaviour and self-discipline shown by pupils have a very positive effect on the quality of learning in class and the standards that are achieved.
- Pupils settle down quickly in class, follow instructions and sustain concentration for extended periods of time. They co-operate well with one another and engage willingly in discussion. In large group settings, such as assemblies and meal times, pupils' very good behaviour adds to the enjoyment of these occasions.
- The school has very good strategies should behaviour become inappropriate. Pupils are aware of the adverse effects of bullying. Appropriate emphasis is placed on pupils to make attempts to sort out their own difficulties before resorting to adult help. They receive support from other pupils who are trained to help them. As a result life in this school is very pleasant.
- The merit system is much valued by pupils. They eagerly await the outcome of the house point system that encourages, amongst many other things, proper behaviour and good manners. Pupils are very polite.

- No pupils have been excluded over the last 12 months.
- Parents speak highly of the good standards of behaviour and discipline set and achieved by the school.

4.3 Attendance

Attendance is satisfactory, but punctuality on some days remains a problem.

- Over the last year attendance at the school has been over 90%. Attendance during the week prior to the inspection was 92.97% and over the last 3 years the school has made good progress in improving attendance. Although many take holidays in term time, care is taken to ensure that appropriate permission is sought and that no more than the statutory 10 days are taken.
- Attendance rules and regulations are set out well in the School Brochure, leaving parents in no doubt of their responsibilities to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Lateness to school, however, continues to be a problem in spite of the school's efforts.
- The school acts on the first day should there be an unexplained absence and, in cases of persistent absence, works very closely with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Registration is taken promptly in the morning and after lunch. A clerk enters these figures on a computerised system enabling the head to monitor attendance rates closely. The school meets the legal requirements for marking and reporting attendance.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

In all, 45 lessons were observed during the inspections. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 92% of lessons and unsatisfactory in the other 8%. Overall the quality of teaching is very good in about 16% of lessons, good in about 56% and satisfactory in the other 20%.

- The quality of teaching in the early years classes is consistently good. The work is invariably well planned and tasks well matched to pupils' ability. Activities proceed at a lively pace and emphasis is given to developing pupils' personal and social skills.
- The quality of teaching in KS1 is always good or better. It is good in about 70% of lessons and very good in 30%.
- In KS2 the quality of teaching is more variable. It is good and often very good in Y6, but varies considerably in the other classes in KS2. In approximately a third of classes in KS2 the quality of teaching is satisfactory and unsatisfactory in 15% of lessons.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good in all lessons. Pupils know that their contributions are valued and consequently are eager to take part in classroom discussions.

- Where the quality of teaching is good and very good, lessons are well structured and proceed at a lively pace. A sense of urgency is evident in the learning, and this ensures that pupils' interest and motivation is well maintained.
- In lessons where the quality of teaching is good or better, lessons are well planned and the work suitably differentiated to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. Classroom support assistants are well aware of their role and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. In these lessons of good quality teaching, teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach and their enthusiasm for the work is conveyed to their pupils. These teachers have high expectations of their pupils, both in terms of achievement and discipline. These expectations are very largely met. Where the teaching is good or better lesson learning objectives are clearly identified and shared with pupils. The plenary sessions are well used to consolidate learning and to inform teachers of progress made by pupils.
- Shortcomings evident in both lessons judged unsatisfactory and those lessons with shortcomings concern work that is insufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils. At worst, this results in lack of challenge for the more able pupils, undemanding tasks and the over reliance on simple worksheet. Overall the attributes of the good and very good teaching evident in most classes in the school, incorporating an increasing degree of independent and small group learning, are underdeveloped in these classes.
- In lessons where the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory a major failing is the slow pace of the lessons, and whilst pupils maintain a good and very good standard of discipline, they show signs of boredom and their interest wanes. In instances where the teaching is unsatisfactory lessons are poorly structured. Learning objectives are unclear and pupils are often unsure as to what they are to do. Plenary sessions are not used constructively to reinforce learning.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Procedures for assessment, recording and reporting are good, with some very good aspects.

- The results of NC tests and other performance data are very carefully analysed and used to implement strategies for improving standards. Pupils' progress is tracked from entry in the nursery to Y6 and records of pupils achievement is handed on from year to year enabling successive teachers to know pupils' ability and prior attainment.
- Throughout most classes, the marking of pupils' work is of good quality and is used consistently to raise standards of achievement. However, there is evidence in classes in Y3 and Y4 of pupils failing to complete set tasks and a lack of advice on how to improve performance.
- Teachers set challenging, but realistic targets for improvement every autumn and predict expected levels of performance for the end of the year. Teachers hold regular discussions with individual pupils to assess their progress.
- The revised SEN Code of Practice (April 02) is already in place. All teachers are familiar with the contents of pupils' IEPs that are reviewed regularly. The school's SEN register is up-dated at regular intervals.

- Pupils are encouraged to use assessment to improve their work. Pupils have started on the process of self-assessment and set their own personal targets as, for example, in ICT.
- Individual planning and teachers' evaluations are scrutinised by co-ordinators to ensure a consistent approach and pupils' work is monitored regularly through sampling. Monitoring of all subjects is undertaken regularly.
- Parents are kept well informed of progress made by their children, including those in the early years. The reports issued to parents at the end of the year are very useful and subject specific.
- Assessment is an integral part of the school's planning and teaching programme and is used well to raise pupils' standards of achievement. It meets the current statutory requirements.

5.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully meets statutory requirements. The religious education curriculum is based on the LEA agreed syllabus.

- The quality of the Early Years curriculum is good and fully meets the requirements of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Early years children experience rich and varied learning experiences that promote their all-round growth and development.
- The quality of the KS1 curriculum is very good. Pupils' learning experiences are well matched to their varying needs and are enhanced by a very good range of practical experiences and by the support they receive from classroom assistants.
- The KS2 curriculum is of good quality and by the end of the key stage pupils are generally well prepared for the next stage in their education. However, pupils' writing skills across the curriculum are underdeveloped and consequently their ability to express themselves well, for example in history and religious education is limited. In some instances the over use of simple worksheets also restricts writing opportunities and individual work.
- The school has good quality policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Schemes of work guide teachers' planning effectively and include opportunities to evaluate teaching and learning. Suitable provision is made for both the more able pupils and those identified as having SEN.
- Teachers' planning is generally detailed and, in most instances, clearly outlines learning objectives, teaching strategies, differentiation and assessment opportunities. Informal assessment is used well to guide teachers' short term planning and to provide appropriate tasks for pupils.
- Teachers' plans incorporate suitable opportunities to develop pupils' key skills. Pupils' developing ICT skills are given particular attention but there is no whole school curriculum plan for the development of key skills across the whole curriculum in either key stage.
- Appropriate time is allocated to all subjects and, in most classes, homework is used effectively to consolidate pupils' learning and makes a good impact on their standards of

achievement.

- The school's arrangements for personal and social education are good. Provision for ensuring racial harmony is good and well reflected in pupils' knowledge and understanding of the issues, as well as their general demeanour about the school. The school's provision is based on Qualifications Authority for Wales Curriculum and Assessment (ACCAC) guidelines.
- Pupils' development is suitably enhanced by the school's extra-curricular provision. As well as after school clubs, including such activities as games, bookclubs, science and information technology, pupils' learning is developed very well through visits and visitors to the school.
- There is equality of access to the curriculum and opportunity for all pupils to reach their potential. There are no pupils for whom the NC is modified or for whom it is disapplied.
- The school gives satisfactory emphasis to developing Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig through the curriculum as well as specific activities, such as the St. David's Day eisteddfod. However, further development of the language is adversely affected by teachers' limited competence in the language.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

Very good provision is made for support, guidance and welfare of pupils and is a strong feature of the school.

- This is a very caring school where great emphasis is placed on the personal welfare, academic development and achievements of all the pupils.
- There is a high adult to pupil ratio and relations between staff and pupils are very good. All staff, including non-teaching staff, work very hard to create a happy and secure environment.
- Pupils are carefully monitored to ensure that they make good academic and personal progress.
- Suitable policies are in place including anti-bullying, drugs and alcohol education, and sex education. Parents are involved where appropriate, such as being informed about teaching of sensitive issues.
- The school is aware of the ACCAC guidelines for the delivery of PSE. This is delivered primarily through science, religious education and circle time. At present the school is working towards the Healthy Eating award and some very good new initiatives, such as selling fresh fruit at break time, have been put in place.
- There is an equal opportunities policy, which includes matters concerning racism. All pupils have an equal opportunity to participate in every aspect of the school's life. The headteacher has attended a course on valuing diversity and the LEA has provided the school with a model policy; this has not yet been adapted to suit the school's particular needs.

- The school has a designated officer for child protection and staff are aware of the procedures as laid down in the school's policy.
- Fire drills, risk assessments and checks are carried out conscientiously and regularly.
- The school has trained first aiders and procedures are in place to record and deal with accidents and handle any other medical concerns.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good and pupils make good progress.

- Fifty-three pupils have been identified as requiring SEN support; all are included within mainstream classes and have full access to the NC.
- The headteacher and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), effectively plan the provision for all pupils identified as having SEN and the school's policy for SEN meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice (CoP). The roles and responsibilities of all staff are clearly outlined and there is a designated governor who takes an active interest in the provision provided and the progress of the pupils.
- Effective arrangements are in place for the early identification of pupils with SEN. All pupils are regularly assessed as they progress through the school in order to identify specific learning difficulties and to provide appropriate support.
- Good levels of support are provided by non-teaching staff when pupils are withdrawn for intensive teaching sessions. The planning is detailed and the work relevant to pupils' work in mainstream class.
- Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) are detailed and contain achievable targets for pupil progress. They are regularly reviewed by the SENCO, teaching and support staff, and parents.
- Pupils make good progress commensurate with their age and ability and the tracking of pupils' progress ensures that when appropriate targets are met, are set further challenging targets.
- Home school liaison procedures are good and the school works closely with parents.
- Links with outside agencies are good and pupils are assisted well by the LEA support team. Good liaison procedures between the school and the receiving secondary school are in place to ensure continuity in pupils' learning.
- Pupils with SEN are integrated well into the life and work of the school. Their successes are celebrated and their efforts are valued through a positive reward system.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The school's partnership with parents and the community, with other schools and institutions is very good and a strong feature of the school.

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education and to form a close relationship with their children's teachers. The home-school agreement emphasises the importance of a good partnership and is welcomed by the majority of parents.
- The school brochure is very informative and is supported by a well-designed school web site. Although the school has a complaints policy, procedures are not outlined in the school prospectus.
- Parents are kept well informed through regular newsletters, which also contain examples of children's work.
- There is a strong parents' association that meets regularly, arranges social functions and raises significant amounts of money for school resources. Many parents help in school, in class and on school trips.
- Parents meet in school every Tuesday morning for coffee and Welsh language, health and beauty and drug awareness classes. A Be Enthusiastic About Reading (BEAR) club, run in the infants, encourages parents to choose and read with their child.
- The replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire were extremely positive with more than 96% of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the ten statements incorporated into the questionnaire.
- The governors hold an annual meeting with parents and their annual report is well presented and meets legal requirements.
- The school plays a very full part in the life of the community. Visitors to the school regularly lead assemblies and religious services are occasionally held in the local church or chapel. Members of the police, fire and other services visit, all of whom have a beneficial effect on pupils quality of education and broaden their awareness of the local and wider community.
- There are very good pastoral links with the comprehensive school and pupils are prepared well for transition. The school recognises the need for improved curriculum links to ensure continuity and progression of learning and this is currently being planned.
- The school works closely with other primary schools that are part of the local cluster.
- As part of the Comenius project, the school is linked to schools in Norway and France with reciprocal visits by staff. Classes exchange written communication photographs and emails which broaden the pupils' knowledge of the world.
- A policy for partnership with initial teacher training universities is in place and students spend time in the school as part of their course.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

The school has very good links with industry.

- The school has recently won an award from the Welsh Assembly for its work with the Education Business Partnership. Business links benefit from close governor involvement.

- Links are many and diverse. For example representatives of a local petroleum company visit the school and works with pupils in connection with science projects. Members of a technology company assists older pupils with control technology and smaller concerns, for example, local shops are also involved and help pupils to understand the world of work.
- Pupils are taught about environmental issues. For example, pupils in Y4 visit a building site and also a display of the “House of the future” where they learn about different materials used in its building and about solar energy.
- The school benefits greatly from sponsorship. Nursery play equipment and transport for educational visits has been provided. In addition money has been made available to enable teachers to spend some time in local businesses and teachers have benefited from work experience opportunities.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- The SDP provides clear direction for the work of the school. It is a useful working document and details how improvements are to be undertaken as well as success criteria. All aspects of school life have been audited and details of the steps that need to be taken for improvement are set out in the three-year plan for 2001-2004.
- The annual action plans for development, incorporated into the SDP, are evaluated in detail to appraise the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school’s self-critical culture is an integral part of the process adopted for improvement and has resulted in raising standards substantially recently.
- The GB is actively involved in self-evaluation processes and in prioritising objectives for the school. The GB receive regular reviews on progress towards the targets set for school development in the SDP.
- School performance is closely monitored against national and local data. This provides measures against which school improvement can be compared.
- The school has effective procedures for assessing and tracking pupil’s attainment in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are set realistic and achievable targets for improvement and they self-evaluate their own performance.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The quality of leadership and efficiency is very good.

- The headteacher provides the school with very good, professional leadership. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher and governors who share similar values and norms about learning, behaviour, relationships and equality of opportunity.
- There are clear aims and policies that are focused on pupils’ needs and these are understood and implemented by all staff including non-teaching staff.

- The governors and staff are fully involved in drawing up and evaluating the SDP. The financial resources are managed in line with the priorities identified in the SDP based on educational priorities.
- The GB takes direct responsibility to ensure that the school makes best use of all available expenditure on staffing, premises and learning resources. The GB is fully supportive of the school, members are well informed of the work of the school and individual expertise is used well.
- Co-ordinators, responsible for the development and evaluation of their curriculum areas carry out their management duties effectively.
- Administrative procedures are well established and organised efficiently. Internal and external communication routes are clear and operate effectively. The headteacher and her staff are accessible and approachable for visitors and parents.
- The school has recently been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and has received the award for Investors in People.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The school has sufficient teachers, and the school is well resourced to meet the needs of the curriculum. The school benefits from good accommodation.

- The impact of induction and continuing professional development of teachers is very good. Newly qualified teachers (NQT) receive good support from the head teacher and colleagues. The match of teachers' qualifications to their subject responsibilities is good.
- The accommodation is of good quality and provides sufficient space for the pupils on roll. It provides pupils with an attractive learning environment. It has improved considerably since the last inspection. Good use is made of the open plan layouts to provide reading areas, and ICT alcoves.
- The nursery has been extended and refurbished and other teaching areas have been extended which has made for better delivery of the curriculum. The accommodation now has a very good effect on the standard of pupils' achievement.
- Displays are of very good quality in both key stages and great effort is taken to ensure that pupils' work is exhibited attractively.
- The quality and quantity of learning resources are generally good. Resources are used well to support teaching. At the moment, KS1 cannot access the Internet though this omission is being addressed.
- Good use is made of the extensive hard core and green playing areas surrounding the school.
- The school was unfortunate in having a fire immediately before the inspection period. However, the prompt action of the LEA and the hard work of the maintenance staff ensured that disruption to school life was minimal.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

Educational provision for children under five is good. The curriculum provided is broad, balanced and successfully promotes the six Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

- Children enter the school initially on a half-day basis from September each year and on a full day basis from November. This means that initially children have substantial support from teachers and other adults for the first few weeks in school and this has proved to be very successful in developing their social and linguistic skills. All children make good progress in learning and by the time they enter Y1, standards of achievement are good in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, personal and social development, understanding of the world and physical and creative development.

Nursery

Language, literacy and communication.

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children gain in confidence and most express themselves clearly and confidently when answering questions. They listen well to stories and respond enthusiastically. Most wait their turn to speak and speak in short sentences with an extending range of vocabulary.
- Children are able to sequence stories correctly, putting the beginning, middle and end in the right order.
- Most children associate the spoken with the written word from an early stage. They enjoy handling and looking at books in the book corner. They can predict the next word in a familiar story or rhyme and use picture and phonic clues to make sense of a word. Most children in the class correctly identify the front cover of a book, the title and read aloud the title of their 'big book'.
- Children have good listening skills with pairs of children listening regularly to stories on audio tapes.
- Children can count up to ten in Welsh, and are familiar with greetings such as "bore da". They indicate their presence in Welsh during the registration period. They know the names for various parts of the human body and various items of clothing. They learn a good range of Welsh songs which all pupils perform in the school's St David's Day celebrations.

Mathematical development

Standards of achievement are good.

- Most children count up to ten using their fingers, or counters and can subtract from ten using coloured blocks. They use body percussion songs to consolidate their understanding of number.
- More able children confidently count up to ten on their own and are constantly being given opportunities as individuals to point out numbers on a number line which helps to develop their self-confidence.
- Children working with dice record their results on a simple grid.

Personal and social development.

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children work well individually and in groups. They know the importance of being kind and helpful to others. This is demonstrated well in the very good relationships they have with each other and their teacher.
- Children settle quickly to tasks and organise themselves well. Children help tidy away at the end of sessions and are beginning to take on responsibility.
- Nearly all the children concentrate well for considerable periods and persevere in their learning.
- Children feel secure, valued and, when asked questions they respond confidently.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children can recognise different sounds and can name various musical instruments.
- The children can identify objects that make the same or similar sound and can compare their characteristics, such as loud and soft.
- Children can describe the ingredients required for making stew in the kitchen and what is meant by cooking.

Physical Development

Standards of achievement are good.

- Pupils handle tools safely and competently and use scissors, paint brushes, glue sticks and pencils properly. Children are beginning to co-ordinate their hand movements “fishing” flash cards out of the “river” for a word matching game.
- Pupils participate enthusiastically using large and small apparatus in the hall and on their soft play area. They play safely and follow instructions effectively.

Creative development.

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children sing confidently and know the words of several songs and nursery rhymes.
- Children make confident decisions about the use of colour and create interesting pictures.
- The children play creatively with sand and water and in the home corner using role-play and creative drama.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

Reception

Language , Literacy and Communication Development

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children gain confidence in expressing themselves in small groups and in front of an audience. They enjoy looking at books and handle them in an appropriate manner when reading independently in the book corner. Children sequence stories correctly.
- Children are beginning to write and their writing contains recognisable letters and words. Most can successfully trace words or use 'underwriting' to copy their names and other familiar words.
- Able children write independently and are able to compose their own sentences. They have good pencil control and handwriting is developing well.
- Effective use is made of incidental Welsh throughout the day and children have an expanding range of phrases including greetings, colours and the weather.

Personal and social development

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children work well independently and as part of a group. They know the importance of being kind and helpful to others. They have good relationships with each other and with their teacher and learning assistants.
- Children settle quickly to tasks and organise themselves well. All children help tidy away at the end of sessions and are beginning to take on responsibility. After practical sessions the children clear up their materials and equipment without prompting.
- Nearly all the children concentrate well for extended periods of time and persevere in their learning.
- Children discuss their personal feelings and can talk about what it is that makes them happy or sad. They have a good understanding of what is fair and unfair and most are

prepared to wait their turn.

Mathematical Development

Standards of achievement are good.

- All children count confidently up to ten and more able children are confident to 20 and beyond. Many can count backwards from ten to zero. They recognise numbers and can place them into a sequence.
- Number skills are well supported by a wide range of practical skills and they work in groups using brick towers to consolidate their number work. Many are confident with concepts such as more or less, bigger or smaller and lighter or heavier.
- The children can match simple shapes, and can arrange objects in repeating patterns. The children group sets of objects according to their shape.
- All children are developing understanding of measurement through their water and sand play activities and from the well-organised practical group activities in the classroom.
- The children use the class computer, using both ball and mouse, to practice their number recognition and to enhance their counting skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children talk about clothes and describe their own dolls and teddy bears. Many children start to research the diets and habitats of real bears using colourful books from the school library.
- They understand the concept of time with some having a very sound knowledge of days, months, and seasons of the year.
- They develop their sense of touch to recognise objects in a 'feely bag'. They can describe texture including hard, soft, squozezy, rough and smooth.

Physical Development

Standards of achievement are good.

- Nearly all children have good pencil control and this is reflected in the generally good standards of handwriting.
- Children's handling skills are developing well and most children use a range of tools, including scissors, confidently and carefully. They are able to cut and stick with the minimum of support.
- Children also make mathematical shapes in play dough in their practical activities. Many recognise simple regular shapes.

Creative development.

Standards of achievement are good.

- Children sing confidently and know the words of several songs and nursery rhymes and act out the actions to the rhyme 'Teddy Bear'. Children tap their feet in time with the music. They respond to suggestions for dance and imitate movements.
- When using paint, children are confident in making decisions about the use of colour to create interesting pictures. They make repeated patterns in different colours and draw confidently, creating, for example, portraits of themselves or their friends.
- In role-play activities, children use their imagination well to act out situations and events. They dress up in adult clothes and prepare to go out for a night of celebration.
- Effective use is made of incidental Welsh throughout the day including registration and arrangements for dinners and some children answer in full sentences.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

English

Standards are good in both key stages. Progress is variable in Y3 and Y4 but overall all pupils, including those with SEN, are making good progress in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils' listening skills are good throughout both key stages. Pupils listen attentively and are keen to take part in discussion. Although there is a minority who are diffident, most pupils speak with clear diction and correct language structure. They speak accurately and with confidence attained through the supportive learning atmosphere afforded by the school.
- Pupils' reading skills are good and they make good progress in most classes aided by the wide range of books of all genre available to them. Able pupils in both key stages read challenging texts including both poetry and prose and can discuss what they have read imaginatively.
- Writing is satisfactory in most classes in both key stages though it is under-developed in Y3 and Y4. Spelling is improving through the use of dictionaries, glossaries and thesauruses and the regularly set spelling tests.
- Pupils in KS1 are familiar with the meaning of words such as illustrator, author, characters, and many, with help from the teachers read out the contents of the big book. Their use of punctuation, including capital letters, full stops and exclamation marks is good. In writing, some pupils leave too little space between their words, making their work difficult to read.
- Pupils in KS1 correctly identify consonants and vowels. They understand graphs, digraphs and phonemes. They understand the basic structure of sentences and punctuate accurately. ICT is used effectively to support their learning.

- Pupils in KS2 make good progress and can identify parts of speech and construct instructional posters. The majority of pupils know verbs for instructional demands but some less able pupils are insecure in their recognition of verbs as parts of speech.
- Pupils in KS2 have good recall of detail and many read well with appropriate expression. However, tasks are not always well matched to the pupils' abilities in Y3 and Y4. They understand the role of adjectives well but do not use them effectively in their writing. When reading, some pupils tend to guess the meanings of words rather than use phonic clues to aid recognition.
- Pupils in KS2 understand idiomatic phrases and understand similes but are insecure with metaphors. They have a good understanding of how to change colloquial expressions into standard English.
- By the end of KS2 pupils compare and contrast characters in a story and can select appropriate adjectives to describe them. The more able pupils in Y6 work well on short information texts and can identify different parts of speech.
- Pupils in both key stages use their ICT skills to support their learning. Pupils in KS2 have well developed word processing skills and use the technology effectively in their language work.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings but pupils' ability to write independently and at length is underdeveloped in Y3 and Y4.

Mathematics

Standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2. Progress of all pupils, including those with SEN, is good in KS1 but varies from satisfactory in Y3 and Y4 to good in Y6. Overall progress in KS2 is satisfactory.

Good features

- By the end of KS1, pupils have a good understanding of basic mathematical concepts and they can recall key facts quickly and accurately. They tell the time accurately to the hour and half-hour and measure capacity using standard and non-standard units. The majority can find one half and one quarter of a number of objects.
- In Y1 pupils recognise simple two and three-dimensional shapes and some of their properties. The majority count in even numbers to 10 and know their number bonds to 10. They use and understand mathematical vocabulary such as more than and less than, greater or smaller, heavier or lighter to compare quantities.
- Pupils in Y2 understand the concept of place value. They count on and back in 2s, 3s, 5s and 10s to 100 and they understand odd and even numbers. They use various strategies to work out problems with number bonds up to 100 and abler pupils check their answers for accuracy.
- By the end of KS2, most pupils identify and use the appropriate operations to solve problems involving numbers and quantities and they are able to explain their methods and

reasoning.

- Pupils in KS2 understand that multiplication is repeated addition and the majority of pupils use simple multiplication facts to work out problems involving number, money and measures.
- Pupils in KS2 use a variety of mental arithmetic strategies to solve problems with numbers up to 100 and beyond. They can name a variety of two and three-dimensional shapes and know the properties of different shapes such as octagons, hexagons and pentagons.
- By the end of KS2 the majority of pupils are able to define the concept of probability. They understand that the chance of choosing a red token from 1 red and 1 yellow is expressed as 0.5.
- Pupils, in both key stages, use their ICT skills well to support their learning.

Shortcomings

- Y3 and Y4 pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables and computational skills are limited.
- More able pupils in Y3 and Y4 are not sufficiently challenged and their ability to undertake mathematical investigations is limited.

Science

Standards are good in both key stages. All pupils, including those identified with SEN, make good progress.

Good Features

- Pupils in both key stages carry out scientific experiments carefully and accurately. Pupils in KS1 observe carefully and record their results accurately. The more able pupils are beginning to understand the idea of a fair test and the importance of accurate measurement. For example, in one investigation involving toy cars moving over different surfaces pupils understand that the same toy should be used and that they should start from the same place. The majority of pupils measure distance in non-standard units and the more able pupils make simple predictions.
- Pupils in KS2 have well-developed experimental skills. Older pupils, for example those in Y6, make realistic predictions and the more able modify their predictions in the light of their experimental findings. Most of these older pupils, including those with SEN, understand the importance of repeated measurements, can calculate mean results and recognise abnormal results when they occur.
- Pupils in KS1 understand some of the characteristics of living things and can group separately familiar plants and animals. Pupils in Y2 know the names and functions of the major organs of the human body and those of flowering plants. These pupils know the major stages in the life cycle of flowering plants and frogs. They also appreciate how they themselves grow and develop.

- Pupils in KS2 develop a very good understanding of basic life processes. Most pupils, for example, know the different categories of food and how diet can be a part of a healthy life style. Pupils know that some drugs are useful in treating diseases, whilst others are detrimental to health. Pupils in KS2 know that plants make food and are the basis of all food chains. These pupils can accurately distinguish between the different stages in the life cycle of a plant and relate structure to function, as for example in seed dispersal.
- Pupils in KS1 can group materials according to their properties and understand that the properties of materials determine their use, such as in house building. They know that glass is transparent and used for windows whilst roof tiles are waterproof. Pupils also know that materials change, for example when heated or cooled and that some of these changes, for example ice to water, are reversible.
- Pupils in KS2 know that there are three states of matter and that the different properties of materials can be used to separate mixtures. They know that sieving is an effective means of separating mixtures based on the size of particles, whilst some metals can be separated based on their magnetic properties.
- Pupils in KS1 construct simple electrical circuits using bulbs and batteries. Pupils name appliances in the home that need electricity but are fully aware of the dangers inherent in mains electricity. Pupils in Y2 understand that force can be applied as a push or pull and can name familiar objects that can be pulled or pushed.
- Pupils in KS2 show good understanding that forces act in particular directions and can make things speed up, slow down or change direction. They know that force is measured in Newtons and that friction as a force between surfaces slow moving objects. Pupils in Y6 know that some materials act as insulators and others, such as metals are good conductors of electricity. They can test materials for their properties using electrical circuits. Pupils in Y6 know that the movement of the earth relative to the sun causes day and night and know how shadows are formed.
- Pupils' ICT skills are used well in both key stages. Pupils in KS2 use computers to collate data, for example, when investigating the effect of exercise on pulse rate and to illustrate their results graphically.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

Welsh second language

Standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2. All pupils, including those with SEN make good progress in KS1. Progress overall is satisfactory in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 know basic colours and the name of clothing they wear. They enjoy listening to their teachers reading a 'Big Book' on Dillad Tedi Twt and they know a good range of phrases to describe weather conditions.
- Pupils in KS1 are beginning to write Welsh words and phrases and understand the meaning of what they have written.

- Pupils in KS1 know the Welsh names of many of the subjects taught in the school curriculum and can write about their likes and dislike. Nevertheless, pupils tend to give instant translations into English and fail to maintain an extended conversation in the target language.
- By the end of KS2, most pupils are able to read and understand basic sentences and questions using familiar language patterns. They can use 'Wyt ti wedi' and the negative form, in conversation, when they have teacher support
- The written work of pupils in KS2 is variable; their spelling of simple words is, however, usually correct.

Shortcomings

- Pupils in KS2 cannot engage in basic conversation due to their limited vocabulary and this also limits their ability to write.
- Pupils' ability to read Welsh phrases and sentences is generally underdeveloped.
- Incidental Welsh is not sufficiently developed as it is restricted to very basic and repetitive instructions that are often repeated in English.

Design and technology

Standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2. All pupils, including those identified with SEN, are making good progress in KS1 and satisfactory progress in KS2.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 use a good range of different materials and can select materials based on their fitness for purpose. These pupils have good measuring, cutting and fixing skills and understand that in some instances fixing that can allow movement to take place is useful.
- Pupils in KS1 have a good basic understanding of the design process. Following their observations of some commercial products they produce their own sketches and in some instances these are annotated. More able pupils note the materials they will need and how their artefacts are going to be made.
- More able pupils in KS1 evaluate their final product based on their likes and dislikes and state what they would change in the future.
- Pupils in KS2 undertake a wide range of practical activities involving a good range of materials. Very good use is made of visits and visitors to the school to enhance pupils' understanding of how materials are used in the commercial world. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of how properties of materials determine their use.
- Pupils in Y4 understand the importance of the quality of the finished product and for whom it is designed. Pupils' knowledge of other subjects is used well; for example, their knowledge of electrical circuits when making novelty Christmas cards.
- Pupils in Y6 have developed a good understanding of the importance of packaging the final product. They can identify suitable packaging for a range of products based on factors such as hygiene requirements and cost.

- Pupils' ICT skills are used well to develop their competence in designing. For example, they use computer-based designs of flowering plants in KS1.

Shortcomings

- Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they do not sufficiently evaluate their finished product. There is too little evidence available to indicate that pupils test their artefacts and modify them to fulfil their original intentions.

Information technology

Standards are good in both key stages. All pupils, including those identified as having SEN, are making good progress.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 have well-developed keyboard skills and handle the mouse confidently. They build effectively on the skills they have acquired in the early years.
- Pupils in Y1 use simple computer tools, such as dazzle when creating pictures, and in Y2 create their own designs based on simple shapes, as for example in the style of Mondrain.
- Pupils in Y2 have well developed word processing skills. They can use the basic icons to delete and correct words and to join sentences.
- Pupils in KS1 use directional language to control and produce a sequence of instructions to control the movement of a "Roamer" and the more able can programme it to negotiate obstacles.
- Pupils in KS2 extend their word processing skills and are competent using different fonts, spell check and clip art. All pupils handle data as part of their work in other subjects and present their information graphically and in tabular form. They use a variety of software packages and can combine text and pictures, alter layouts and present information in a variety of forms and styles.
- Pupils in KS2 further develop their programming skills to control a screen turtle and the more able can design their own mazes and codes.
- Pupils in KS2 can produce their own spreadsheets. Pupils know how to produce spreadsheets for specific purposes, such as monitoring sales from a school shop. They can incorporate formulae to work out costings and alter inputs to meet demands, such as the number of people attending a party.
- Pupils in KS2 use the Internet to search for information linked to their work in areas of the curriculum. They also use a good range of CD-ROM and use them purposefully to support their learning.
- Older pupils use e-mail confidently and have established worthwhile links with a school in Norway that enables them to extend their knowledge and understanding of a contrasting locality in Europe.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

History

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages. All pupils, including those with SEN, are making good progress.

Good features

- In both key stages pupils develop a good chronological awareness through the use of time lines. Pupils begin to interpret evidence and give reasons for the differences between varying accounts of the past.
- Pupils in KS1 develop a good understanding of the difference between the past and the present and understand the concept of change over a period of time.
- Younger pupils in KS1 are able to use historical vocabulary such as years ago, then and now, old and new to discuss how electricity might have affected people's lives over a period of time.
- In their study of homes, visits to St. Fagan's, the Museum of Welsh Life, enables pupils to understand how living conditions have changed over time. Pupils compare life in the past with their own life style.
- Pupils in KS2 develop a good understanding of Welsh culture and heritage by visiting places of historical interest. For example, they visit Llancaich Fawr to study the Stuart period and Maestir School at St.Fagan's to take part in role play to understand how children were educated in late Victorian and early Edwardian times.
- Pupils in KS2 use their ICT skills to construct time lines and they access the Internet and use reference books to search for information on the early Celtic peoples of Wales.
- In Y5 and Y6 pupils develop their investigative and ICT skills well by their study of coracles in Wales and their method of construction.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings but the frequent use of worksheets inhibits pupils' extended writing skills and their full development of historical ideas.

Geography

Standards are good in both key stages. All pupils, including those identified with SEN, are making good progress.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 have a good and developing knowledge and understanding of their own locality and give clear instructions to find local landmarks, such as the station.

- Pupils in KS1 draw their own map of the school and surrounding streets and use appropriate symbols to show particular landmarks, including bridges, car parks and buildings and can indicate their way to school. They are aware of the four points of a compass and can locate physical features seen in each direction from the school environs.
- Pupils in KS1 are familiar with maps of different scales and can locate their locality on a map of Wales of the British Isles. They can also locate local features, such as the school, on an aerial map.
- Pupils in KS2 continue to make good progress with map work. They have a good understanding of scale, map symbols and keys. In their comparative studies they can distinguish between human and physical features, land use and how human activities have affected the environment.
- The school has well-established links with a community in Norway and use this to compare and contrast the physical features, human life style and amenities with their own village.
- Pupils in KS2 understand how places are linked through the movement of goods. In their study of India they come to understand that whilst such a country is relatively self-sufficient in food, they need to import fuel with the consequent financial implications.
- Pupils in KS2 are well aware of how human activities have changed the environment and of efforts being made to improve it. In their investigation into a local planning issue they also appreciate the various constraints that affect what can be done in their community.
- Pupils in KS2 have well-developed geographical skills that are well integrated into the topics they study. They have a good knowledge of places in different countries of the world and use their atlases effectively. They describe locations accurately using latitude and longitude.
- Pupils' ICT skills are used well, for example, when studying the climate of different localities and the effect it has on life style. They use their ICT skills well to illustrate their findings in appropriate graphs and charts.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

Art

Standards are good in both key stages. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that all pupils, including those with SEN, are making good progress.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 make good use of their immediate environment to collect examples of autumnal hues. They explore colour and texture and mix paints to match the natural colours of leaves.
- Pupils in KS1 use a very good range of materials. They visit the Museum of Welsh Life to see basic weaving being done. They study the work of Goldsworthy who uses pebbles

and driftwood for sculptures and visit the seaside to collect shells to make creations of their own.

- Pupils in KS1 examine the work of famous artists. They paint in the style of Van Gogh and emulate his swirling brush strokes as evident in the painting 'Sunflowers'. They draw pictures of wild life fauna and flora observed on their visits to the seaside Their work is kept in portfolios to aid assessment of their progress.
- Pupils in KS2 produce drawings of good composition and learn how to use perspective. They paint in the style of Lowry and study the work of modern Welsh painters such as Elwyn Thomas and Carpiainini.
- Pupils in KS2 produce plates reflecting the patterns in Morgen Hall tableware and use the Internet to access pictures from other cultures such as Indian Scrolls and the precision art from the 18th century (Rajasthan in the Ganges Valley). They develop a good understanding of symmetry through their work on Celtic art and jewellery.
- Pupils in KS2 produce good quality paintings inspired by the work of Van Gogh (Starry Night) and work collaboratively, to produce collages based on the work of Picasso. They produce three-dimensional work such as the clay faces and study the use made by William Morris of repeated patterns.
- Pupils in both key stages use their ICT skills well to explore colour and to support their work in art.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

Standards are good in both key stages. All pupils, including those with SEN are making good progress.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 explore the noises one hears in the countryside. By improvising sounds they produce a sound story with effects to emulate stamping of feet, birds flying in the air, a farmer walking in mud in wellington boots and the sound of a combined harvester and of wind in the trees.
- Pupils in Y2 record their sound picture and suggest ways in which their sound montage could be improved including making some sounds more distant and others nearer. They explain which sounds please them and which are their favourites.
- By the end of KS2, pupils explain accurately which instruments play single notes and those which play chords. They understand what is meant by accompaniment and follow used tonic solfa to sing notes.
- Pupils in Y6 use a range of untuned and tuned percussion, recorders, keyboards and voices to perform 'Down on the seashore' They play in strict time and follow the conductor's instructions. Singers sing well and keep in tune and appreciate how the sound balance of their recording could be improved. Pupils discuss their performances and

consider the importance of silence in performances. They also appreciate that the sound of some percussion instruments, such as cymbals, takes time to die away.

- There are 15 pupils who are learning string instruments (violin and cello) with a peripatetic teacher and pupils learn the recorders as extra curricular activity. These pupils perform well.
- Pupils throughout the school sing a good range of music with complex rhythms and some two-part harmony in end of term concerts. They perform a wide range of Welsh songs in the school's St David's Day eisteddfod to a good standard.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical education

Standards are good in KS1 and very good in KS2. All pupils, including those with SEN, are making good progress in KS1 and very good progress in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils change their clothes suitably for PE. All pupils take part in warm up and cool down activities in the course of each lesson or extra-curricular activity. The school recognises the importance of exercise for the development of the body and a healthy lifestyle.
- In both key stages pupils listen attentively to instructions and show good body control. They make good use of the space available and work well with a partner or in a group.
- Pupils in KS1 plan, perform and evaluate a sequence of movements effectively. They display good use of the skills of jumping, landing, stretching, curling, rolling and changing direction when creating a movement using music.
- In dance lessons, Y6 pupils explore variety in movement responding well to stimuli from music. They learn to evaluate their own and others' performances and modify their work accordingly. This work is of a very good standard.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and interested in physical education and take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are available to all pupils.
- Pupils in Y4, Y5 and Y6 visit a local leisure centre for swimming lessons and the school reports that the majority of pupils can swim by the end of the year.
- Pupils in Y6 and some from Y5 visit the Ogmere Centre Trust and develop good skills in outdoor and adventurous activities. They learn mapping and compass skills, take part in orienteering exercises and undertake challenges of a physical and problem solving nature.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious education

Standards are good in both key stages. All pupils, including those with SEN, are making good progress. The scheme of work is based on the Bridgend Agreed Syllabus.

Good Features

- Pupils in both key stages have a good recall of the main stories of the Bible that are appropriate to their age. They have a good understanding of Christian festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter through whole school activities that involve the wider community.
- In both key stages pupils have a good understanding of the need for school rules. They treat each other with respect and courtesy. Pupils discuss and reflect on the significance of moral stories from a variety of sources.
- Pupils in KS1 learn about the life of Jesus. They understand the importance of baptism in the Christian faith; for example, they listen attentively to the local curate who leads pupils in a role play activity in which they act out a christening.
- Pupils in KS1 have an awareness of the diversity of religious beliefs in Wales. They celebrate Divali, the Hindu festival of light, and understand and gain knowledge of other faiths.
- Older KS2 pupils explore their feelings and express personal responses to issues such as prejudice. They write sensitively about how Christians react to important events in history such as the Holocaust.
- Pupils in KS2 visit local places of worship to take part in services and to understand the key beliefs and traditions of the Christian religion.
- Pupils learn about other religions by listening to visiting speakers explaining the traditions and customs of the Muslim faith and they access the Internet to experience a virtual tour of a Mosque. The school is well resourced including examples of religious artefacts.
- By the end of KS2 pupils know that each religion has its own traditions and customs and that other people hold different religious beliefs which deserve respect.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The last inspection report of April 1997 identified eight key issues. These indicated that the school needed to:

- improve the standards and progress made by pupils where weaknesses exist;
- improve weaknesses in the quality of teaching, where they exist, by providing support;
- record consistently the progress made by pupils in all subjects of the curriculum and especially in the core subjects;
- meet statutory requirements in the content of the GB's annual report to parents and the school prospectus;
- ensure that the format and content of annual reports on pupils to parents meet statutory requirements;
- introduce a SDP from 1998 onwards, which includes a vision for the future;
- establish and develop a greater consistency of practice in the role of the subject co-ordinator;
- review and improve the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' written work.

Through its action plan and subsequent programme for action and monitoring, the school has successfully addressed these issues.

- Standards have improved substantially since the last inspection. Standards in the Early years are now good, as are standards in all subjects in KS1. Standards have also improved in English in KS2 where shortcomings were identified and planning for improvement has been effective. The school recognises that pupils' writing across the curriculum remains an area for development. Standards have also been improved in KS2 in science, history, geography, music, art, physical education and religious education.
- overall the quality of teaching is now good. The school has provided support where it was needed but weaknesses still remain in the quality of teaching in some instances;
- recording procedures are now good and pupils' progress is well monitored;
- the GB's annual report to parents and the school prospectus now meet statutory requirements;
- the format and content of annual reports on pupils to parents now meet statutory requirements;

- the school's SDP includes forward planning; what the previous report termed as a vision for the future;
- the role of subject co-ordinators is identified clearly and whilst there is some variability in the way roles are carried out, there is generally consistency of practice;
- the marking of pupils' work is always satisfactory and in most instances good.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The school needs to:

- raise standards in Welsh second language, mathematics and design and technology in KS2 by addressing the shortcomings identified in the subject reports;
- improve pupils' standards of writing and presentation across the curriculum;
- develop a whole school programme for the development of key skills across the curriculum;
- give urgent attention to improve the quality of teaching, where it is unsatisfactory.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Garth Primary School
School type	Primary/Community
Age -range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Mission Road, Garth, Maesteg
Post-Code	CF34 0ND
Telephone Number	01656 733041

Headteacher	Miss Susan O'Halloran
Date of appointment	May 2001
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mr Mal Reeves, Bridgend CBC
Registered Inspector	Mr Eifion Morgan
Dates of inspection	4.11.02 – 6.11.02

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	15	29	31	32	18	46	29	40	240

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	11	0	11

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23 :1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	25
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	0.9 :1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Term 1	88.2	93.3	93.9	91.8
Term 2	91.8	93.3	93.1	92.7
Term 3	89.0	91.8	91.6	90.8

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

END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y2:21					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	15	45	40	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	20	40	40	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	35	65	0	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	55	40	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	55	35	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	45	45	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	80	In Wales:	81

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y6: 37									
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	N	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0		0	0	0	0	38	43	19	0
		National	0	0	1	0	1	6	19	48	25	0
	Test/Task	School	0	5	0	0	0	3	0	51	41	0
		National	0	2	2	0	0	4	14	47	31	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0		0	0	0	0	27	60	13	0
		National	0	0	1	0	1	4	19	47	28	0
	Test/Task	School	0	5	0	0	0	3	27	46	19	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	4	18	42	32	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0		0	0	0	0	14	70	16	0
		National	0	0	1	0	0	3	15	52	29	0
	Test/Task	School	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	43	54	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	2	13	51	31	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	60	In the school:	65
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

National figures relate to 2001 as results for 2002 are not yet available.

D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors over a three day period. The report was based on evidence from:

- the observation of forty-five lessons or sessions;
- listening to a representative sample of pupils reading;
- discussion with groups of pupils to ascertain their knowledge and understanding of subjects and to seek their views of the school;
- the scrutiny of teachers' plans, assessment records and co-ordinators' documents;
- the scrutiny of other school documents;
- interviews with the teaching staff about their roles and responsibilities;
- discussion with the headteacher;
- pre-inspection meeting with staff, governing body and parents;
- the analysis of questionnaires returned by parents;
- the observation of pupils' behaviour in lessons, in and around the school at break times, lunch times and before and after school;
- attendance at school assemblies and acts of collective worship;
- the observation of a range of extra-curricular activities;
- tour of school building and grounds.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Team Member	Aspect	Subject
Mr Eifion R Morgan Registered Inspector	The school and its priorities. Main Findings Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning. Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching. Curriculum. Progress since the last inspection. Key issues for Action.	Science Design & Technology Information and Communications Technology. Geography
Mr Clifford Brace Team Inspector	Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement. Leadership and efficiency.	Mathematics History Physical Education Religious Education
Mrs Rhiannon Boardman Lay Inspector	Behaviour and attitudes. Attendance. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare. Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions. Partnership with industry.	
Mr Dafydd Treharne Team Inspector	Assessment, recording and reporting. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.	Early Years English Welsh second language Music Art.

The inspection team would like to thank the headteacher, staff, governing body, parents and pupils of the school for their hospitality, courtesy and co-operation throughout the inspection.