

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

Ysgol Glan Aber

**Bootend
Bagillt
Flintshire
CH6 6LW**

School Number: 664/2002

Date of inspection: 2nd – 4th July 2002

Registered Inspector:

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Under ESTYN contract number: T/223/01P

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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

Ysgol Glan Aber is a community primary school catering for boys and girls aged three to eleven years. The school was previously inspected in June 1997. There are 92 full-time equivalent pupils on roll, including twelve children attending the nursery part-time. The nursery children are taught in a mixed age class with eleven children in reception. A teacher and a nursery nurse teach this class. The children in Key Stage 1 (KS1) are taught in a single mixed age class and the older pupils in Key Stage 2 (KS2) are taught in two mixed age classes. The average class size is 23. In total, there are 4.2 full-time equivalent teachers, including the headteacher and two part-time teachers. Three part-time classroom assistants support their work.

The school is situated in Bootend, part of the village of Bagillt, alongside the Dee Estuary. The village is about two miles from Holywell, in Flintshire. Nearly all the children come from the village. There is a mixture of rented and owner occupied houses in the community. The locality is economically disadvantaged. About a quarter of households are described as neither prosperous nor disadvantaged. Twenty six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is about average. No children have ethnic minority backgrounds and none come from homes where Welsh is the preferred language. English is the predominant language. All pupils are taught Welsh as a second language.

The school receives pupils from the full range of abilities. Baseline assessments show a range of attainments at the time the children begin full-time education. Subsequent assessments identify 23 per cent of pupils to have special educational needs (SEN). This is broadly average. No pupil has a statement of SEN.

The school sets targets for raising standards. The prospectus includes the school's statement of ethos and aims. The school development plan (SDP) identifies the following priorities for 2001/2:

- audit curriculum time to ensure balance across subjects;
- audit use of time for pupils with SEN;
- improve staff expertise in physical education and the early years;
- address weaknesses in pupils' performance in NC tests;
- review and update all school policies;
- improve feedback to pupils about their progress towards targets;
- encourage pupils to complete work within a set time;
- moderate assessments of pupils' work in literacy and numeracy;
- improve home-school liaison;
- complete identified improvements to the building and site and deal with the consequences of vandalism;
- audit resources in foundation subjects, science and the early years;
- develop the role of the acting deputy headteacher;
- establish a system of monitoring to involve governors.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

This is a steadily improving school. The recently revised and updated plans for the curriculum provide a good basis for further raising standards. The teachers and support staff are enthusiastic and conscientious. They use a variety of teaching approaches and expect higher levels of achievement from the pupils. This is clearly evident in better standards feeding through to the early part of KS2.

- The educational provision for the under fives is good and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning. This is a positive feature of the school. The children have a wide range of attainments when they begin school. They make good progress and achieve well.

Area of learning:	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Good	Good
Personal and social development	Good	Good
Mathematical development	Good	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good	Good
Physical development	Good	Good
Creative development	Good	Good

- The standards achieved in the subjects of the National Curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 are:

Subject	KS1	KS2
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Welsh second language	Good	Satisfactory
Design and technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
History	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Geography	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Art	Good	Satisfactory
Music	Good	Satisfactory
Physical education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

- The standards of achievement in using the key skills of numeracy across the curriculum are good. The standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and using information and communications technology are satisfactory.
- In KS1, pupils of differing abilities continue to make good progress. The pupils build well on their previous learning through a wide range of interesting work.
- In KS2, the overall rate of progress is satisfactory. Progress is often better in the early part of the key stage. By the end of Y6 most pupils make appropriate progress in English and mathematical skills and they learn a range of scientific knowledge. However, overall progress slows in Y5 and Y6 where the range of work is sometimes narrow.
- Across the school, the progress of pupils with SEN who receive additional support in literacy is generally satisfactory but progress is not always maintained when the pupils work with the whole class.

- By the end of KS2, the boys generally out perform the girls in national tests. This is contrary to the national picture and is an established pattern over several years in the school.
- In the 2001 KS1 NC tests and assessments, on the basis of teacher assessment, 86 per cent of pupils attained at least the nationally expected level 2 in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is above national figures and the average for similar schools¹.
- In the 2001 KS2 NC tests, 50 per cent of pupils attained at least the nationally expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science. These results are below national figures and those for similar schools. This year group was very small and included a high proportion of pupils with SEN.
- The school's results in NC tests and assessments show a gradual improvement over time.
- In KS1, the average proportion of pupils attaining level 2 or above over the last three years is 71%. Although this is below national figures, results have improved markedly year on year.
- In KS2, the average proportion of pupils attaining level 4 or above over the last three years is 42%. This is well below national figures but the overall trend shows a steady improvement.
- The provisional results for the 2002 NC tests and assessments indicate standards in KS1 are similar to 2001 and in KS2 there is a significant improvement in standards in English and mathematics. The school attributes this improvement to the provision of a "booster club" for pupils in Y6 and better lesson planning.
- The overall quality of the school's provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. There are shortcomings in the provision for spiritual and cultural aspects.
- The main emphasis of daily assemblies is on social and moral guidance. The pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to value and celebrate being part of a school community and too little emphasis is given to providing opportunities for guided reflection and prayer. Arrangements for the daily act of collective worship do not consistently meet requirements.
- Aspects of the *Cwricwlwm Cymraeg* are clearly identified in curricular planning. The pupils' awareness of Welsh heritage and culture is positively encouraged.
- Although the pupils learn about aspects of life in other countries, the school does not sufficiently promote an understanding of the lifestyles of people from different cultures. The pupils have little understanding of the diversity of cultures.
- The overall quality of pupils' behaviour is good, both in the classroom and around the school. The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning and generally persevere well with their work.
- The relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are good. The pupils are polite, friendly and co-operative. In KS1, the pupils show a high degree of interest in lessons and this is clearly reflected in the quality of their work. In KS2, levels of motivation and interest are variable.
- The overall level of attendance is satisfactory. The majority of pupils arrive punctually to school but a minority regularly disrupt the start of lessons by arriving late.
- Registration is completed punctually at the beginning of morning and afternoon lessons but the recording of authorised and unauthorised absence is insufficiently rigorous in some class registers.

¹ Schools having between 25% and 32% of pupils entitled to free school meals.

- The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are strengths in teaching the under fives and in KS1. Shortcomings in lesson planning and a limited range of teaching approaches sometimes limits the impact of teaching but all teachers are beginning to build well on clear schemes of work.
- The school's procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress, including a baseline assessment for those under five, are systematic and efficient but the teachers do not use assessment information sufficiently to plan for individual pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements. The provision is good for the under fives and in KS1. The recently updated whole-school framework for the curriculum provides a good basis for further improvement but shortcomings in its implementation in KS2 mean the curriculum is not always appropriately balanced.
- In Y5 and Y6 the pupils undertake only a very narrow range of work in information technology, geography and physical education. There are also shortcomings in the organisation of the school day in KS2 that reduce the teaching time available to below the recommended level of 23.5 hours per week. This further reduces the impact of curricular provision.
- Despite the absence of a policy or agreed strategy to promote the development of key skills, the staff have made a good start in identifying opportunities to develop key skills within the recently introduced schemes of work.
- The school's arrangements for personal and social education (PSE) are unsatisfactory. Although the school has recently introduced aspects of a suitable scheme of work it has not audited its curriculum to ensure all aspects are adequately covered.
- Regular educational visits and a range of extra-curricular activities including some competitive opportunities in sport enrich the curriculum. The older pupils benefit from attending a residential experience.
- The school is socially inclusive. The pupils have equality of access to all school activities but, although the school has identified the gender imbalance, with far more boys than girls in KS2, it has not addressed sufficiently the issue of promoting girls' achievement.
- The provision for support and guidance of pupils and the attention given to welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. Relationships in the school are positive and supportive. The pupils feel secure and valued at work and play.
- There are well established accident procedures but the arrangements to identify potential hazards to safety are too informal. The headteacher has been informed of a small number of potential threats to the health and safety of the pupils observed during the inspection.
- The school's provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory. The pupils with SEN make slow but steady progress in the work undertaken in withdrawal sessions but provision is not always effective in fully including these pupils in whole-class lessons.
- The overall quality of the school's partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is satisfactory.
- The school provides a good range of information for parents but the prospectus and annual governors' report to parents do not include all the required information.
- Most parents are very supportive of the school and its staff. Many appreciate the open evenings held to discuss their children's progress and they praise the quality of the annual written reports.
- However, a significant minority would like more information and a greater emphasis on the role of parents in school life. There was also some disquiet about the standards of work, expressed by a very small number of parents.

- Inspectors find the school is already providing better information for all parents. However, the limited involvement of parents in school life indicates scope for improvement in this area.
- Inspectors find standards are not always high enough and children are not always encouraged to take sufficient pride in their work.
- Taken overall, the school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory overall. The SDP is a good basis to move the school forward but there is no assurance that strategies for monitoring and evaluation will focus on the key whole-school goals and help to ensure consistency, in issues such as planning and the use of assessments to group pupils.
- The overall quality of leadership and efficiency is satisfactory. The headteacher is well supported by an enthusiastic staff in setting the direction for the school's work. There is a strong emphasis on raising standards and improving the quality of provision.
- The governors meet most of their statutory obligations. However, they do not set professional targets for senior staff and do not ensure the full range of information, including NC results and school policies, are made known to parents.
- The governing body has a prudent approach to budget setting and manages this aspect well.
- The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory but the lack of a part-time teacher to teach the headteacher's class once a week, means that he has insufficient time available to carry out his managerial role effectively. This is having a negative impact on the pace of school improvement.
- There is a basic sufficiency of learning resources. The quality of resources is good in English, mathematics and science but there are shortcomings in information technology, geography, history and religious education. The school has plans to progressively improve resources as it introduces new schemes of work.
- This inspection finds clear evidence of recent improvements that result from better teaching and curricular provision across the school. The school has made satisfactory progress in relation to the key issues for action raised in 1997. The improvement in standards and the quality of learning is most evident among the younger pupils who move to KS2 with higher levels of achievement.
- This report acknowledges the good progress made in the school and the key issues at the end of this report are to guide the school in planning the next stage of its development.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

The standards of achievement are satisfactory overall.

- In the 34 lessons or parts of lessons inspected, standards of achievement were judged to be very good in three per cent, good in 53 per cent, and satisfactory in 44 per cent.
- The children in the mixed nursery and reception class make good progress. In nursery and reception, the majority achieve good standards in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in the personal and social, creative and physical areas of learning.
- In KS1, pupils of differing abilities continue to make good progress. The pupils build well on their previous learning through a wide range of interesting work.

- In KS2, the overall rate of progress is satisfactory. Progress is often better in the early part of the key stage. By the end of Y6 most pupils make appropriate progress in English and mathematical skills and they learn a range of scientific knowledge. However, overall progress slows in Y5 and Y6 where the range of work is sometimes narrow. This is evident in all the foundation subjects.
- Across the school, the progress of pupils with SEN who receive additional support in literacy is generally satisfactory but progress is not always maintained when the pupils work with the whole class.
- In KS1, the standards of achievement are good in mathematics, Welsh as a second language, art and music.
- In both key stages, overall standards are satisfactory in English, science, design and technology, information technology, history, geography, religious education and physical education.
- In KS2, the standards of achievement are satisfactory in mathematics, Welsh as a second language, art and music.
- By the end of KS2, the boys generally out perform the girls in the standards attained in national tests. This is contrary to the national picture and is an established pattern over several years.
- In the 2001 KS1 NC tests and assessments, on the basis of teacher assessment, 86 per cent of pupils attained at least the nationally expected level 2 in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is above national figures and the average for similar schools².
- In the 2001 KS2 NC tests, 50 per cent of pupils attained at least the nationally expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science. These results are below national figures and those for similar schools. This year group was very small and included a high proportion of pupils with SEN.
- The school's results in NC tests and assessments show a gradual improvement over time.
- In KS1, the average proportion of pupils attaining level 2 or above over the last three years is 71%. Although this is below national figures, results have improved markedly year on year.
- In KS2, the average proportion of pupils attaining level 4 or above over the last three years is 42%. This is well below national figures.
- The provisional results for the 2002 NC tests and assessments indicate standards in KS1 are similar to 2001 and in KS2 there is a significant improvement in standards in English and mathematics. The school attributes this improvement to the provision of a "booster club" for pupils in Y6 and better lesson planning.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

The standards of achievement in using the key skill of numeracy across the curriculum are good. The standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and using information and communications technology (ICT) are satisfactory.

Good features

- The children under five make good progress in developing the skills of literacy and numeracy and become familiar with using computers and other ICT equipment during their work.
- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 use their knowledge of numeracy well to collect and present information in science, geography and art, for example.

² Schools having between 25% and 32% of pupils entitled to free school meals.

- Across the school, pupils are eager to contribute to lessons and most express themselves clearly. The younger pupils listen well to their teachers and each other.
- The use of writing across subjects is developing well in KS1.
- Pupils quickly master the basic techniques of operating computers and listening centres. The younger pupils make regular use of word processing, a graphics package and a simple database.

Shortcomings

- The pupils do not progressively develop their literacy and ICT skills as they move through the school. In some classes the pupils undertake a narrow range of work. This is particularly the case for the older pupils who make too little use of ICT.
- The older pupils in KS2 seldom sustain their listening with full attention. Many use a limited vocabulary and speak too informally. They lack sufficient structured opportunities to collaborate and solve problems.
- The use of writing is variable in KS2. Presentation often lacks care and the use of over structured worksheets or writing frames limits pupils' responses.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The overall quality of the school's provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. There are shortcomings in the provision for spiritual and cultural aspects.

- The pupils are happy in school; they feel valued and safe and they have positive relationships with their peers and the adults who work in the school.
- There are arrangements for whole-school assemblies on three days a week; on the other two days services are held in the classrooms. The main emphasis is on social and moral guidance, especially with the recent introduction of personal and social education topics as the framework for these sessions.
- The timing of assembly at the end of the afternoon sometimes results in too little time being available. As a consequence pupils do not sufficiently value and celebrate being part of a school community. In whole-school assemblies, religious stories are retold, hymns are sung and prayers said. Too little emphasis is given to providing opportunities for guided reflection and prayer.
- Pupils' spiritual development is appropriately promoted through, for example, lessons in religious education and English. The pupils successfully celebrate the main Christian Festivals, either in school or in St. Mary's Church. However, arrangements for the daily act of collective worship do not consistently meet requirements.
- The pupils show good respect for property and behave responsibly within the school. They know the difference between right and wrong behaviour and have a clear understanding of the need to obey school rules.
- The teachers encourage the pupils to have positive attitudes and they demonstrate good levels of respect and friendliness towards their teachers, visitors and each other. They take good care of school property.
- The pupils are polite and helpful; they respond positively to praise for effort, achievement and behaviour. The pupils' personal achievements are regularly celebrated in school.

- Pupils learn to consider the needs of the disadvantaged through hearing about the work of charitable organisations. They generously contribute time and money to a number of charitable causes.
- The pupils develop appropriate social skills and self-confidence, through their work in oracy and performances in school concerts and plays. The majority of pupils play together harmoniously and work well in pairs and small groups during lessons.
- Although the older pupils learn to be independent through experiences such as the residential outdoor pursuits course in Pentrellyncymer, they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their initiative and independence during lessons.
- Extra-curricular activities and visits suitably promote the pupils' awareness of Welsh heritage and culture. The use of incidental Welsh in school, the singing of Welsh songs and the study of topics with a local connection, in geography and history, raise pupils' awareness of the *Cwricwlwm Cymraeg* but they have too few opportunities to learn about local Welsh composers and artists.
- In religious education, the pupils gain insights into the traditions and customs of Christians, Jews, and Muslims but the school misses many opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of their own as well as others' values and beliefs. Little time is allocated to individual reflection on issues important to the pupils.
- Pupils' learn about aspects of life in other countries such as Mexico and St Lucia and earlier cultures, including those of the Celts and Romans. They study the techniques of established artists such as Klee and Sutherland and listen to the works of famous composers such as Gershwin, Mozart and Vivaldi both in music lessons and assemblies.
- Overall, the school does not sufficiently promote a lively involvement in, or curiosity to understand the lifestyles of people from different cultures. The pupils have too little understanding of the diversity of cultures. There is a whole- school policy on racism.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The overall quality of pupils' behaviour is good. The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning and generally persevere well with their work.

- The relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are good. The pupils are polite, friendly and co-operative.
- In KS1, the pupils show a high degree of interest in lessons and this is clearly reflected in the quality of their work.
- In KS2, levels of motivation and interest are variable. Early in the key stage, attitudes to learning are mostly positive but there are occasions when the older pupils lose interest and concentration. A significant minority find it hard to listen attentively and the quality of their work suffers accordingly.
- Across the school, the pupils work well together in small groups and maintain self-discipline well, without the need for constant supervision.
- The school has comprehensive arrangements for ensuring good behaviour and these are effective. The pupils know the rules of behaviour and generally follow them well. In particular, this positively contributes to the purposeful learning ethos the younger pupils experience.
- The pupils are happy in school and most enjoy their work. They treat the buildings and resources with respect. Playtimes are well ordered and boys and girls of different ages mix freely. Although games can be vigorous, there is an ethos of care whereby the older pupils 'look out for' the needs of the younger ones.

- Most parents confirm there is a happy and friendly atmosphere in the school.
- Individual pupils are given appropriate responsibilities that they carry out well. The older pupils in particular act as monitors and contribute to the smooth running of the school.
- A suitable reward system is used to promote good work and behaviour. A wide range of personal achievements is acknowledged. The whole school regularly celebrates exceptional improvement in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and the quality of their work.
- The school has effective arrangements to counter any misbehaviour, including verbal abuse that may result in bullying. The pupils have confidence in reporting any concerns that they may have to the adults in the school. During the inspection no such misbehaviour was seen or reported.
- No pupil has been excluded from school during the last 12 months.

4.3 Attendance

The overall level of attendance is satisfactory. The majority of pupils arrive punctually to school but a minority regularly disrupt the start of lessons by arriving late.

- The average attendance of pupils over the last three terms is 92.73 percent. This is a substantial improvement on the level of attendance at the time of the previous inspection.
- Registration is completed punctually at the beginning of morning and afternoon lessons. The marking of registers is generally accurate.
- The levels of unauthorised absences are widely variable, ranging between zero and 1.46 per cent over the last three terms. The recording of authorised and unauthorised absence is insufficiently rigorous in some class registers. Pupils registered as late arrivals are not always included in the school's figures for unauthorised absence as required by the National Assembly for Wales.
- The school makes a good effort to encourage parents to bring pupils to school on time and requests that they provide written confirmation to explain absences. Most parents comply with these expectations but a significant minority are slow to respond.
- The arrangements by the school to investigate unexplained absences are comprehensive and understood by the whole of the teaching staff. Appropriate support and advice is received from the Educational Welfare Officer.

5 QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are strengths in teaching the under fives and in KS1. Shortcomings in lesson planning and a limited range of teaching approaches sometimes limit the impact of teaching but all teachers are beginning to build well on clear schemes of work.

- In the 34 lessons or parts of lessons inspected, the quality of teaching was judged to be very good in three per cent of lessons, good in 47 per cent, satisfactory in 47 per cent and unsatisfactory in three per cent.
- The teaching of the under fives is well organised and planned. Planning is based on whole class themes and teaching is carefully linked to children's needs in each of the six areas of learning. The nursery nurse makes a positive contribution to teaching and learning and is fully involved in all aspects of work.

- The quality of teaching in KS1 ranges between very good and satisfactory. The range in KS2 is between good and unsatisfactory.
- Lesson planning is most effective where close attention is paid to the learning objectives identified in the termly plans. These provide a clear indication of subject content and map out progression in learning well.
- In English and mathematics the work is often carefully adapted for the differing needs of pupils. This aspect of planning is well developed across most subjects in KS1. In KS2, there is much evidence of differentiation in the planning in English and mathematics, and to a lesser degree in science, although planning is generally less precise towards the end of the key stage.
- Across the school, teachers make good use of the weekly planning framework but there is insufficient emphasis on identifying assessment opportunities and building on the results. Most lesson evaluations focus on how the lesson went rather than how well the learning objective was achieved by different groups of pupils.
- A good range of teaching strategies and organisational techniques is used in KS1. This aspect is also sometimes good in early KS2. Where good use is made of the classroom assistant and there is a good balance between teacher-led instruction and questioning and focused group work the teaching is effective.
- In upper KS2, where there is too much emphasis on directing the organisation and methods of work and too little attention to posing questions and building on the solutions the pupils provide the pace of lessons is often slow.
- The teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage their classes well. Expectations of achievement are highest and most consistent for the younger pupils. Levels of expectation vary in KS2. Towards the end of the key stage, expectations of factual knowledge remain high but the style of learning promoted is not always fully effective in teaching pupils how to use their learning and extend their achievements.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The school's procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress, including a baseline assessment for those under five, are systematic and efficient.

- Standardised tests in spelling and reading are carried out regularly and accurately. The results provide a continuous record of pupils' progress.
- The data gathered from the assessment of pupils' work is satisfactorily used to identify pupils with SEN but the teachers do not use this information sufficiently to plan for individual pupils' progress.
- The system of compiling individual pupil profiles is manageable and informative. The profiles enable teachers to closely monitor individual pupils' progress.
- The regular monitoring of children's achievements and the recording of assessments is well established for the children under five.
- The assessment of pupils' abilities is generally accurate but there are some discrepancies between teacher assessments and the results of national tests.
- The school is beginning to collate samples of pupils' work in subject portfolios and to judging it in relation to NC levels. This is at a very early stage.
- The annual written reports to parents are informative, skills-based and indicative of a good knowledge of individual pupils' progress. Teachers are available to discuss the progress of pupils with parents on open evenings and at other times.

- The performance of boys in KS2 is better than that of girls but the analysis of results does not result in significant changes to teaching strategies in relation to gender or higher ability.
- The pupils in KS2 are beginning to be involved in setting their own targets for improvement. This is evident at the end of KS2 but there is insufficient awareness of the need to consistently address the targets.
- The marking of written work is regular but does not offer pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work.

5.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements. The provision is good for the under fives and in KS1. The recently updated whole-school framework for the curriculum provides a good basis for further improvement but shortcomings in implementing the curriculum in KS2 mean the curriculum is not always appropriately balanced.

- The curriculum for the under fives successfully promotes the desirable learning outcomes. Planning is securely based on the six areas of learning. A good range of learning experiences is provided through well chosen whole-class themes.
- The quality of the curriculum in KS1 is good. There is appropriate breadth and balance across all subjects. This good provision ensures that pupils benefit from both interesting and suitably challenging tasks that promote good levels of involvement.
- The curriculum in KS2 is well planned, but shortcomings in its implementation reduce its impact to satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and generally appropriate to pupils' needs early in the key stage. Towards the end of the key stage, there is an imbalance between subjects and lesson planning does not adequately promote progression in learning. This is most evident in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- For instance, the pupils in Y5 and Y6 undertake only a very narrow range of work in information technology, geography and physical education. The absence of sufficient regular provision in these subjects means pupils do not build adequately on their previous learning. Progress is too slow and the standards achieved do not match the pupils' capabilities.
- There are also shortcomings in the organisation of the school day in KS2 that reduce the teaching time available to below the recommended level of 23.5 hours per week. This further reduces the impact of curricular provision.
- Despite the absence of a policy or agreed strategy to promote the development of key skills the staff have made a good start in identifying opportunities to develop key skills within the recently introduced schemes of work.
- Pupils in both key stages benefit from regular homework and this has a positive impact, especially in the core subjects.
- The school's arrangements for personal and social education (PSE) are unsatisfactory. The school has recently introduced aspects of a suitable scheme of work but has not audited its curriculum to ensure all aspects are adequately covered.
- A range of extra-curricular activities including some competitive opportunities in sport, suitably enriches the curriculum. The curriculum is extended through regular educational visits and the older pupils benefit from attending a residential experience.
- The school satisfactorily promotes social inclusion. The pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and all school activities but, although the school has identified the gender imbalance, with far more boys than girls in KS2, it has not addressed sufficiently the issue of promoting girls' achievement. The provision is effective in KS1 but this is not always built upon in KS2.

- The provision to ensure pupils of differing abilities maintain optimum progress is effective in KS1 but lacks consistency in KS2.
- There are no pupils for whom the NC is modified or disappplied.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is satisfactory.

- Relationships in the school are positive and supportive. The pupils feel secure and valued at work and play. The level of supervision during break and lunch times is adequate. The supervisors carry out their duties carefully.
- The school is developing its assessment procedures so that pupils will be more involved in assessing and monitoring their own progress and receive more focused guidance on how to improve. The setting of individual targets is at early stage in KS2.
- An appropriate Health and Safety policy offers useful guidance to teachers.
- The procedures for Child Protection are correctly understood and implemented by staff.
- Fire drills are held regularly. Two teachers, but no ancillary staff, hold current First Aid qualifications. There is an accident book but no formal system to record hazards and the action taken. The caretaker informs the headteacher of any potential hazards but these are not formally recorded.
- The local education authority (LEA) manages arrangements for periodic risk assessments and carrying out safety checks on electrical and physical education equipment on behalf of the governors. As in many schools, there is not a designated governor with oversight of health and safety issues.
- The school maintains a positive liaison with the Educational Psychologist, the SEN and health services, and other outside agencies.
- The arrangements for all aspects of PSE are insufficiently formalised although some areas are addressed in class and whole school assemblies.
- There is no assurance that all pupils cover a full PSE programme. The school governors confirm it is agreed policy to include sex education as part of the curriculum but the arrangements for sex education; to raise pupils' awareness of the misuse of drugs and how to ensure personal safety are not sufficiently formalised.
- The headteacher has been informed of a small number of potential threats to the health and safety of the pupils observed during the inspection.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

The school's provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory.

- There are 21 pupils on the SEN register; none has a statement of SEN. These pupils have full access to all subjects of the NC and religious education.
- The headteacher, who teaches a class full-time, and a teacher, who visits the school for one afternoon a week, share the role of SEN co-ordinator (SENCO). This arrangement is not fully effective.
- The part-time teacher withdraws small groups of pupils with SEN for support in literacy. The pupils follow suitable learning programmes. Another part-time teacher also withdraws pupils for language and mathematics one afternoon a week.

- Appropriate individual education plans (IEPs) are written by the visiting teacher in consultation with class teachers. They identify appropriate learning targets and progress is carefully monitored and dated.
- However, teachers' planning does not indicate that sufficient attention is paid to the details of the IEPs when planning work for the whole class.
- The part time classroom assistants make a positive contribution to the progress of slow learners.
- The pupils with SEN make slow but steady progress in the work undertaken in the withdrawal sessions. They benefit from working in small groups rather than individually. Taken overall, their progress is satisfactory across the full range of the curriculum
- Those pupils in KS2 who require a closer focus on their literacy skills are not using enough computer software and other multi-sensory resources to support their learning.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The overall quality of the school's partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is satisfactory.

- The school provides a good range of information for parents through regular newsletters. This includes details of the topics being studied by the younger children.
- Parents of children joining the nursery are provided with helpful booklets that provide valuable additional information. This encourages the parents to help with their children's learning.
- The prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents include a range of useful information. These documents are written in a clear and easily accessible style but they do not include all the required information. This in breach of statutory requirements.
- In particular, the school does not publish its NC test and assessment results together with comparative information to enable parents to see the school's results in context. A number of other important omissions were drawn to the school's attention.
- Most parents are very supportive of the school and its staff. This was confirmed in the inspectors' meeting with parents and the responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire.
- However, a significant minority would like more information about the curriculum, their children's progress, and a greater emphasis on the role of parents in school life. There was also some disquiet about the standards of work and a small number said their children did not like school.
- Inspectors find the school is already providing better information about the curriculum for all parents. This includes newsletters and a school magazine that features the pupils' work.
- The limited involvement of parents in school life indicates scope for improvement in this area. During the inspection, there was no evidence of children being unhappy at school but inspectors find standards are not always high enough and children are not always encouraged to take sufficient pride in their work.
- Many parents appreciate open evenings held to discuss their children's progress and they praise the quality of the annual written reports. The meetings for nursery parents and the opportunity to spend an introductory half-day in school before their children join the nursery, are valued by parents.
- There is an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that raises substantial additional funds for the school through social events and a weekly 'Bonus Ball' scheme. While no parent regularly helps in school, some parents are ready and willing to help with extra-curricular events and many attend school functions and performances.

- The school has an appropriate home-school agreement, but only a minority of parents have signed this.
- The school plays an important role in the community. For instance, concerts and seasonal services held in the church successfully promote awareness of the school's work amongst local people. There are good links with the local church and local ministers regularly contribute to school assemblies. The pupils visit a nearby residential home and provide concerts for old-age pensioners.
- The school maintains satisfactory links with other local primary schools, including some opportunities for competitive games. Links with the High Schools that receive pupils from this school are secure. Arrangements include inter-school visits and the implementation of projects in mathematics and science at the end of Y6 that link with work in Y7.
- The school maintains positive liaison with the relevant services provided by the LEA and the health service and regularly receives visits from organisations such as the emergency services, which come into school to give talks on various aspects of safety.
- The school receives students from Bangor University, North East Wales Institute (NEWI) and Deeside College. Several students in Y10 and Y11 at Holywell High School come to the school for work experience. These partnerships are beneficial to the school.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Taken overall, the school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.

- The school does not have a formal policy or agreed strategy to promote partnership with industry.
- None of the teaching staff have received training in industry.
- The governing body endeavours to create and sustain worthwhile links with local companies and small businesses. There are a few established links that provide curricular and financial benefits for the school, such as those with a local bus company.
- Links with the Chester Chronicle Newspaper Group and the Deeside Power Station are effective. The pupils' work in literacy and science is extended through the worthwhile educational experiences these partnerships provide. They gain appropriate insights into the world of work.
- Local businesses are supportive to the school and regularly donate prizes; the school has received sponsorship for a set of sports kit from a local restaurant.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- The school follows a locally recommended approach to self-evaluation. Staff and governors annually discuss and review progress with initiatives included in the SDP. The conclusions from these discussions form the basis of the next year's SDP.
- The current SDP is a sound document. It provides a clear picture of the desired goals for a three-year period and identifies a good range of objectives for improvement in the current year. There is a useful evaluation of progress and the staff play an increasingly effective role in helping to identify aspects for further improvement.
- The separate action plans for literacy, numeracy and ICT are a good feature.

- Most of the school's goals for improvement focus on improving provision and considerable progress is being made. However, there is a lack of achievement orientated targets and few details of finance are provided in the SDP. There is no indication of the relative priority of the goals and targets the school has set itself.
- Although the school has set appropriate end of KS2 targets for attainment and receives a comprehensive analysis of the school's performance in NC tests, there is little evidence of the use of this information to focus teaching or provision.
- The SDP is a good basis to move the school forward but there are shortcomings in planning the way forward. There is no assurance that strategies for monitoring and evaluation will focus on the key whole-school goals and help to ensure consistency, in issues such as planning and the use of assessments to group pupils.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The overall quality of leadership and efficiency is satisfactory.

- The headteacher is well supported by an enthusiastic staff in setting the direction for the school's work. There is a strong emphasis on raising standards and improving the quality of provision.
- The school has adopted a well considered mission statement and has agreed a number of aims in key areas over the medium term. There is appropriate reference to equality of opportunity and the school's key values of "self-esteem", "co-operation and partnership" and "tolerance and respect" are increasingly reflected in its work.
- The headteacher, with the appropriate support of governors, provides satisfactory leadership in directing and managing the school's work. The school is well ordered and day-to-day routines are well established.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is still at an early stage of development. All teachers make a positive contribution to developing the school. The headteacher is particularly well supported by the acting deputy headteacher.
- The governing body meets regularly and has appropriate arrangements for committees of governors. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The governors meet most of their statutory obligations. However, they do not set professional targets for senior staff and do not ensure the full range of information, including NC results and school policies, are made known to parents in the required documents.
- The governing body has a prudent approach to budget setting and manages this aspect well. It is careful to ensure an adequate level of staffing and learning resources is provided for. The governors conscientiously monitor income and expenditure but are not formally involved in evaluating the impact of spending decisions.
- There are inefficiencies in the organisation of the school day that result in the older pupils not studying some subjects in sufficient depth.
- The school is well supported by the secretary who ensures the impact of necessary day-to-day administration on teaching is minimal.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory.

- Taken overall, there are sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. The teachers are suitably deployed across the age range but the lack of a part-time teacher to teach the headteacher's class once a week, means that he has insufficient

non-contact time available to carry out his managerial role effectively. This is having a negative impact on the pace of school improvement.

- The governing body has not set professional targets for the headteacher and deputy headteacher as required. This hampers the school's overall development.
- There are no formalised arrangements for teachers' professional review. The teachers benefit from attending a range of in-service training courses but arrangements to disseminate and implement new ideas are largely informal. The school is preparing for the introduction of performance management.
- There is a good number of learning support staff, comprising a nursery nurse and three classroom assistants. The support staff makes a positive contribution to teaching and learning where they are fully involved in lessons. This is most evident with the younger pupils. In KS2, the role of the assistant is not always defined clearly enough by the teacher.
- The lunchtime and supervisory staff provide effective levels of supervision and actively encourage the pupils to play a variety of games during the lunch break.
- There is sufficient accommodation for the number of pupils on role. The nursery and reception classroom has been improved but the location of the outdoor learning area remains a disadvantage. The four classrooms are of adequate size but lack sufficient storage areas. There is sometimes a lack of adequate ventilation in the classrooms that has a negative impact on learning.
- There is a good size hall, a multipurpose room housing the library, several work areas adjoining the classrooms and sufficient outdoor games facilities. However, these facilities are seldom fully and effectively used.
- The building and site are well managed and kept clean by the caretaker.
- There is a basic sufficiency of learning resources. The quality of resources is good in English, mathematics and science but there are shortcomings in information technology, geography, history and religious education. The school has plans to progressively improve resources as it introduces new schemes of work. The impact of resources on the standards of achievement is satisfactory.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The school's provision for children under five is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes in the six areas of learning. The children are well prepared to begin work on the NC.

The standards of achievement are consistently good across the six areas of learning in both the nursery and reception year.

Good Features

Language, literacy and communication skills

- The children make good progress in developing language, literacy and communication skills. They talk confidently in class to the teacher and communicate easily with each other in role-play and small group work. Their vocabulary is well extended and reinforced by the thematic approach to their activities.

- They listen carefully to stories that they eagerly repeat in detail. They are keen to question as well as answer and most children respond to instructions promptly
- The children enjoy learning Welsh. They acquire a wide range of words, phrases and songs that they use and perform with increasing confidence.
- Children in reception have a good knowledge of the sounds and forms of letters and are very familiar with books. They read simple words and are keen to be “heard” reading aloud and some can recognise rhyming words.
- By the age of five, the children write letters and numbers correctly and the majority write their names clearly. Some children form legible sentences using basic punctuation in their emergent writing books. The children thoroughly enjoy their group work in writing. They enthusiastically illustrate the class “Big Book” for example.

Mathematical development

- The children reliably count objects and numbers up to at least 10 in the nursery and to more than 20 in the reception class. The more mature children can count forwards and backwards.
- They are fully conversant with different coins. They confidently name common coins and count up differing amounts of money.
- The children sort objects according to colour and pattern and carefully compare their sizes. They have a good knowledge of shapes and their properties.
- They learn to sequence events in time and to give directions by controlling a floor robot.
- The children make good progress in all aspects of mathematics including knowledge of weight, length and capacity. They successfully develop their knowledge through many and varied activities with dry and wet sand and water.

Knowledge and Understanding

- The children have a good understanding of varying weather conditions, make sensible attempts at forecasting and make their own weather symbols. Most thrive on watching their own recorded performances as ‘weather men’.
- They experiment with basic forces such as pulling and pushing and can list various household objects which humans have to control. They understand the concepts of sinking and swimming.
- They know the life cycle of a butterfly and understand that living things, including the seeds they have planted and animals, grow and require food and water.
- The children are beginning to identify change in themselves and others and to understand there is a difference between old and new.

Personal and Social Development

- The children generally work well together. They learn to share resources and to approach their activities purposefully.
- Most children take turns and share well when playing on the “beach”, playing “table top” games, or joining in “fairground” games outside. They are comfortable with adults, they benefit from good role models and relationships are good.
- They are developing a respect for property and an awareness of the need to treat those less fortunate than themselves with sensitivity.
- The majority of nursery and reception children make good progress in taking responsibility for their own hygiene, dressing themselves and putting their things away.

- They have a developing knowledge of various Christian festivals and know a good number of Bible stories.

Creative Development

- The children are very enthusiastic and committed in their role-play activities; they sing a range of English and Welsh songs well.
- They make music with interest, using a variety of untuned percussion instruments that they play with gusto.
- The children progress well in art by experimenting imaginatively with colours and patterns, textures and shape. They use a wide variety of materials well and explore them freely when making their three-dimensional creations.

Physical Development

- The children are generally well co-ordinated. The majority develop good fine motor control when using small equipment and malleable materials.
- In their work on “fairground” challenges, the children persevere patiently to improve their aim, throwing and catching skills.
- They make good progress in jumping, hopping, walking and running.
- They take turns well and encourage others to succeed. They act with maturity in movement work. They find and maintain their own space and many are aware of the effect of strenuous activity on their bodies.

Shortcomings

- Not all children are continuously and effectively challenged in some aspects of number and physical development.

English

The standards of achievement in English are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good Features

- In KS1 the pupils eagerly contribute to discussion and they are developing a broad range of vocabulary and expressions. Many speak clearly, drawing on an expanding vocabulary and they formulate questions intelligently.
- Most pupils listen carefully and are interested in what they hear. They carry out instructions promptly and the majority can re-tell a narrative in sequence.
- Pupils identify the title and setting of the books they read. Many are developing a secure knowledge of phonics and use clear strategies to help them with their reading. The more able read with expression and fluency and with satisfactory understanding.
- Most pupils write in a lively way and they link events convincingly. They label diagrams and write directions clearly. In their work on reports, they demonstrate a good sense of writing for a specific purpose.
- The majority make steady progress in developing a legible style of handwriting.
- In KS2, most pupils articulate their ideas clearly and develop their vocabulary appropriately. They demonstrate interest in acquiring and using new words.
- Some pupils listen intelligently and develop their ideas well from what they have heard.

- The majority make good progress in reading a broad range of reading materials. They interpret character and motivation well and respond positively to their paired and group reading experiences.
- The more able pupils are developing useful ‘skim-reading’ skills. In their work on “The Listeners” the younger pupils make commendable efforts at analysing theme, setting, mood and opinion.
- Most pupils write convincingly for different audiences and understand the difference between factual and creative writing. They work without inhibition when writing dialogues and scripts and show a keen ear for conversation. They are beginning to vary the length of sentences to engage the reader.
- Less able pupils are learning to structure their ideas by using writing frames constructively.
- By the end of KS2, the more able pupils are able to organise their thoughts effectively and to argue the ‘pros and cons’ of an issue.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, too many pupils make basic errors in constructing and demarcating sentences.
- In early KS2, a significant minority of pupils have erratic listening skills.
- Across KS2, the pupils’ presentation of work, including spelling, grammar and punctuation, is often careless.
- Less able pupils and those with SEN make slow progress in reading and the use of phonics.

Mathematics

The standards of achievement in mathematics are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 are confident in using basic numeracy skills. They have a good knowledge of number bonds to 10 and numerical patterns to 100, including odd and even numbers. They enthusiastically identify patterns such as nine more on a 100 number square.
- Pupils accurately sort, match and sequence numbers to 20. The majority of older pupils understand addition and subtraction to 100. They show a growing confidence in making calculations and demonstrate a firm understanding of place value.
- Pupils in Y1 and Y2 are learning number tables and patterns, including the 2’s, 5’s and 10’s. The pupils recognise the value of coins, total money to 99p and calculate the change needed from small purchases.
- Younger pupils confidently identify and name two and three-dimensional shapes and the older pupils create suitable block graphs and use tallying to gather information. They determine whether objects are heavier or lighter than a kilogram, read the time accurately in hours, measure length with increasing accuracy and have a developing knowledge of simple fractions.
- In KS2, younger pupils continue to reinforce their work in numeracy with an increasing understanding of number patterns. The most able pupils have a firm command of place value and a satisfactory knowledge of multiplication tables. They subtract from two digit numbers using the “bridging” method. The pupils in Y4 make calculations using the four operations involving numbers to 1,000 and use a variety of units including weight and money.
- Across Y3 and Y4, pupils develop a sound knowledge of the properties of two dimensional shapes and know how to calculate perimeter. They gain practical experience of measurement

by recording the heights of pupils in the class and presenting the results in table and graph form.

- In Y5 and Y6, the pupils master more complex operations such as multiplication and division and begin to understand the relationship between decimals and fractions. Many confidently round numbers to the nearest ten or 100. The most able quickly make complex calculations, such as multiplying two and three digit numbers in their heads.
- The pupils make satisfactory progress in their ability to name and describe the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They have a sound understanding of symmetry and confidently name the different types of angle. They draw and measure angles with increasing accuracy.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings in KS1.
- In KS2, pupils' ability to talk about mathematics and explain their thinking is underdeveloped. They do not develop and practise a sufficient range of methods of working when solving calculations. Some rely on the simple strategy of 'counting-on'.
- They seldom participate in sufficiently challenging investigations or tackle problem solving exercises with sufficient urgency. The poor presentation of some pupils' work inhibits progress.
- The older pupils do not undertake sufficient practical work involving measurement, nor do they find their own solutions to challenging mathematical problems.

Science

The overall standards of achievement in science are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 have a sound knowledge of the properties of different materials and know that some physical changes, such as water freezing when making fruit lollies, are reversible. They also discover which setting of the toaster makes the "best" toast.
- They observe carefully and have a good knowledge of mini-beasts and are beginning to use simple scientific vocabulary, including "mixture", "change", "freezing", "melting" and "predict" correctly.
- In early KS2, pupils have a developing knowledge of the requirements of a healthy diet and appropriately group healthy and less healthy foods. They understand the basic conditions for seeds to germinate.
- They distinguish between magnetic and non-magnetic materials and find out that different food solids melt at different temperatures. They confidently name the uses of electricity.
- The older pupils assemble a simple electrical circuit and satisfactorily explain how it works. They have a developing knowledge of forces and life cycles.
- They further their knowledge of materials by investigating thermal conductivity to distinguish between conductors and insulators.
- By the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory general knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and physical processes. They use a range of scientific terms appropriately and have a satisfactory knowledge of the function of the major organs and structures of the human body.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not sufficiently and consistently develop their scientific knowledge in a wide enough range of topics, for example, knowledge of living things and forces.
- The older pupils do not adequately develop their investigations by extending the basic task, setting up fair tests and recording their findings in a sufficient variety of ways.

Welsh second language

The standards of achievement in Welsh as a second language are good in KS1 and early KS2. No lesson was observed in the Y5 and Y6 class but the scrutiny of pupils' work, the teachers' records and planning together with observations of the use of incidental Welsh during the school day indicate standards are satisfactory.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 speak with confidence and with natural pronunciation. They are developing a broad spoken vocabulary to accompany their topics. They use familiar language patterns accurately and often speak in full sentences.
- They listen and respond well to instructions.
- The pupils perform the *Helpwr y Dydd* duties as monitors conscientiously. They exchange greetings, describe the weather and dismiss the groups in the class in order.
- Taken overall, most pupils in KS2 make satisfactory progress in speaking, reading and writing Welsh. Progress in the early part of the key stage is often good.
- The pupils intone correctly and can adapt learned sentence patterns well into role-play exercises.
- Most pupils make good progress in reading familiar words and sentences.
- Satisfactory progress is made in writing, for example in preparing to write their own booklets on "Harri Morgan" the pupils use writing frame structures appropriately.
- In most classes, the pupils learn well from well-planned activities, including games, the use of listening centres and conducting surveys amongst their classmates.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings in KS1.
- The older pupils in KS2 do not record their work sufficiently or build effectively on their spoken vocabulary.
- The pupils make insufficient use of audio-visual resources and ICT applications to extend and reinforce their knowledge and skills.

Design and technology

No lessons in design and technology took place during the inspection. The scrutiny of pupils' books and work, plus teachers' records and planning, indicate that standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good Features

- Pupils in both key stages use their mathematical and artistic skills well to support their work in design and technology. They mark out, measure, cut, join fix and glue their materials with developing care and accuracy.

- Pupils in KS1 observe the styles of different houses and design, and make their own models, paying particular attention to the shapes and structures within their houses.
- Using construction kits of differing levels of complexity, they construct models of their own design and evaluate their suitability for the purpose.
- They explore the process of folding and make different types of hinges for specific functions.
- Using their scientific knowledge about levers and how puppets work, the pupils successfully make puppets and caterpillars with moving parts. They collaborate well as a class on designing a house for their puppets.
- Many pupils describe the process clearly and make good attempts at labelling their plans.
- In KS2, pupils investigate different types of slippers and design a style best suited to their purpose. They make steady progress in sewing, selecting suitable materials and appraising the functionality of what they produce.
- They explore the internet to access different recipes for sandwiches and pizzas before designing their own.
- In their work on musical instruments, they modify their product to improve the sound made.

Shortcomings

- Pupils in both key stages have not sufficiently developed their designing and making skills, and do not use a sufficient range of tools.
- In KS2, many pupils show too little pride in their work. They do not record and label their work clearly to show the stages of development nor do they take sufficient care in making and finishing the end product.
- The older pupils make insufficient use of control, data handling and design programs to aid their research and project development.

Information technology

The standards of achievement in information technology are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 use a dictionary on a CD-ROM and know how to use the index and run a search. They use the basic functions of a word processing package to input and alter text and confidently print their work, such as postcards from “Barnaby Bear”.
- The pupils use a graphics program to make designs and are learning to construct a search using a database. They compile and enter data from their survey of mini-beasts, generate graphs and predict the outcome of a search. They know the movement of a controllable robot is determined by the instructions they type in.
- In Y3 and Y4, the pupils use program functions appropriately to edit text when writing playscripts and learn to combine text and graphics when selecting images of Paul Klees’ work from internet pages.
- They use databases to input data about holiday destinations, how the pupils travel to school and how the amount of water affects plant growth. The results are printed in a variety of graphs. The pupils have used a light sensor to monitor events and are learning to program a screen turtle using “logo” program.
- In Y5 and Y6, pupils use a suitable spreadsheet program appropriately to present information about tuck shop sales and the results of a one hundred metre sprint.

- They use the internet to research recipes for a design and technology project and use a desktop publishing program to write letters and design posters combining clipart designs and text.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not progressively develop the skills of information technology as they move through the school.
- The pupils do not use a sufficient range of simulation programs.
- The majority of pupils do not make enough regular use of ICT applications to reinforce their developing skills.

History

The standards of achievement in history are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils learn about important events and people in history, including the Fire of London, Florence Nightingale and Laura Ashley. They are beginning to understand that things change over time.
- In Y3 and Y4, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of some important features of life in Celtic times such as houses, clothes and jewellery. They also gain knowledge of Tudor life, including the monarchs of the period.
- In Y5 and Y6, pupils compare Victorian schools and kitchens with the present day, have a basic knowledge of aspects of Victorian life and know that inventions such as the railways date from this period. In their study of World War 2 they learn about the impact of rationing, evacuation and air raids.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not progressively and consistently develop their historical knowledge as they move through the school.
- The older pupils, in particular, do not sufficiently develop the skills of enquiry and have only a limited knowledge of historical sources. They do not study historical topics in sufficient detail.

Geography

The standards of achievement in geography are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils observe the weather, identify the appropriate clothes for holidays in different climates, use and draw maps and plans and both identify and record features in the locality. For instance, they name the different types of houses and name a variety of forms of transport and relate these to their journey to school.
- In Y3 and Y4, pupils further develop their knowledge of climate and relate this to different countries on a world map. They make comparisons between life in Bagillt and living on the island of St Lucia. They identify similarities and differences and begin to understand that the environment affects how people live.
- In Y5 and Y6, pupils identify the physical features of Snowdonia and understand the importance of accurate weather information for those working or visiting the National Park. They study weather data and present graphs of visitor numbers. They make simple

comparisons between the village of Bagillt and the Conwy Valley and use maps to identify features.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not use a sufficient variety of photographic and map resources to help them make comparisons.
- The older pupils have insufficient knowledge of human and physical features and do not make enough use of maps and geographical data to help them begin to understand the links between landscape and human activity.

Art

The standards of achievement in art are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 are strongly encouraged to think about their artwork before embarking upon it. They practice the skills required and after sensible discussion they develop their own ideas with maturity.
- They enthusiastically express their ideas in different media, such as exploring shape and colour based on observations of dissected fruit.
- Influenced by their learning about Mexico, the pupils further develop their identification and understanding of pattern and colour.
- In their work based on that of Degas, the pupils develop greater skill in line drawing and a good sense of form in their three dimensional sculptures.
- Pupils successfully merge their own imaginative ideas with those gleaned from books, as in their “Zig Zag” work. The illustrated booklets they produce demonstrate that the majority have a good eye for observed detail and approach the task carefully.
- They compare their success in various materials and are beginning to use subject specific terms appropriately.
- In KS2, pupils make good progress in colour mixing, shading and toning such as in their work based on that of Paul Klee.
- Many pupils are beginning to evaluate famous artwork sensibly and to use what they have learned in their own work, for example their “Seafarer” pictures. They produce authentic-looking and well finished Celtic jewellery based on careful research.
- When collaborating on the “myths and legends collage” the pupils sketch their design and carefully select and arrange the materials. Their work shows developing skills in stitching and weaving to good effect.
- The older pupils make steady progress in observational drawing and they paint landscapes inspired by the works of Constable and Sutherland.

Shortcomings

- The pupils do not progressively develop their artistic skills as they move through the school. In particular many pupils in KS2 do not sufficiently improve a wide enough range of techniques.

Music

The standards of achievement in music are good at KS1. During the inspection it was only possible to observe work in music in the lower KS2 class, but, taking into account the singing in assemblies and the records of work undertaken in upper KS2, the standards achieved are satisfactory.

Good Features

- Pupils in KS1 enjoy performing a range of songs and they confidently play their own compositions in an ensemble.
- They maintain a steady pulse, copy various rhythm patterns accurately and use body parts, chopsticks and other percussion instruments effectively. They stop and start their playing promptly and obey the instructions of dynamics well in their performances.
- When listening to a varied repertoire of recorded music the pupils readily identify patterns, instruments and musical moods, for example in works by Messaien and Vivaldi.
- The pupils produce interesting graphic scores using various ‘mini-beasts’ and relish their opportunities to compose variations on their work.
- The younger pupils in KS2 know the rondo form and use simple musical terminology correctly.
- They compose rhythmic scores using the names of a variety of buildings and can both identify and create a number of different rhythms. They thoughtfully evaluate whether they have changed a piece of music for the better or not.
- The older pupils explore the many different ways voices can be used. They listen to recorded music and singing from different cultural settings, including pieces for ceremonial and festival events.
- They distinguish between ‘plainchant’ and ‘rap’ and consider the qualities and characteristics of different musical sounds. The pupils have opportunities to emulate such styles, create graphic scores and to use instruments to accompany their performances of songs such as ‘London’s burning’.
- A small number of pupils in KS2 benefit from regular tuition in learning to play the violin.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings in KS1.
- In KS2, the older pupils do not record their work sufficiently, either in written, graphic or audio form.
- The quality of singing by the older pupils in assembly is lacklustre. The pupils show little enjoyment. They do not practice basic singing techniques sufficiently.

Physical Education

The standards of achievement in physical education are satisfactory in both key stages. It was only possible to observe a limited range of work in physical education during the inspection but judgements are based on discussion with staff, video evidence and scrutiny of school planning.

Good Features

- Pupils in both key stages make good progress in dance.
- They respond sensitively to music by using different body parts well to convey expression.

- Their movements incorporate a variety of steps, skips and jumps. They vary direction by turning, travelling forwards, sideways and backwards, and sometimes they increase their speed to a gallop whilst maintaining control well.
- They respond positively to a range of stimuli, express themselves confidently and easily change speed, level and direction.
- The pupils collaborate well in pairs and have good awareness of space.
- Most pupils make steady progress in developing bat and ball skills, including throwing, aiming and catching.
- The older pupils persevere well to improve their ball skills during the football coaching lessons.
- The majority show interest, carefully listen and respond to instructions both promptly and accurately.

Shortcomings

- Those pupils with a ‘natural flair’ and good movement or games skills do not sufficiently sharpen their skills because the work is rarely challenging enough.
- The less able pupils do not spend enough time practising the basics skills to enable them to sufficiently improve their co-ordination and fitness.

Religious Education

The standards of achievement in religious education are satisfactory in both key stages. The provision suitably reflects the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

Good Features

- In KS1, pupils explore feelings and the need for rules. They have a developing knowledge of Old and New Testament stories including the creation and Jesus befriending Zachaeus.
- In Y3 and Y4, pupils learn about important Christian Festivals, such as Easter and Christmas. They know a church is a place of worship, name the main features and are beginning to understand some features of worship. They know that Christians undertake special ceremonies such as baptism, confirmation and marriage at key points in a person’s life.
- The pupils are introduced to the Hindu faith through the story of Rama and Sita and learn the symbolism of light from a diva.
- In Y5 and Y6, pupils recall a variety of Bible stories. They name the qualities of leaders such as Abraham and Moses and know that Jesus teaches his followers through parables such as the Prodigal Son. They compare the features of Christian churches and begin to make comparisons with the artefacts of the Synagogue and Mosque.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not consistently develop their knowledge of religious traditions and customs as they move through the school.
- They do not use a sufficient range of texts, artefacts and other religious sources including ICT to develop their enquiry skills, and help them develop greater insight into the life of children growing up in different family traditions.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

Following the previous inspection the school implemented a suitable action plan but progress in making improvements was initially slow. This inspection finds clear evidence of recent progress as a result of improvements in teaching and curricular provision across the school. The school has made satisfactory progress in relation to the key issues for action raised in 1997. The improvement in standards and the quality of learning is most evident among the younger pupils who move to KS2 with higher levels of achievements.

(1) raise standards of achievement in science in KS1 and information and design and technology in both key stages;

- The school has successfully raised standards in these subjects from unsatisfactory to satisfactory.

(2) devise and implement a method of whole-school planning that incorporates syllabuses and schemes of work and ensures continuity and progression within and across both key stages;

- The school has recently implemented updated schemes of work that form a secure framework for progression in learning across the school. The subject planning is thorough; it provides clear learning objectives that most teachers build well on in their day-to-day planning. Despite this good provision there is a lack of consistency in implementing the planning towards the end of KS2. A further problem is that the blocking of isolated units of work in subjects such as physical education results in fragmented learning, rather than the progressive development of knowledge and skills.

(3) develop the role of subject co-ordinators to enable them to identify the skills, concepts, knowledge and resources required and to evaluate the curriculum in practice;

- The role of subject co-ordinators is still at an early stage of development, although recent progress is very encouraging. Several co-ordinators have audited subject resources in relation to the new units of work and improved provision. The staff has benefited from helpful advice about subject planning from LEA advisors and a start has been made in monitoring teaching and learning in the core subjects. However, as yet most co-ordinators do not have a clear view of standards and quality across the school in their subject(s) and have not collected evidence of pupils' work to exemplify current standards.

(4) implement a system of appraisal for staff development that informs a programme of in-service training related to the needs of the school;

- The requirements for appraisal have been replaced by a performance management scheme. Although the school is aware of the need to prepare for this scheme it has made no agreed plans to do so. The SDP identifies the main staff development needs and teachers have attended a range of courses and received advice in school on a number of important professional aspects.

(5) improve provision for the early years children by:

(a) devising and implementing methods of planning and assessment which relate to the requirements of the six areas of learning;

- The school has made good progress in this area and the children achieve well.

(b) reviewing the arrangements for early years children, particularly the use of accommodation.

- The accommodation has been refurbished and good use is made of the workspace alongside the classroom, the hall and the outdoor activity area.

(6) improve present assessment and recording procedures in order to make them more manageable for teachers and more effective in raising standards of achievement;

- The school has good arrangements to monitor pupils' achievement and progress in English, mathematics and science through the regular administration of standardised tests. An individual profile of work is maintained for each pupils and a good start has been made on building up subject assessment records.

(7) build upon the partnership with parents to secure and increase their involvement in the life of the school and in particular to improve levels of attendance.

- The quality of partnership with parents remains satisfactory. They appreciate the school's open door policy, feel the teachers are approachable and value the information provided that encourages them to help their children. However, a significant minority of parents feel the school is not proactive enough in providing information and seeking to involve them in the life of the school. The overall rate of attendance has improved since the last inspection and is consistently above 90 per cent. However, a significant minority of parents are slow to ensure their children's regular attendance and punctuality.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

In order to raise standards and further improve the quality of education, the school and the governing body, with the support of appropriate agencies, should:

- continue the good efforts to further raise standards in those subjects judged satisfactory in both key stages;
- improve the presentation of pupils' work, especially in KS2;
- develop teachers' marking and lesson planning, link assessments to key learning objectives and use the information to match the work more closely to the pupils' prior knowledge;
- devise a comprehensive policy and fully implement a cross-curricular scheme of work for personal and social education;
- develop suitable teaching strategies to promote the achievement of girls in KS2;
- review the provision for pupils with SEN and ensure they are fully and effectively included in whole-class lessons;
- ensure the headteacher is provided with sufficient non-contact time to effectively manage the school;
- devise and implement rigorous managerial procedures, to include focused monitoring, and build on whole-school evaluations to set carefully prioritised and manageable goals for improvement;
- ensure the statutory requirements are met for setting professional development targets for senior staff, providing the required information in the prospectus and annual governors' report to parents, ensuring the rigorous recording of absence, punctuality and any potential threats to health and safety and ensuring effective arrangements are made for the daily act of collective worship.

APPENDIX

A Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Glan Aber
School type	Community
Age -range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Bootend Bagillt Flintshire
Post-Code	CH6 6LW
Telephone Number	01352 711995

Head teacher	Mr I. F. Roberts
Date of appointment	1 st September 1995
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Councillor K. Jones
Registered Inspector	Mr M T Ridout
Dates of inspection	2 nd – 4 th July 2002

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	6	11	12	15	11	16	8	13	92

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	4	2	4.2

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20 : 1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	6 : 1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	23
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.05 : 1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	Reception	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Summer 2001	93.0	92.0	93.04	92.68
Autumn 2001	92.0	90.69	92.55	91.75
Spring 2002	90.5	95.06	95.7	93.75

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

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS

END OF KS1: 2001

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2001			Number of pupils in Y2 : 14						
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	14	71	14	0
		National	0	0	4	13	62	21	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	14	50	36	0
		National	0	0	4	13	54	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	0	14	43	43	0
		National	1	0	3	13	53	30	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	14	71	14	0
		National	0	0	5	13	70	12	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	0	14	71	14	0
		National	0	1	5	10	75	9	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	14	71	14	0
		National	0	0	3	11	63	23	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	7	57	36	0
		National	0	0	2	9	60	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	0	7	36	57	0
		National	0	1	2	6	56	36	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	7	93	0	0
		National	0	0	2	10	67	21	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:	86%	In Wales:	81%

- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
- A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

**NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS
END OF KS2: 2001**

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2001								Number of pupils in Y6: 5				
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	20	20	20
		National	0	0	0	-	1	1	6	19	48	25
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	60	20
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	5	14	47	30
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	60	20	20
		National	0	0	0	-	0	1	4	20	47	28
	Test/Task	School	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	20
		National	0	2	1	1	-	0	4	18	42	32
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	20	60	20
		National	1	0	0	-	0	0	3	15	52	29
	Test/Task	School	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	20	60	20
		National	0	2	0	1	0	0	2	13	51	31

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:	50%	In the school:	50%
In Wales:	68%	In Wales:	68%

- D Pupils who are exempted 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
B Pupils not entered for the tests because they are working outside the set levels of the tests.
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

- The inspection team consisted of three inspectors who worked for six inspector days gathering first-hand evidence. In total, 34 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. Inspectors observed classes and evaluated the children's work.
- Inspectors visited registration sessions and school assemblies and observed break times. All teachers were observed teaching several times. Discussions were held with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, representatives of the governing body, parents and others both during the inspection and initial inspection visits.
- All the available work and records of a representative sample of at least three pupils from each year group, plus the work of a sample of pupils with SEN was scrutinised. A representative number of pupils were heard to read both formally and informally.
- A large amount of documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection.
- The registered inspector held a meeting attended by 10 parents before the inspection and considered 20 parents' responses to a questionnaire.
- No lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection. A limited range of work in information technology was observed.
- The inspection took place over three days.

E Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

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

The inspectors wish to thank the governing body, staff, parents and pupils of Ysgol Glan Aber for their co-operation, assistance and courtesy before and during the inspection.

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