

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

***GILFACH GOCH INFANTS' SCHOOL  
HIGH STREET  
GILFACH GOCH  
PORTH***

***School Number: 674-2087***

***Date of Inspection: 24-26 September 2001***

***By  
MRS M E EVANS  
Registered Inspector***

***Date: 12 November 2001***

***Under Estyn Contract Number: CT69/01P***

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 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 (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

Gilfach Goch Infants' School is a local authority maintained school which serves the community of Gilfach Goch in the Rhondda Cynon Taff unitary authority. The school is a 3-7 infants' school and includes nursery provision for 20 children. Children are admitted to the nursery class following their third birthday, on a full-time basis. There are 31 pupils on roll at present and these numbers have remained constant for the last three years. There are two classes: one for nursery and reception children and the other for Y1 and Y2 pupils. All pupils are from English speaking homes and Welsh is taught as a second language. The school aims to create a rich, lively, stimulating and challenging learning environment where pupils are encouraged to develop and succeed.

The school considers its catchment area to be economically disadvantaged, with high unemployment; 30 per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals. The nature of the intake is mostly disadvantaged and the intake comprises the full range of ability. There are four pupils on the school's Special Educational Needs (SEN) register and there no pupils with a statutory statement of SEN. Baseline assessments are undertaken on entry to the nursery class and results indicate an average attainment for most children.

The school was last inspected in 1996 and has made good progress in meeting the targets set in its post-inspection action plan to improve curriculum provision, pupils' standards of achievement and school management. Some of the targets in the current School Development Plan (SDP) have been met. The focus for the year will be to raise pupils' standards of achievement in literacy, design and technology, geography and the development of information and communications technology (ICT) skills. An analysis of assessment results is the basis for target setting to improve standards.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### The main findings of the report

- Gilfach Goch Infants' School is a much improved school with good features. The commitment of staff to improve curricular provision, especially in the early years, in order to raise standards and the improvements made by the school, contribute to the good progress made by pupils. The headteacher provides efficient, caring leadership and is ably supported by all staff who work well as an effective team.
- The educational provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children's standards of achievement are very good overall and they are making good progress in all the areas of learning and the majority exceed the Desirable Outcomes by the time they reach the age of five. Baseline assessments indicate that attainment on entry is average for most children.

- Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

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

- In all the lessons observed, pupils' standards of achievement were very good in 22 per cent, good in 57 per cent and satisfactory in 21 per cent.
- Key Stage 1 (KS1) pupils' standards of achievement in the National Curriculum (NC) subjects and religious education are as follows:

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

- In KS1, standards are good overall in English. Pupils' speaking skills are good and they speak confidently and clearly using an increasing range of vocabulary. Their listening skills are good and pupils listen attentively in lessons. Pupils achieve good standards in reading and satisfactory writing skills.
- Standards are satisfactory in mathematics and good in science; pupils are developing their investigative skills.
- The school's 2001 NC Assessment results indicate that standards achieved in the core subjects, by the small cohort of pupils, are above the national average. When compared with similar schools nationally and locally, where 30 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, the results are in the upper quartile of best performing schools. The school's system of pupil tracking has shown that standards have improved over the last two years.
- Pupils' overall standards and progress in the key skills across the curriculum are good. Standards achieved in literacy skills are good overall. The use of numeracy skills in different subjects is good. Pupils' use of a range of ICT for different purposes is good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and reflects the positive and caring ethos of the school.

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- The quality of pupils' behaviour and attitudes is good and the school makes every effort to promote and reward good behaviour, which has a positive effect on standards.
  - Levels of attendance and punctuality throughout the day are good.
  - The quality of teaching was very good in 17 per cent of lessons observed, it was good in 57 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 26 per cent.
  - Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning for children under five and the NC core subjects but are less secure in some of the foundation subjects.
  - Lesson planning is satisfactory but does not clearly identify learning objectives and the development of subject specific skills to enable the accurate assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
  - Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress and achievements are good in the early years and effective use is made of assessments to inform future planning. Good use is made of formative assessments but continuous assessments in KS1 are not always linked to learning objectives.
  - The quality of reports to parents is good and give a clear picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in all subjects and areas of learning.
  - Curriculum provision is satisfactory and complies with statutory requirements. The quality of the curriculum and planning for children under five is good. In KS1, the schemes of work in each subject are at a developmental stage and are not yet effective in linking the curricular themes with the Programmes of Study. The overall quality of planning is satisfactory but is inconsistent and short-term planning does not focus clearly on the learning objectives and the key skills to be taught in every subject.
  - The school provides a good standard of educational support, welfare and personal guidance for pupils. The school's procedures for promoting the well being and health and safety of pupils are good and there are appropriate policies and procedures in place.
  - The quality of the provision for pupils with SEN is good and complies with the Code of Practice. Pupils make good progress in line with the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs).
  - Partnerships between the school and parents, the community, schools and other institutions are good. Parents are well informed about the activities of the school and are very supportive of school events. The school's partnership with industry is unsatisfactory.
  - The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory. There are effective procedures for evaluating pupils' standards of achievement and the school carefully monitors the progress made towards achieving targets.
  - The school manages its resources efficiently and budget planning reinforces the aims of the school, ensuring good value for money. The school's monitoring and self-evaluation procedures are at an early stage of development and are beginning to identify areas for development and the training needs of staff. Targets for improvement are set and are incorporated into the SDP.

- The SDP is effective in moving the school forwards. Each action plan has clear targets and includes success criteria, identified responsibilities, planned expenditure and time schedules. The governing body ensures that budget setting relates efficiently to the school's educational priorities in the SDP, over a three year period.
- The school is well staffed. Teachers are suitably experienced and are appropriately qualified for the age groups they teach. They are supported by teachers' aides who are well deployed to support pupils' learning.
- The school has ample space for the number of pupils and the building is well maintained. The accommodation for children under five is good. There are good quality displays of pupils' work, which are effective in celebrating their achievements. The provision of resources is adequate and their quality is good. Resources for children under five are good. Staff and pupils make appropriate use of all available books, materials and equipment.
- The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. Governors are involved with the work of the school but there are no curriculum links with staff, apart from SEN, to enable them to monitor educational provision and pupils' standards of achievements.
- The quality of leadership and management of the school is good. The school's aims and values promote a caring ethos and high standards; they give a clear sense of purpose and direction for the school.
- Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in meeting the targets set in the action plan which addresses the key issues from the previous inspection report. These include:-
  - improving standards and provision in the early years;
  - improving the unsatisfactory elements of standards in art and history;
  - ensuring the SEN policy and practice complies with the Code of Practice;
  - developing curriculum planning and schemes of work (which require further development), in-service training (INSET), continuity and progression in pupils' learning; dissemination of good practice;
  - improving safety and security in the nursery play area.

### **3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning**

In the lessons observed, pupils' standards of achievement were very good in 22 per cent, good in 57 per cent and satisfactory in 21 per cent.

- Standards of achievement of children under five are very good overall and they make good progress in all the areas of learning. Baseline assessments indicate that attainment on entry to the school is average for most children and many exceed the Desirable Outcomes by the time they reach the age of five. Their standards of

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achievement are very good in language, literacy and communication skills, personal and social development, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards are good in physical development and creative development.

- In KS1, standards are good overall in English. They achieve good standards in speaking and listening and pupils make good progress in using these skills in many aspects of their work. They achieve good standards in reading and make good progress towards improving their fluency and accuracy. Their writing skills are satisfactory and they make appropriate progress towards the development of independent writing. Extended writing across the curriculum is limited and pupils do not develop the skills of drafting their writing.
- Standards are satisfactory in mathematics and the use of numeracy strategies is having a beneficial effect on improving pupils' standards of achievement and mental calculations. In science, standards are good and pupils make good use of their investigative skills.
- The 2001 NC Assessment results show that the small cohort of pupils entered for the tests, all achieved level 2 and above in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools nationally and locally, where 30 per cent or more pupils are entitled to free school meals, the results are in the upper quartile of best performing schools.
- In the foundation subjects, standards of achievement are good in geography, music and religious education. Standards are satisfactory in Welsh second language, information technology, design and technology, history, art and physical education.
- All pupils make good progress towards the targets for improvement set by the school in relation to national criteria. The targets are based on the assessment of pupils' achievements as well as the results of NC assessments. Those pupils with SEN make good progress towards the targets set in their IEPs.

### **3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum**

Pupils' standards of achievement and progress in the key skills across the curriculum are good overall. Standards achieved in literacy and communication skills are good, especially in the use of speaking, listening and reading skills. The use of numeracy skills in different subjects is good. Pupils' use of a range of ICT for different purposes is good.

- Children under five make good progress in the use of the key skills across all the areas of learning. They benefit from the strong support provided by the staff to promote their language and communication skills. They listen with interest and concentration and respond well to questions and instructions. They are keen to take part in discussion and speak clearly. They enjoy role-play activities, which are effective in promoting their oral skills, and they make effective use of their early reading and writing skills across the curriculum. They consolidate their knowledge of mathematics through counting, ordering and matching activities as well as through scientific and technological investigations. They use computer equipment confidently in order to enhance their learning.
- In KS1, pupils make good progress in developing their speaking skills. They are confident when speaking to an audience and speak clearly and audibly when

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responding to questions, describing events and taking part in discussion. Pupils' listening skills are good and they listen carefully to others with concentration, responding appropriately and effectively to what they have heard.

- Pupils are developing their reading skills well and value reading as a source of information and pleasure. By the end of KS1, pupils are beginning to read accurately, expressively and with an understanding of a variety of texts in different subjects. The reading of text in the Big Books enhances their interest and knowledge of topics across the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in writing skills and are improving their accuracy and fluency. They make good use of their writing skills for different purposes across the curriculum but their range and extended writing is limited.
- Pupils' overall standards in numeracy across the curriculum are good. They measure and calculate accurately in their science investigations and, in geography, they make accurate use of letter and number co-ordinates to locate features on a map. They make effective use of data handling skills and produce useful databases and graphs. They handle numbers appropriately in mental, oral and written tasks. Pupils have limited skills in selecting and applying mathematics in practical tasks.
- The overall standards in using ICT across the curriculum are good and successfully support pupils' learning. Pupils use ICT equipment and software confidently. They make good use of ICT to record and present their writing and in handling information to produce graphs in geography and science. Pupils successfully use CD-ROMs to find information.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress in improving basic language skills in line with the targets set in their IEPs and they make good use of ICT to support their learning.

## **4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

- The school's aims are caring and set appropriate expectations for all pupils, taking account of the age and ability of individuals.
- The headteacher and staff place an emphasis on the development of moral and social skills. Older pupils provide good support for younger children including assisting them with classroom activities. Pupils work well together and take responsibility and initiative in school activities.
- The governing body and parents praise the school's ethos and are pleased with attempts to encourage positive attitudes and values.
- Pupils are happy and secure and take pride in their surroundings. Consequently the school is a friendly place to be.

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- Acts of collective worship take place daily and promote pupils' spiritual and moral development. The aims of the school and the Christian ethos are further supported by regular visits from local clergy.
  - The provision for cultural development is good. Pupils gain knowledge of Welsh history and culture through work in a number of curriculum areas including history, geography and music. The St David's Day celebrations enable pupils to acquire a suitable repertoire of Welsh hymns and songs.
  - Pupils' appreciation of the richness and diversity of other cultures is good, especially through their study of different religions, their awareness of the needs of children in Uganda and the study of cultures across the curriculum, such as Chinese music.
  - The school supports local charities and those further afield. The proceeds of last years' Harvest Festival were donated towards the purchase of a computer for a local child with SEN.

## 4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The standards of behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning are good.

- The foundations for good behaviour are laid in the early years class. All adults have high expectations of pupils' social abilities. They are consistent in their implementation of routines and in encouraging the pupils to give of their best. Parents are supportive of the school's behaviour policy: everyone has accepted the home/school agreement and all pupils aged over five have signed it. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond well to the Golden Rules.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very warm and friendly. Pupils are valued and the school is a welcoming and caring community.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Children in the early years class happily leave their parents and settle quickly. They are developing independence and respond well to responsibilities from a very young age. The majority of older pupils are interested and involved in their work: they concentrate well and persevere with their tasks. They collaborate and support each other when working in pairs and groups.
- Pupils are polite and friendly. They show courtesy and consideration to each other, to all adults and to visitors. They move sensibly in and around the school and play co-operatively outdoors during break times and lunchtime. They are eager to participate in games organised by the lunch time-supervisor.
- Pupils respond sensibly to the personal and social opportunities provided by the school. Children in the early years class, help with checking the dinner register. They are responsible for their own work trays and the general tidiness of the classroom. Older pupils help to care for the younger ones and undertake social responsibilities such as setting out and replacing furniture for daily assemblies and caring for the school pets. Pupils in Y2 visit the local forestry plantation and select a Christmas tree. All pupils are encouraged to make choices; for example they select items for their birthday parties from the local supermarket and prepare the food and set the tables. Children from an early age are learning the value of savings: they willingly join the school bank and are able to use their own money to purchase goods at the Autumn Fayre.

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- A separate anti-bullying policy is in place. Incidents of anti social behaviour are dealt with promptly. No such incidents were noted during the period of inspection. The school has not found it necessary to exclude any pupil.

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### 4.3 Attendance

Pupils' attendance levels are good.

- The average rate of attendance over the three terms prior to the inspection was 91 per cent and was adversely affected by an epidemic of chicken pox, which involved the whole school over an extended period of time.
- There is evidence that the attendance rate is normally in line with the national average and exceeds the average for the local education authority (LEA). Absences are mainly caused by illness. However, a few parents take family holidays in term time. It is particularly significant that there have been no incidents of unauthorised absence. Strategies are in place to improve attendance.
- Almost all the pupils arrive punctually and individual lessons start on time.
- Appropriate procedures are in place to monitor and follow up absences.
- Registers are completed meticulously and comply with statutory regulations.

## 5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

### 5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching was very good in 17 per cent of lessons observed, good in 57 per cent and satisfactory in 26 per cent.

- The quality of teaching of children under five is very good and enables them to make good progress in all the areas of learning. The staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning and set high expectations to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in the six areas of learning.
- In KS1, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the core subjects they teach but are less secure in some of the foundation subjects such as design and technology, art, history, Welsh second language and physical education.
- Lesson planning is inconsistent through the school and does not always clearly identify learning objectives or identify the development of subject specific skills. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and set challenging tasks to improve pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The preliminary oral session often consolidates previous learning and encourages pupils to participate in discussion.
- In the majority of lessons, work is well matched to the needs of all pupils with appropriate differentiated tasks set for them as individuals, pairs or groups. Occasionally, there is an over-reliance on worksheets. All pupils are provided with good support, especially those with SEN, who are well supported by the teachers' aides.
- Lessons are well organised and teachers manage their pupils well and have good relationships with them. A good range of teaching techniques and organisational strategies are used effectively for different activities and purposes. The plenary

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sessions at the end of lessons, when used well, consolidate skills and knowledge, to assess understanding and to evaluate progress.

- Teachers' assessment and recording of pupils' progress are inconsistent and are not always used effectively in order to obtain information for future planning. Pupils are not always involved in the evaluation of their own work.

## **5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

The quality of the school's assessment, record keeping and reporting is satisfactory overall.

- Baseline assessments are efficiently managed on entry to the nursery and when children enter the reception year.
- Good use is made of regular teacher assessments in the early years, to monitor children's progress and to ensure that the work provided enables them to achieve in line with their abilities.
- The assessment of children in the early years class clearly enhances planning and promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- Reading records give adequate indication of the development of pupils' reading progress through a structured reading scheme.
- A mathematics test, designed by the school, is introduced at the end of the reception year and subsequently administered in Years 1 and 2. The test is effective in identifying pupils' needs and parents are kept informed of progress.
- The quality of reports to parents is good and they provide useful information about pupils' progress. The results of tests are shared with parents, in particular to indicate weaknesses, which may be supported at home.
- The requirements of the SEN Code of Practice are met and IEPs are regularly reviewed.
- Assessment opportunities are not consistently found in teachers' planning which in turn do not link with learning outcomes.
- There is a useful portfolio of samples of pupils' writing and mathematics work, which are annotated with NC levels of attainment. A portfolio of work for art contains a limited number of samples but with no annotation linked to NC criteria. Further development of the practice of maintaining portfolios in other curriculum areas does not yet provide accurate information to inform teachers' assessment.

## **5.3 Curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory overall.

- The curriculum for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. There are effective schemes of work for each of the six areas of learning with clear learning objectives for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in each area. Children are provided with a good range of experiences and activities, which promote the development of basic skills in a stimulating and secure environment.

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- In KS1, the curriculum is broad, relevant and suitably balanced. It complies with statutory requirements, including the teaching of religious education and a daily act of collective worship. Adequate time is allocated to subjects to ensure a balanced curriculum.
  - There are policies for all subjects but some policies have yet to be updated. Appropriate use is made of the LEA's schemes of work. The school is in the process of developing schemes of work which link the school themes with the Programmes of Study but they are not yet effective in ensuring the progression of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
  - Curriculum planning is detailed but is inconsistent through the school and the short-term planning is not always clearly focused on learning objectives and the development of subject specific skills. The planning of assessment opportunities is not directly linked to learning objectives. There is a useful long-term plan for subjects but does not provide a clear over-view of the progression of the Programmes of Study across the key stage.
  - The quality of whole-school planning for the development of key skills across the curriculum is satisfactory but is not clearly focused on the specific skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT which are to be taught in every subject.
  - The school makes good use of homework to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Parents are encouraged to support their children, especially in reading activities and home-school tasks.
  - The curriculum is enriched by opportunities for pupils to undertake educational visits and succeeds in extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of Wales and its heritage.
  - The school makes appropriate provision for pupils' personal and social education, which includes health and sex education through pupils' studies in science.
  - All pupils, including those with SEN, have full access to the curriculum and benefit from the inclusive nature of the school, which provides equality of opportunity for all pupils.

#### **5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare**

The quality of the school's provision for support, guidance and pupil's welfare is good.

- Teachers and other staff know their pupils well and good practice reflects the school's positive ethos. The school's caring and orderly environment, together with the staff's efforts to praise and encourage pupils' efforts and achievements, ensure that pupils are motivated to do their best.
- Appropriate support for pupils' learning enables them to feel successful in their work.
- Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities and Child Protection policies are in place and offer clear guidance.
- Relationships with external agencies and specialist support, including social services and health services, are well developed.

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- Good levels of support and guidance are provided to ensure that children's entry to the school is smooth. The vast majority of pupils and parents bring their children to school on a daily basis and are warmly welcomed by staff.
  - Links with parents of early years children are developed through the encouragement to assist with home tasks. For example, parents and children make realistic models of houses from milk cartons and design kitchens using shoe boxes.

## **5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN**

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set in their IEPs.

- There is a comprehensive policy for SEN which complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice. It gives clear guidance to all those involved in the SEN procedures. There is a named governor for SEN who provides appropriate support for pupils with SEN.
- An SEN teacher is employed to teach a group for one hour a week and works closely with the teachers to plan the SEN provision, according to the Code of Practice. The SEN teacher provides effective support for improving pupils' language skills. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the headteacher, is responsible for overseeing all SEN provision according to the Code of Practice. The support staff provide effective learning support for the less able pupils in the classroom.
- There are four pupils (13 per cent) on the school's SEN register, one at Stage 1 and three at Stage 2. There are no pupils with a statement of SEN. Individual educational plans are provided for pupils from Stage 2 onwards and the SEN teacher prepares the targets in the plans, in consultation with class teachers.
- There are appropriate systems for identifying and assessing the needs of pupils with SEN. Good use is made of baseline assessment results to identify children with SEN at an early stage. The quality of IEPs is good and realistic targets are set for pupils to achieve. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly and detailed records are kept of pupils' progress. Parents are kept informed of procedures and are encouraged to support their children's learning. There is effective liaison between the school and outside agencies.
- All pupils with SEN are provided with equal access to the curriculum through appropriately differentiated tasks, which ensure that pupils work at their level of ability.

## **5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions**

The partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is good. The overwhelming majority of parents appreciate the work of the school and support its high expectations.

- The quality of information provided for parents is good. The school produces an informative prospectus that is revised annually and a useful booklet for the under-fives. The annual governors' report to parents is comprehensive and contains a diary of events and activities. Information about the topics being taught and the Desirable

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Outcomes for Children's Learning is displayed on the notice board in the early years reception area. Parents of older children are involved in their children's learning through requests for resources and their involvement in home/school projects. Diaries of events and activities and other useful information are displayed on notice boards in both areas.

- The majority of parents take advantage of the school's open door policy; there is good, daily informal contact between parents and staff. A small number of adults make positive contributions to the life and work of the school through their involvement in curriculum based activities. Although there is no formal Parent Teacher Association, a significant number of parents assist with educational visits, which help to enhance their children's learning, and with other social events. They willingly collect tokens and vouchers that enhance resources.
- The school has strong links with the community and is a focal point of village life. All school activities and celebrations such as concerts, St David's Day celebrations, assemblies and sports activities are open to the community as a whole and are well attended and supported. The annual Autumn Fayre is the only fund-raising event and is particularly well supported. The school provides a photocopying service that is very much appreciated by the community and the school premises are used for adult education.
- Pupils participate in a range of events in the community such as the Gardening Association summer show. They use their talents to raise funds for charities both locally and in the wider community.
- Visiting speakers enhance pupils' education and members of the clergy regularly lead school assemblies. Pupils visit the local church and study the building as a place of worship.
- Transition arrangements into the early years class are thoughtfully planned and implemented; the children settle well into school. Older pupils make familiarisation visits to the receiving junior schools and pastoral links are well established. However, curriculum links are not as well developed.
- The school does not have a partnership with initial teacher training institutions. However, training and work experience is provided for NNEB and childcare students and for secondary school pupils.

## **5.7 Partnership with Industry**

The school's partnership with industry is unsatisfactory.

- The school has no written policy on industry and no member of staff has benefited from industrial links. However, visits and visitors help to make the pupils aware of the world of work both past and present. Pupils' experiences include visits to the local supermarket and mobile shops.
- The school benefits materially from useful links with the very small number of local commercial concerns that exist in the area. Donations and gifts enhance the school environment and resources.

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## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement**

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory and is at an early stage of development.

- The school has a self-assessment report, which is effective in evaluating its strengths and weaknesses. The school has begun to implement a self-evaluation procedure which has a clear framework for evaluating performance and quality. Areas for improvement are addressed, targets are identified and action plans are prepared. This process is in its infancy and the school has begun to use monitoring information and assessment data in order to set targets for improvement.
- Targets have been set for improving pupils' achievements in literacy, design and technology, geography, Welsh second language and ICT skills. The targets are realistic and appropriate and have been incorporated into the SDP as a result of the self-evaluation process.
- The SDP is effective in moving the school forward. Each action plan has clear targets, success criteria, organisation implications for staff, planned expenditure, time schedules and evaluations. The plans are reviewed termly by staff and governors to improve the quality of provision and raise the standard of pupils' achievements.
- The school is beginning to monitor the progress made towards achieving its targets through monitoring pupils' work, teachers' planning and the quality of teaching. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and the school has met the targets in the action plan to improve curriculum provision, the quality of teaching and school management.
- Monitoring procedures are developing but are not yet effective in identifying training needs of staff. The staff share the co-ordination of subjects but their roles are not clearly defined in order to monitor their subjects on a regular basis. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and each class is monitored each term. Evidence is collected, reports are written and information is fed back to the staff.

### **6.2 Leadership and Efficiency**

The quality of leadership and management of the school is good. The school's aims and values promote a caring ethos and give a clear sense of purpose and direction for the school.

- The school has a clear set of aims, including a commitment to equal opportunity, which is successfully promoted by staff and governors. All staff succeed in achieving the school's aims by providing a caring, secure environment in which pupils feel valued and encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and support for the staff in improving educational provision and standards of achievement. The school has begun to implement a self-evaluation procedure, which includes monitoring to improve the quality of teaching, curriculum provision and standards of pupils' work.
- Staff share responsibilities for aspects of the curriculum but their roles are not clearly defined in order to provide leadership in those areas and in monitoring the provision

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and standards. Resources are managed efficiently and regular audits are made to identify areas for development.

- The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. The governors are well informed and understand their roles and responsibilities. The governing body is involved in the work of the school, but there are no formal curriculum links in order to monitor the quality of education and pupils' achievements.
- The SDP is an effective document which identifies appropriate priorities and targets. The governing body ensures that budget setting relates efficiently to the school's educational priorities in the SDP over a three-year period. The current targets focus on improving curriculum provision and raising pupils' standards in literacy, design and technology, Welsh second language, geography and ICT skills.
- The school has a delegated budget, which is efficiently administered by the school's secretary. The LEA finance department provides effective advice and support. All governors are involved in monitoring spending and setting the budget. The recent financial audit report states that financial administration of the school is of good standard. The few minor recommendations have been successfully implemented. The school manages its resources efficiently and ensures good value for money.
- The headteacher and school secretary undertake administration tasks to ensure the efficient day-to-day running of the school.

### **6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources**

The quality of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good overall.

- The school is well provided with teaching and support staff and has a low pupil-teacher ratio (14:1). Early years children are in one class and KS1 pupils are in another.
- Teachers' qualifications and experience are well matched to the age they teach. A part-time teacher (0.2) makes a good contribution towards extending the pupils' learning experiences, especially in music and school productions.
- There is good provision of support staff in the classrooms. Where teachers' aides are well deployed, pupils' standards of achievement are enhanced. The school clerk, cook, caretaker and lunchtime supervisors provide good care and support and promote the school's positive ethos.
- The SDP outlines curriculum priorities on a three-year cycle. Provision is made for staff to attend courses and receive training, which match the relevant targets.
- The school has ample space for the number of pupils and the accommodation is clean and well maintained. In addition to the two main teaching areas there is a hall which is used for music, physical education and dinners and a withdrawal room which is large enough to accommodate all the pupils for morning assemblies. There are good quality displays of pupils' work which are effective in celebrating their achievements.
- An extension to the early years area, in the form of a conservatory, provides a well used resource area for sand and water play and painting. Good use is made of the

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outdoor area for children to develop their physical skills through structured outdoor play. However, this area is not used on a daily continuous basis.

- Learning resources are satisfactory overall. They range from good in the early years, for design and technology and science to adequate in the provision of computers.
- The overall effects of the provision and use of resources on pupils' standards of achievement is good. Resources are well deployed and enhance pupils' learning.

## **7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING**

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

#### **Provision for the Under-Fives**

The educational provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children achieve very good standards in language, literacy and communication skills, personal and social development, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards in physical and creative development are good. Curriculum planning is good and provides an appropriate range of activities within the six areas of learning. Children are admitted to the school on a full-time basis, following their third birthday. Baseline assessments are undertaken on entry to the early years class and the results indicate an average attainment for most children.

#### **Language, literacy and communications skills**

##### **Good features**

- Younger children make very good progress in developing their language and communication skills. They speak clearly and confidently and are keen to talk about their experiences, using a range of vocabulary to express their thoughts. They listen attentively to the teacher and to other children. They respond well to instruction and enjoy listening to stories and rhymes, including those on the listening centre. They enjoy role-play situations and communicate well with their peers. Through Welsh language activities, they are becoming familiar with vocabulary and respond well during oral sessions. They handle books carefully and enjoy sharing them with others in the reading corner. They recognise and write their own names and recognise letters by their shape and sound, which they use successfully in their early reading and writing attempts.
- Four-year-old children are confidently developing their language skills and enjoy taking part in the role-play activities. They take part in conversations; they contribute well to group discussions and communicate their own ideas and beliefs. They listen attentively to others and take account of what they say. They take turns and speak clearly and audibly and are beginning to use an increasing range of vocabulary. Children are developing their reading skills well; they have a good knowledge of phonics and can read words and sentences in books. Whilst looking at rhymes and pictures in a Big Book, they can follow and read the words in the text. They make good attempts at early writing and explain clearly what they have written. Children are familiar with Welsh language patterns and respond well to oral activities.

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## **Personal and social development**

### **Good features**

- All children make very good progress in their personal and social development. Younger children respond very well to high expectations of behaviour. They show confidence and self-respect and are able to establish effective relationships with other children and adults. They co-operate well during activities and understand what is right and wrong.
- Older children's behaviour is very good and they often help and support the younger children with their learning, especially when engaged in practical activities. They respond well to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to new areas of learning. During class discussion, children are keen to take part and take turns to speak.

## **Mathematical development**

### **Good features**

- Younger children successfully use mathematics as an integral part of activities such as preparing breakfast, building with bricks, role-play, sand and water play. They use mathematical language appropriately when sorting by colour, size and shape. They match numbers to pictures and count, order and compare everyday objects. They recognise and name simple 2-D shapes. They recognise and count numbers up to ten. They enjoy singing number rhymes and action songs and use these to count forwards and backwards.
- Older children are increasing their knowledge and understanding of number during oral and practical activities. They can count to 10, some to 20, they can count backwards, they recognise numbers to 10 and order them correctly. They use mathematical language appropriately and use apparatus successfully to aid calculations. From a selection of coins, they can recognise and name coins up to the value of 10p. Good use is made of the class shop for children to understand the concept of shopping and the use of money. They can recognise and name 2-D and 3-D shapes and are beginning to understand their properties.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

### **Good features**

- Younger children demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the environment by talking about their families and where they live and by describing events in their lives in the past and the present. Through their investigations of growing plants, children explain clearly how they plant their seeds and what they need in order to grow. They explore and select appropriate materials to make collage pictures using cutting and sticking skills successfully. They are developing an understanding of time and correctly name the meals they eat in a day. They use a computer confidently and are familiar with a keyboard and roller-ball mouse to select different nursery rhymes on screen.
- Older children are developing their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. They have a good knowledge of healthy eating and can name the foods

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which are healthy to eat for breakfast. They understand the importance of hygiene when preparing food. They know where eggs come from and how they can be cooked for different meals. Through their work on materials they are able to recognise and name the materials from which the objects on the kitchen display are made and that the doll's house and furniture are made of wood. They are developing manipulative skills well, using scissors and a range of tools for different activities. They make effective place mats, which they use, for their breakfast activity. They design and make model houses from milk cartons. They can identify and name different fruits. When discussing and handling the 'old' pillowcase, they understand its value as a precious item from the past. They use computers confidently and successfully programme a floor robot to move in different directions and to compose music.

## **Physical development**

### **Good features**

- Younger children are confidently developing their physical skills during outdoor play activities. They move with increasing control and co-ordination and have a good awareness of space and others around them. Good use is made of the outside play equipment to develop children's physical skills of climbing, swinging and balancing. They can use a range of small and large equipment with increasing skill and confidence. They handle tools and construction equipment competently and make good use of malleable materials, such as dough, to make shapes and models.
- Older children increase their confidence and co-ordination when moving and when using apparatus. Good use is made of the outside play equipment to develop children's physical skills. They can climb, jump and land safely. They take turns sensibly with wheeled toys and play co-operatively with construction equipment.

### **Shortcomings**

- Insufficient use is made of the outdoor area to develop children's physical skills on a regular, continuous basis.

## **Creative development**

### **Good features**

- Younger children use paint, sponges and brushes confidently to produce effective paintings of houses and Humpty Dumpty's wall. They experiment with printing techniques using hands, fruit and leaves to make effective printed patterns. They use a variety of media and textures to make effective class friezes. In music, they enjoy singing a variety of songs and nursery rhymes and play homemade percussion instruments in time with their singing. They explore sounds and instruments to create their own music. They can distinguish between loud and quiet sounds.
- Older children are improving their painting skills and confidently use a range of brushes and fingerprints to produce effective paintings of flowers. They are beginning to develop their observational drawing skills and use a range of pencils to draw pictures of daffodils. Their figure drawings are developing well with recognisable features of the face and body. They confidently investigate printing and pattern-making techniques and use them well in class friezes. In music, they are becoming more familiar with different styles of music and songs. They successfully accompany

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music and songs with a variety of instruments, keeping a steady beat. They experiment with sounds from a floor robot to create their own music.

### **Shortcomings**

- Children have limited experiences of experimenting with paint mixing, line drawing, texture and working in three dimensions, including clay.

## **English**

Standards of achievement are good overall. In speaking, listening and reading standards are good and satisfactory in writing.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils achieve good standards in speaking and express themselves confidently and clearly. They particularly enjoy participating in discussion about stories they read in literacy sessions such as 'Oliver's Fruit Salad' and respond well to questions. Pupils are keen to offer oral contributions in lessons and use their speaking and listening skills well during collaborative group work. Their listening skills are good and pupils listen attentively in lessons and respond well to questions and instructions. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils are improving their ability to contribute to discussion; they take turns appropriately, listen with interest to other pupils' views and show confidence to express their opinions.
- Standards in reading are good and pupils make good progress to improve their fluency and accuracy, supported by regular reading at home with parents. They use a range of methods and strategies to help them learn new words in their structured reading scheme, including letter sounds, word recognition and picture and contextual cues. They enjoy following and reading text in the Big Books, and read with expression and enthusiasm. By the end of the key stage, most pupils are reading fluently from a range of texts. They are able to discuss the contents of their books, re-tell the main events of stories and predict how stories will end. Pupils successfully locate information using non-fiction books and make good use of CD-ROMs to find information about various subjects.
- The standard of pupils' writing is satisfactory. There are good examples of sequential writing, stories, reports, instructions and letters. Good use is made of literacy strategies to identify word and sentence patterns and punctuation in text, which pupils use appropriately in their own writing.
- Pupils make good progress in improving their handwriting skills and in structuring sentences as they develop greater independence in their writing. Work is well presented with accurate punctuation. Pupils make good use of wordbooks and dictionaries for spellings and to find appropriate vocabulary. Good use is made of word processing skills to present their writing.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' extended writing and writing for different purposes and audiences is limited.
- Older pupils do not develop their skills of organising their work, planning, drafting and improving their writing.

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## Mathematics

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

### Good features

- Pupils make satisfactory use of the language of number and have a sound understanding of numerical order.
- Pupils' work at KS1 is mainly based on a published scheme, each pupil working through booklets of photocopied sheets to record work done.
- Younger pupils can use positional vocabulary correctly, such as above and below, in order to respond to questions.
- Pupils readily use classroom resources for different activities; they know where equipment is stored and use it appropriately.
- Pupils record data in a variety of ways through words, pictures and models; they produce graphs on paper and on a computer and use them to interrogate findings.
- Pupils can tell the time on the hour and half hour and some to quarter past and quarter to the hour. Older pupils tell the time in five-minute intervals.
- Pupils can sequence events in the day and correctly match them to appropriate times.
- Pupils use sand and water timers to experiment and develop their knowledge and understanding of time.
- Pupils can name a variety of 2-D shapes and have successfully made 3-D models using construction kits and cardboard nets.
- Pupils use coins appropriately when developing their shopping skills.
- Older pupils are developing an understanding of the meaning of half and double.

### Shortcomings

- Pupils lack speed and precision when calculating mentally.
- Pupils have limited skills in selecting and applying mathematics in practical tasks, sometimes as a result of over-direction by teachers.

## Science

Standards of achievement are good.

### Good features

- Pupils are gaining a good understanding of science through their studies of living things, materials and physical forces.
- Pupils use equipment well to develop practical and investigate work, which positively enhances their learning.
- Younger pupils successfully use crocodile clips to complete a circuit in order to light a bulb. Older pupils explore circuits using wire, bulbs and buzzers. They understand that constructed electrical devices will not work if there is a break in the circuit. Pupils know that everyday appliances use electricity and need to be handled carefully.

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- Pupils know that light comes from a variety of sources and that darkness is the absence of light.
  - Pupils use reference books well and some use CD-ROMs to collect information.
  - Pupils present their work well in a number of ways including the use of a computer database to record similarities and differences with other pupils.
  - From their study of living things, pupils can accurately name parts of the body and know that humans need food and water to grow. They can correctly name different parts of a plant and record detail through observational drawings.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils do not evaluate their work sufficiently in order to explain what they have learnt and discovered.

## **Welsh (second language)**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

### **Good features**

- Pupils respond well to incidental spoken Welsh at specific times during the day. They are able to greet each other in Welsh and are familiar with the language patterns used in questions and answers, such as in discussing daily weather patterns.
- Pupils listen to new words and phrases which they repeat accurately. They know the names of fruit and their colours. They enjoy singing a song, which combines the names and colours of the fruit, and they can count them using the correct vocabulary.
- Pupils listen to questions and instructions, focusing on known sentence patterns and respond appropriately, showing an understanding of vocabulary. They correctly name members of their family and their relation to each other. They can read word and sentence cards accurately and match them to the correct pictures. They make good attempts to find the missing words to complete written sentences.
- All children enjoy singing nursery rhymes, number rhymes and traditional songs and hymns, which help them to learn new vocabulary and consolidate known language patterns.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils lack confidence in reading words and phrases on an individual basis.
- Pupils' writing skills are limited to worksheets and are not developed into written sentences.

## **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

### **Good features**

- Pupils use a range of appropriate construction kits to make a variety of structures.

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- Pupils' making skills are developing well; they use rolling, cutting and shaping skills when using tools and malleable materials.
  - Pupils make effective pop-up cards incorporating written messages, drawings and decoration. They make decisions about designing by adding pieces of coloured paper and ribbon.
  - Pupils, supported by the part-time teacher, have designed and made a range of instruments which produce music by plucking, tapping and shaking.
  - Pupils know how to turn machines on and off in order to control them. This is demonstrated when using a floor robot.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils have limited knowledge and understanding of simple mechanisms, including wheels and axles.
- Pupils do not evaluate their work sufficiently in order to improve and refine their designs.

## **Information technology**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

### **Good features**

- Pupils use listening centres appropriately to develop their listening and reading skills, using switches to operate the 'on' and 'off' and 'rewind' buttons.
- Pupils successfully control a floor robot to make music and to experiment with routes.
- Using a prepared database, pupils enter information about themselves and display the information in the form of graphs.
- Younger pupils write letters to Father Christmas finding words and placing them correctly in the spaces provided. Older pupils develop their word processing skills by developing their own vocabulary.
- Pupils have some experience of retrieving information from a CD-ROM when looking at the parts of a flower.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils have yet to develop basic ICT skills systematically through the school and do not use computers regularly to consolidate their skills.

## **History**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

### **Good features**

- Pupils have a good understanding of some of the changes that occur over time. They explain the difference between the past and the present through their descriptions of 'old' clocks and those of today. They can interpret the passage of time through

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reference to the measurement of time over the centuries. Good use is made of time-lines to demonstrate the passage of time.

- Through stories about people who lived in Wales, pupils have a good understanding and can make comparisons of how people lived in the past, for example, Susan Rees, the Victorian coal pit girl and Jane Pritchard, Child of the Manor at Llancaiach Fawr.
- Pupils' historical understanding is further developed through studies of the local area and visits to places of historical interest, such as the Museum of Welsh Life, St Fagan's.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' interpretation skills are underdeveloped. They lack the ability to describe and record comparisons using artefacts from the past and modern day resources.
- Pupil's enquiry skills of asking and compiling questions through questionnaires and interviews are underdeveloped.

### **Geography**

Standards of achievement are good. It was not possible to observe a lesson during the inspection period and judgements are based on the evidence of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and staff.

#### **Good features**

- Pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of place, direction and their locality. They can list the natural and human features they can see in the area around their school and on an aerial photograph of Gilfach Goch. They study and locate the different buildings and routes in the area. They make good use of their mapping skills to draw maps of the local area and a plan of the playground; they explain accurately the purpose of a key.
- They have a good knowledge of their immediate environment and accurately describe features of the school and the grounds. They successfully draw plans of the school playground and use a grid reference to identify features. They can use a trundle wheel competently to measure the school grounds. They are beginning to develop an awareness of an attractive environment and how to care for it through growing plants and creating gardens.
- From their study of the course of a river, older pupils name the geographical features. They make good use of pictures to identify features and correctly label them. They can use grid references on maps and use co-ordinates to locate places on a map of Wales. They understand points of a compass and accurately describe features which are to the north, south, east and west.
- Older pupils have a good understanding of the world outside their own area. They explain clearly the difference between a village, town and city. They are familiar with a globe and atlas and can accurately identify seas, land and name some countries. They know that Europe is a continent and are able to identify the UK and Wales on a map in the atlas.
- During their study of Porthcawl pupils study photographs of the area and accurately describe the geographical and human features. They are able to make detailed

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comparisons between the sea-side town and their own area. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the similarities and differences between the main features of each area.

- Good use is made of a floor robot to follow directions and CD-ROMs to find information.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Art**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

### **Good features**

- Pupils explore a range of media including paint, crayon, pencil, pastel, glitter and paste.
- Pupils successfully experiment with printed patterns and make effective repeated printed patterns for the harvest frieze border. They make close observations of the cross-sections of fruit and discuss their shape, colour, texture and pattern. They select appropriate autumn colours from the ready mixed paint and make good use of sponges and the paints to make the fruit imprints. They combine shapes and colours well to make an effective printed border.
- Pupils study the work of famous artists and have been successfully using their observation skills to find line, tone and shape in the paintings of buildings by a local artist. They make good attempts to paint their own pictures of buildings using the same colours found in the paintings.
- Pupils are developing their observational drawing skills and produce detailed drawings of shells, fruit and plants using pencil, pencil crayon and paint.
- Pupils use paint and brushes confidently and select appropriate colours to paint story characters from 'Oliver's Fruit Salad'.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' colour mixing skills are generally underdeveloped.
- Pupils do not consistently explore different elements of art, craft and design.
- Pupils have limited skills of working in three dimensions.

## **Music**

Standards of achievement are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils enjoy performing in concerts and festivals and sing a variety of songs, hymns and rhymes in English and in Welsh with enthusiasm. They sing with confidence, in tune, with clear diction and appropriate attention to breathing and the quality of sounds. Some pupils confidently sing solo items clearly, with good intonation.

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- Older pupils follow singing and clapping patterns and repeat them successfully. They can clap and play untuned instruments in time, with the music, keeping a steady beat. Younger pupils make their own musical instruments and can name and correctly sort instruments into those which they 'bang', 'shake' and 'scrape'.
  - From the Chinese story of 'Ma Liang', pupils show interest and appreciation of Chinese music and musical instruments. Pupils work well to explore sounds and movements, listening carefully to rhythms in piano music and recorded Chinese music. They perform fluid movements and actions to illustrate events in the story. They sing the song of Ma Liang with enthusiasm and clarity. They successfully perform clapping rhythms from lines in the song.
  - All pupils successfully investigate and programme a floor robot to compose music.
  - Pupils have good listening skills and demonstrate good appraisal skills. They listen with appreciation to Vlatva by Smetana. They understand how the composer uses particular effects to create impressions and images in the music. Older pupils write a written appraisal of the music. They recognise and name the instruments used and give reasons for their favourite part of the music.
  - Musical performances successfully enhance school assemblies and concerts. Pupils enjoy taking part in community performances.

#### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

#### **Physical education**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory overall. It was only possible to observe one lesson of dance, in which pupils achieved good standards. According to the planning, the school's provision for games and gymnastics is satisfactory. Photographs of the annual sports day and a video of country dancing provided some supportive evidence.

#### **Good features**

- Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and a healthy lifestyle. They understand the necessity for warm-up activities and the beneficial effects of exercise on body fitness. They are aware of space and move in pathways, turning and moving at different levels and speeds.
- Pupils listen attentively to instruction and to piano music to move in time with the rhythm of the music. They explore movements such as marching, walking, skipping, hopping and galloping. They move confidently with increasing control and co-ordination.
- Pupils express themselves well, in response to the music and perform good movements to illustrate the actions in a story. They perform movement and mime well to show moods and feelings. They listen with appreciation to Chinese music and draw imaginary pictures in the air and on the floor in time with the music.

#### **Shortcomings**

- There is a lack of progression in the development of pupils' skills, especially in gymnastics and games.

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## Religious education

Standards of achievement are good. It was not possible to observe a lesson during the inspection period, therefore judgements are based on evidence of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and staff.

### Good features

- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of celebrations in their lives. They have a sound understanding of the main festivals and ceremonies of the Christian and Jewish faiths. Pupils explain clearly the festivals of Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Hanukkah and why they are celebrated.
- From visits to the local church pupils are aware of its importance as a place of worship and from visits by the local clergy, pupils are developing their vocabulary and knowledge of Christian symbols such as lighting candles to represent reflection and prayer. They recognise the cross as a symbol of Christ, the Bible as a Holy Book and the importance of a prayer book used during services. They know that a font is used for baptism and understand the significance of baptism, often from their own experiences of family Christenings.
- Pupils are able to explain the purpose of religious artefacts of other faiths, such as those used at the festivals of Divali and Hanukkah.
- During collective worship, pupils join in singing prayers and songs with enthusiasm and respond well to prayers said in assemblies about the natural world around them and the love and care they receive.
- The themes developed during school assemblies and visits from the local clergy effectively enhance pupils' religious education.
- Pupils retell a range of Bible stories such as 'The Good Samaritan' and understand the moral values in the story, such as being kind and helpful towards others. They develop a sense of right and wrong from discussing their own school rules and from messages in Bible stories.

### Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

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## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection**

The school was inspected in 1996 and has made good progress in meeting the targets set in the action plan, which address the key issues from the previous inspection report, namely:

#### **Key Issue 1**

**'Take immediate action to review the organisation of teaching and learning for children under five and to effect improvements in current practices.'**

- Curriculum planning and documentation were updated in line with the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- Resources were provided to improve standards in pre-reading skills.
- The grouping of children was re-organised, new strategies were put in place and programmes of work were planned to improve standards across all the areas of learning.
- The current inspection found that curriculum provision is good and children's standards of achievement are very good overall.

#### **Key Issue 2**

**'Give priority to raising standards of achievement in history and art.'**

- The history scheme of work was redrafted to include guidance of how each element is taught. In-service training was provided for staff and a teaching programme was planned to include the development of historical inquiry and investigation skills.
- The art scheme of work was updated to include guidance on the teaching of the elements in each programme of study. A portfolio of pupils' work is collected.
- The current inspection found that pupils' standards of achievement in art and history are satisfactory and that the schemes of work and planning need further development.

#### **Key Issue 3**

**'Ensure that the SEN policy conforms with the Code of Practice and that IEPs are provided for pupils' specific needs.'**

- In-service training was provided for staff, the policy was updated in line with the Code of Practice, a governor was nominated with responsibility for SEN and IEPs were put in place.
- The current inspection found that the SEN provision is good and conforms with the requirements of the Code of Practice.

#### **Key Issue 4**

**'To develop further the managerial role of the headteacher, particularly in relation to:**

- **whole school curriculum planning**

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- **in-service training**
  - **schemes of work for each NC subject**
  - **continuity and progression in pupils' learning**
  - **the dissemination of good classroom practice.'**
- Whole-school planning was reviewed to include long, medium and short-term plans and to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The current inspection found that further development is required in the planning to ensure that pupils' learning objectives are clearly focused.
  - The LEA schemes of work have been adopted and modified where necessary to take account of the revised NC. The current inspection found that the school schemes of work require further development in linking the curriculum themes to the Programmes of Study and ensuring continuity in pupils' learning.
  - The quality of school based INSET was improved. Teachers and teachers' aides attend courses related to their area of responsibility and opportunities are provided to disseminate information at staff meetings. A programme of INSET is compiled by the INSET co-ordinator.

#### **Key Issue 5**

**'Improve safety and security in the nursery play area by raising the level of the boundary wall and securing the doors of the outside gas supply facility.'**

- These recommendations were implemented and a review was made of school security to improve the safety of pupils and staff. A new security system was installed.

## **8.2 Key Issues for Action**

To build on the good standards achieved by the pupils and to improve aspects of the provision, the school needs to:-

- improve standards of achievement in those subjects which are satisfactory by addressing the shortcomings in the subjects;
- improve curriculum planning to ensure that learning objectives are clearly focused to enable the accurate assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding;
- continue to review and develop schemes of work in all NC subjects with specific reference to the Programmes of Study to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning;
- ensure that governors play a greater role in monitoring curriculum provision and pupils' standards of achievement;
- improve links with industry.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Gilfach Goch Infants' School
School type	Infant
Age-range of pupils	3-7
Address of school	High Street Gilfach Goch Porth Rhondda Cynon Taff
Post-Code	CF39 8SH
Telephone Number	01443 672531

Headteacher	Mrs M Jones
Date of appointment	1 October 1997
Chair of Governors	Mr A Warren
Registered Inspector	Mrs M E Evans
Dates of inspection	24-26 September 2001

### B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>					
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Total
Number of pupils	8	10	5	8	31

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	2	1	2.2

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	15:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8.5:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	13
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>			
Term	R	KS1	Whole school
Spring Term 2001	92	93	92
Summer Term 2001	85	84	86
Autumn Term 2000	96	95	96

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

### END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2001

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2001</b>	<b>Number of pupils in Y2: 8</b>
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included	

<b>Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment</b>			
In the school:	100	In Wales:	78

## D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who spent a total of five inspector days at the school.

Before the inspection:

- meetings were held with the headteacher and staff, the governing body and with the parents; three parents attended the pre-inspection meeting;
- questionnaires were distributed to all parents and the 21 completed questionnaires were analysed; the inspection team took note of the results, including a further one additional submission;
- school documentation was examined.

During the inspection:

- evidence of lessons observed was based on approximately 12 hours of the inspection of classes in a total of 23 lessons across the age groups;
- other observations included assemblies and registration;
- discussions were held with the headteacher, class teachers, support staff and non-teaching staff about their roles and responsibilities;
- discussions were held with the pupils about aspects of their work and life in school; inspectors listened to a representative sample of pupils read;
- a scrutiny was made of a sample of the pupils' work from each year group as well as work in the classrooms and on display around the school.

After the inspection:

- meetings were held with the headteacher, the staff and the governing body to provide oral feedback on the inspection findings.

## E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Subject Responsibilities	Aspect Responsibilities
Mrs M E Evans	Rgl	under-fives; English; Welsh second language; history; geography; music; religious education.	Standards of achievement; Standards in key skills; Quality of teaching; Curriculum; SEN; Quality of self-evaluation; Leadership and efficiency; Progress since the last inspection.
Mr J O'Brien	Team	science; design and technology; information technology; art; physical education.	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Assessment, recording and reporting; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Mrs C Lewis	Lay		Attendance; Behaviour and attitudes; Partnership with parents and the community; Partnership with industry.

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