

**Inspection under Section 10 of the
Schools Inspections Act 1996**

**YSGOL GYMRAEG GLANRAFON
LÔN BRYN COCH
MOLD
FLINTSHIRE
CH7 1PS**

School Number: 664/2028

Date of Inspection: 11-13 January 2005

by

**Mr D M Cray
Registered Inspector 92/16768**

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Under Estyn contract number: T/101/04/P

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Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 Ysgol Glanrafon is located in the town of Mold and is maintained by Flintshire Local Education Authority. It is a designated Welsh-medium school that serves a wide area – both rural and urban in character. In the main, it is considered that the area is prosperous and a good number of pupils come from privileged backgrounds.
- 2 Currently, there are 265 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age on the school register, and they are admitted on a part-time basis to the nursery class at the beginning of the term during which they attain their fourth birthday and on a full-time basis to the reception class in the following year.
- 3 Ten per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals – a figure that is slightly below the county average (11.5%), but considerably below the national average (19%). A total of 54 (20%) pupils are identified as having special educational needs. They include eight pupils who attend the special needs resource unit for the county's Welsh-medium schools, located at the school.
- 4 Some 30% of pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken as a first language. Welsh is the everyday language of the school and the medium of teaching and learning.
- 5 The school was last inspected during the spring term of 1999 and numerous staffing changes have occurred since then, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and newly qualified teachers.

The school's priorities and targets

- 6 The school has a number of priorities for the current year that are listed under the following headlines:
 - curriculum;
 - pupils;
 - staffing;
 - communication;
 - buildings / environment.
- 7 The following targets have been set for key stage pupils for the year 2004/5:

Percentage of key stage 2 pupils attaining level 4 or above

Subject	Welsh	English	Mathematics	Science
Target	68%	62%	70%	73%

Summary

- 8 The inspection team agreed with the school's judgements in six of the seven key questions. The lower rating awarded to one question can be mainly attributed to an issue relating to health and safety.

Table of grades awarded

- 9 The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

Key question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	3
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

- 10 Standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Areas of Learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 3

- 11 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 12 The nursery and reception children make generally good progress in the development of their communication and mathematical skills, and in the application of their information technology skills across the curriculum. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 also achieve good standards in the development of their key skills across the curriculum. Pupils exhibit increasing development as they work through both Welsh and English across the curriculum.
- 13 Pupils with special educational needs make good, and often very good, progress.
- 14 In key stage 1 in 2004, the school's results were considerably higher than national and county averages (2003) in Welsh, they were considerably lower in mathematics and were lower in science. In key stage 2 in 2004, the results were considerably higher than national and county averages in Welsh, English, mathematics and science. There are no obvious patterns of difference in the performance of boys and girls in either key stage.
- 15 In relation to comparator schools in Wales, performance in key stage 1 has been in the lowest 25% in two of the last three years. During the same period, performance in key stage 2 has been in the lower 50%, but outside the lowest 25%. In 2004, it was in the upper 25%.
- 16 The majority of pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and they exhibit real interest in their lessons. The majority behave well inside and outside lessons.
- 17 Average attendance levels over the last three full terms are approximately 94%, and in the last full term, the autumn term, they rose to over 95%. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection. However, there is room to improve further.

The quality of education and training

- 18 In the lessons observed, it was adjudged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	66%	23%		

- 19 Lessons are carefully planned and structured. Teachers use an appropriate range of teaching strategies that encourage pupils to apply themselves to working purposefully and confidently. In the majority of lessons observed, teachers succeed in maintaining a clear and consistent focus on the learning objectives. However, it was sometimes seen that teachers' presentations are too long, that excessive guidance was given to pupils and that some activities were not sufficiently differentiated to challenge the most able pupils.

- 20 The school has comprehensive, systematic and manageable procedures for assessment of the core subject areas. They provide accuracy and consistency across the school. The school is currently engaged in refining the methods it uses for assessment and recording pupils' progress in the foundation subjects.
- 21 The annual reports provided for parents are of good quality and they contain purposeful observations on their children's academic progress.
- 22 The school offers a broad range of experiences and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.
- 23 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- 24 The partnership and links with parents are good, and the pre-inspection meetings and the questionnaires returned to the inspectors are testimony of parents' appreciation of the school's work. They co-operate willingly with the school on the issue of the home-school agreement. There are minor shortcomings in the school prospectus.
- 25 The school is a happy community that provides good support for pupils. Teachers know the different needs of each individual pupil, and make supportive provision for them. Support staff at the school make a good contribution.
- 26 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is an outstanding feature. The school ensures that the pupils attending the special needs resource unit are fully integrated into its life and work.
- 27 During the inspection, the inspection team identified an important health and safety matter and brought it to the attention of the governing body, the local education authority and the county council.

Leadership and management

- 28 The headteacher, together with her newly appointed deputy, provide a clear and purposeful sense of direction to the work of the school, and undertakes their duties effectively. The major staffing changes that have taken place recently have affected the school's ability to implement its self-evaluation processes with the thoroughness it would have wished for, but despite this, it has succeeded in maintaining its focus on improving standards and its provision. The progress made in standards in information technology is a good example of its success in this regard.
- 29 The governors operate in an atmosphere of support, but as critical friends. They are knowledgeable of the school's performance and of the key factors in this respect. They make an important contribution in steering the school's direction and in its strategic planning.

- 30 The school fulfils the requirements in relation to teaching time, but there are some minor shortcomings in the annual report distributed to parents.
- 31 Their subject responsibilities are very new to a number of teachers and their roles as subject leaders are in the early stages of development. The need to develop this aspect of the work is acknowledged in the school's self-evaluation report and in the priorities that are identified in its development plans.
- 32 There is room to strengthen the school's planning for improvement by ensuring a rolling programme of development as opposed to a time-limited programme that expires at the end of every third year, as is currently the case.
- 33 The self-evaluation report that was presented to inspectors prior to the inspection is of good quality. It is an evaluative document and is very open in its identification of shortcomings as well as strengths.
- 34 The school has made good progress since the last inspection.
- 35 Overall, the school has a good supply of resources for all age ranges. The resources are used effectively and are kept in good condition.
- 36 There is a reasonable supply of computers in classrooms, and pupils and teachers alike were seen to be making regular and very good use of them. However, there are not enough interactive whiteboards for a school of this size.
- 37 In general, the teaching rooms are spacious. However, there is a shortage of space in the room used by pupils attending the special needs resources unit.
- 38 The school campus is pleasant and expansive. The school seeks to operate a programme whereby all rooms are painted in turn. However, parts of the building suffer from dampness and are in a tired state of repair.
- 39 Expenditure decisions are regularly reconciled with the school's priorities and are well linked to the planning for improvement. The governing body makes generous provision for the funding of special educational needs, and pupils benefit greatly from this.
- 40 Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

- 41 In order to improve the areas inspected at the school, staff and governors need to:
- R1: continue with the efforts to raise standards, by:
- acting on the shortcomings identified in the subject section of this report;

- ensuring that the work set for pupils is at all times challenging;

R2: addressing the health and safety matter brought to the attention of the governing body, the local education authority and the county council;

R3: develop the role of subject leaders and the work of monitoring standards and the quality of provision, as identified by the school;

R4: strengthen the school's arrangements for planning for improvement by ensuring a rolling programme of development;

R5: work with the local education authority to secure more space for the special needs resource unit;

R6: ensure that the school prospectus and the annual report of the governing body fully satisfy the requirements.

42 The governing body is responsible for changing its present development plan to incorporate action steps to be taken in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receipt of the report showing how the school intends to address the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be distributed to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

- 43 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 44 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 45 Pupils' standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Areas of Learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 3

- 46 The nursery and reception children make generally good progress in the development of their communication and mathematical skills, and in the application of their information technology skills across the curriculum.
- 47 Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 also achieve good standards in the development of their key skills across the curriculum. Bilingualism is promoted effectively in the life of the school and pupils exhibit increasing development as they work in both Welsh and English across the curriculum.
- 48 Pupils with special educational needs make good, and often very good, progress, as they achieve the targets set for them.
- 49 In key stage 1 in 2004, according to teacher assessments, 69% of pupils attained level 2 or above in the core subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science at the end of the key stage. In 2003 the figure was 44% (Wales 79%; Flintshire 80%) and in 2002 it was 80% (Wales 80%; Flintshire 80%). The school's results for 2004 were considerably higher than national and county averages (2003) in Welsh, they were considerably lower in mathematics and

were lower in science. There is no obvious pattern of difference in the performance of boys and girls.

- 50 In key stage 2 in 2004, 90% of pupils at the school attained level 4 or above, as determined by test/task results in the core subjects of Welsh, English, mathematics and science. In 2003 it was 71% (Wales 71%; Flintshire 71%) and in 2002 the figure was 67% (Wales 68%; Flintshire 69%). The results for 2004 were considerably higher than national and county averages (2003) in Welsh, English, mathematics and science. There is no obvious pattern of difference in the performance of boys and girl in this key stage.
- 51 In relation to comparator schools in Wales, performance in key stage 1 has been in the lowest 25% in two of the last three years. During the same period, performance in key stage 2 has been in the lower 50%, but outside the lowest 25%. In 2004, it was in the upper 25%.
- 52 In the main the school succeeds in achieving the targets set for its pupils. They are not always sufficiently challenging.
- 53 Pupils make generally good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills. They understand what they are doing; they have a good awareness of their achievement levels and of what they need to do to improve.
- 54 The majority of pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and they exhibit real interest in their lessons.
- 55 The majority of pupils behave well inside and outside lessons, they play together and socialise together happily during break periods. They are courteous and respectful of school staff and visitors.
- 56 Average attendance levels over the last three full terms are approximately 94%, and in the last full term, the autumn term, they rose to over 95%. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection. However, there is room for further improvement. The school conforms to the requirements of National Assembly of Wales Circular 3/99. There are very few instances of unpunctuality.
- 57 Across the school, pupils come to work with a growing measure of independence. They exhibit good problem solving and decision making skills. The majority are happy to wait for their turn and they work well together.
- 58 Pupils show respect, care and concern for others. They have a good awareness of equal opportunities and they respect diversity of beliefs, attitudes and social and cultural traditions.
- 59 Pupils' awareness of the world of work is developed effectively through numerous local links. They contribute very well to a wide range of community activities.

The quality of education and training

Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

60 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

61 In the lessons observed, it was adjudged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	66%	23%	---	---

62 A number of good lessons were observed across the school. The lessons are carefully planned and structured. The weekly plans record effective lesson continuity across the curriculum. Teachers use an appropriate range of teaching strategies to encourage pupils to apply themselves to working purposefully and confidently. They succeed in motivating pupils to concentrate and to work at an appropriate pace. Overall, the tasks set are suitable in terms of pupils' ability and understanding.

63 Teachers interact in a very positive and effective manner with pupils. Overall, they support and control the pupils well, intervening according to the needs of individuals.

64 The short-term planning is detailed and is evaluated on a regular basis. The evaluations impact upon and inform subsequent planning.

65 In the majority of lessons observed, teachers succeed in maintaining a clear and consistent focus on the learning objectives and teachers succeed in using skilful questioning techniques to extend pupils' understanding of their work. However, it was sometimes seen that teachers' presentations are too long, and that excessive guidance was given to pupils.

66 Teachers work together closely in year groups in order to achieve consistency, continuity and balance. However, during the classroom observations, it was seen that some activities had not been sufficiently differentiated in order to challenge the most able pupils.

67 The school fulfils the requirements of the desirable outcomes for the learning of under-fives, the national curriculum programmes of study, and the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education.

68 Equal opportunities are provided for all pupils at the school. The teachers and assistants ensure the full participation of each pupil. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding.

- 69 The school effectively promotes the bilingual development and competence of pupils. This is done by providing appropriate opportunities to develop and use their bilingual and translingual skills in subjects across the curriculum. Teachers set sound standards by using good quality language in all classes.
- 70 The classroom and nursery assistants make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school. They work together in an organised and effective manner as they support the teachers to satisfy the differing needs of individual learners.
- 71 The school has comprehensive, systematic and manageable procedures for assessment of the core subject areas. They provide accuracy and consistency across the school. The school is currently engaged in refining the methods it uses for assessment and recording pupils' progress in the foundation subjects.
- 72 The records of achievement files and pupils' individual profiles provide a clear picture of their progress and achievements during their time at school. They are comprehensive, well structured and are an effective means of tracking pupil progress.
- 73 Pupils' work is marked regularly and the observations made are constructive and give the pupils clear guidance as to how to improve their work.
- 74 Effective use is made of the analyses of statutory tests in order to identify aspects for development in both learning and teaching.
- 75 Pupils are encouraged to nurture and develop their self-assessment skills. They understand the function of assessment and the school has recently embarked upon a process of working with pupils to set targets.
- 76 The annual reports provided for parents are of good quality and they contain purposeful observations on their children's academic progress. The headteacher's comments are added at the end of each pupil's report. The reports for the under-fives reflect the desirable outcomes and record their progress in the six areas of learning.

Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 77 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 78 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The experiences lead naturally to the programmes of study of the national curriculum.
- 79 The school offers a wide range of experiences and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Highly effective support is provided for pupils with special needs.
- 80 There are policies and schemes of work in place for all curriculum subjects together with the agreed syllabus for religious education. They fulfil legal requirements. The school follows a set timescale for reviewing a number of them. Thematic cycles are used as a means of organising the curriculum. The teachers' planning files are comprehensive and are regularly checked by the headteacher.
- 81 Effective use is made of teachers' expertise and interests in subjects such as information technology, music and physical education. This has a positive impact on standards achieved by pupils.
- 82 The school has a system of co-ordinating and monitoring its provision for the development of pupils' basic and key skills. During the inspection it was observed that pupils are afforded opportunities to develop their skills in all aspects of the life and work of the school.
- 83 A range of extra-curricular opportunities is provided to promote pupils' personal and social development, such as the soccer and netball clubs. The school competes regularly and with a fair measure of success in Urdd activities. They play an active part in a number of local events and competitions. Effective use is made of the local environment in order to promote pupils' curricular experiences.
- 84 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. School assemblies conform to requirements. They contribute effectively to their spiritual development and offer opportunities for quiet reflection. This is further enhanced by regular visits by local clerics. Pupils' understanding of moral issues encourages them to respect truth and justice. Pupils are encouraged to raise money for a wide range of national and international charities. The majority of pupils exhibit progressive attitudes and they develop an understanding of being members of a civilised society.

- 85 The partnership and links with parents are good and the pre-inspection meetings and the questionnaires returned to the inspectors are testimony of parents' appreciation of the school's work. They co-operate willingly with the school on the issue of the home-school agreement. There are minor shortcomings in the school prospectus.
- 86 The school plays an active part in a good range of community events and has good links with local schools, including Ysgol Maes Garmon.
- 87 The provision for promoting and developing pupils' bilingual skills is sound. Good emphasis is placed on the Welsh dimension within the curriculum. Pupils' awareness, understanding and appreciation of their culture and heritage are promoted effectively across various curricular areas.
- 88 The school has policies on racial equality and equal opportunities. Pupils are aware of the need to show respect for others, regardless of their racial background. Pupils' awareness of global citizenship is promoted effectively through their curricular work and through their studies of areas such as Lesotho.
- 89 There is an action plan for the development of personal and social education across the school. The school has a designated co-ordinator to support teachers and to ensure that the programme is incorporated into thematic work across the school. Effective use is made of visitors in order to promote values such as helping others less fortunate than themselves and discussing issues such as the prevention of bullying. Its use of the Circle Time periods is an impressive feature of the life and work of the school.
- 90 The school is aware of the aspects that are in need of being nurtured and extended in order to further develop the pupils' awareness of sustainable education. It has embarked upon the process of promoting healthy eating and recycling, including collecting computer printer cartridges and their latest project to recycle old Christmas cards.
- 91 The school succeeds in developing the enterprise skills of older pupils. They have set up a fruit shop, and as a result their business skills continue to develop.

Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?

Grade 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

- 92 The inspection team's findings differ to those of the school's self-evaluation to the extent that the school awarded Grade 1 for this key question. The lower grade can be mainly attributed to an issue relating to health and safety.
- 93 The school is a happy community that provides good support for its pupils. Appropriate emphasis is placed on equal opportunities and social inclusion within its programme of activities, fulfilling the needs of each individual learner.
- 94 Teachers know the different needs of each individual pupil and make supportive provision for them. Support staff at the school make a good contribution.
- 95 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is an outstanding feature. It operates a system of identifying pupils' needs at an early stage and provides appropriate progress and continuity in their development. There is co-operation with parents in the production and review of individual education plans. The school ensures that the pupils attending the special needs resource unit are fully integrated into the life and work of the school.
- 96 The teachers and support staff, including the lunchtime supervisors, work closely together to provide continuous support. Pupils feel happy in a caring environment. They happily ask for support and guidance and talk freely to the staff. The school ensures that all pupils receive access to the programme of personal and social education.
- 97 During the inspection, the inspection team identified an important health and safety matter and brought it to the attention of the governing body, the local education authority and the county council.
- 98 There are detailed policies and procedures for child protection, first aid, sex education and fire prevention. They are known to all and are operated effectively.
- 99 Parents' letters and telephone calls relating to attendance are monitored effectively. Despite the improvement, there is currently no target to improve attendance levels.
- 100 The induction programmes for the children in the nursery class are good. Pupils who are latecomers are welcomed by teachers and fellow pupils alike. This enables them to settle in smoothly to the life and work of the school.
- 101 The school operates a comprehensive behaviour policy that is both fair and consistent and emphasises self-respect and respect towards others. No instances of bullying or other forms of discrimination were seen during the inspection.

- 102 Positive action is promoted to overcome any prejudices and presuppositions based on gender, race, language or social background, and diversity is respected.
- 103 The school takes reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils are not treated less favourably.

Leadership and management

Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 104 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 105 The headteacher, together with her newly appointed deputy, provide a clear and purposeful sense of direction to the work of the school, and undertake their duties effectively. They are appreciative of the contribution of all members of staff and of their efforts to move the school forward. They are well supported.
- 106 The school has a *Mission Statement* and a good range of appropriate management and curricular policies in place to support its work. Due consideration is given to county priorities and to guidance received from the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 107 The major staffing changes that have taken place recently have affected the school's ability to implement its self-evaluation processes with the thoroughness it would have wished for, but despite this, it has succeeded in maintaining its focus on improving standards and its provision. The progress made in standards in information technology is a good example of its success in this regard.
- 108 Performance management is beginning to have a positive impact on the school, making a valuable contribution towards identifying staff needs and improving pupils' achievements.
- 109 The school has gained *Investors in People* accreditation, and the *Quality Mark* of the *Basic Skills Agency*.
- 110 The school has good arrangements in place for the support and early development of newly qualified members of staff.
- 111 The governors, some of who have provided loyal service for many years, meet regularly in sub-committees as well as in the full governing body. They operate in an atmosphere of support, but as critical friends. They are knowledgeable of the school's performance and of the key factors in this respect. They make an important contribution in steering the school's direction and in its strategic planning.
- 112 The school fulfils the requirements in relation to teaching time, but there are some minor shortcomings in the annual report distributed to parents.

Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 113 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 114 The school has good procedures for the self-evaluation of standards and quality within the school. Some important elements, such as the headteacher monitoring the schemes of work produced by classroom teachers, and teachers' awareness of their pupils' performance, are highly effective, but the school has not yet succeeded in implementing all the procedures with the consistency and transparency required to produce a full picture. Their subject responsibilities are very new to a number of teachers and their roles as subject leaders are in the early stages of development. The need to develop this aspect of its work is acknowledged in the school's self-evaluation report and in the priorities identified in the plans for development.
- 115 The school development plan is supported by staff and governors alike. It contains a valuable evaluation of the priorities set for the previous year, together with the current priorities that are linked effectively to the contents of the school's self-evaluation document. Current priorities are addressed under a series of appropriate headings and this facilitates the subsequent monitoring. There is room to strengthen the school's planning for improvement by ensuring a rolling programme of development as opposed to a time-limited programme that expires at the end of every third year, as is currently the case.
- 116 The practice of producing a specific development plan for the special needs resource unit that is also based on whole-school priorities, is progressive.
- 117 The school sets targets for the core subjects at the end of key stage 2 for a period of three years according to requirements. They are not always sufficiently challenging of pupils. Whole-school targets are not set at the end of key stage 1.
- 118 Although no formal arrangements have been made to consider parental views, the school works within a culture of openness and is very happy to accept the views of others who are interested in its work.
- 119 The self-evaluation report presented to inspectors prior to the inspection is of good quality. It is an evaluative document, and is very open in its identification of shortcomings as well as strengths.
- 120 The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement in six of the seven key questions. The lower rating awarded to one question can be mainly attributed to an issue relating to health and safety.
- 121 The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The targets in the action plan relating to key issues raised in the previous inspection have

been addressed and the steps taken have had a positive impact on pupils' standards of achievement.

Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 122 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 123 The governing body ensures that the school has an appropriate number of teachers who have the required knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the curriculum effectively. Although there have been considerable staffing changes over a short period of time, all are mutually supportive and work well together. This includes the nursery and classroom assistants.
- 124 There are appropriate job descriptions for all members of staff and subject responsibilities are allocated to new teachers as they gain experience.
- 125 The daily procedures and lines of communication are clear and they effectively facilitate the school's day-to-day work.
- 126 Overall, the school has a good supply of resources for all age ranges. The newly renovated library is a particularly valuable resource. Effective use is made of the resources and they are kept in good condition.
- 127 There is a reasonable supply of computers in classrooms, and pupils and teachers alike were seen to be making regular and very good use of them. However, there are not enough interactive whiteboards for a school of this size.
- 128 In general, the teaching rooms are spacious. However, there is a shortage of space in the room used by pupils attending the special needs resources unit.
- 129 The school campus is pleasant and expansive. The school seeks to operate a programme whereby all rooms are painted in turn. However, parts of the building suffer from dampness and are in a tired state of repair.
- 130 With the exception of the resource unit, the entrances to the building do not provide full disabled access. However, the governing body has prepared a plan that responds to the shortcomings.
- 131 There are formal procedures in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers and the identification of the needs of other staff. There are specific plans in place for their development.
- 132 Expenditure decisions are regularly reconciled with the school's priorities and are well linked to the planning for improvement. The budget is carefully and effectively monitored under the guidance of the finance sub-committee. The governing body makes generous provision for the funding of special educational needs, and pupils benefit greatly from this.

- 133 Effective use is made of the local environment, the community and educational sites such as museums and art galleries to enhance pupils' learning.
- 134 Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

The under-fives

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 135 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Good and outstanding features

Language, literacy and communication

- 136 The nursery children enjoy listening to a range of stories and are happy to talk about them. They are aware that pictures and words convey the meaning of a story. They are able to sing a range of rhymes and lullabies from memory and their pronunciation is clear. They enjoy experimenting with various materials and equipment when making marks, drawing pictures and writing. They take great pride in the fact that their efforts are displayed in a class booklet.
- 137 The reception children listen attentively and gain enjoyment from listening to a range of stories. They are able to recognise and refer to the basic features of a book such as its title, cover, page and author. Many of the children are able to respond to and discuss their experiences, ask questions and respond well to adults. They are able to recall the main events in stories such as *Sioni Rhew*. They use the new vocabulary to which they have been introduced when talking freely in class. They are able to correctly arrange a series of pictures based on the story. The majority of children have good pencil control. Some of the children are able to write and read independently and with growing confidence.

Personal and social development

- 138 The nursery children settle in quickly at school and they form good relationships with adults and fellow pupils. They show an increasing ability to play together happily when involved in activities inside and outside the school building. They are aware of the need for personal hygiene when preparing for their mid-morning snack. They understand how to behave appropriately when eating and drinking. They happily fulfil the role of *Helper of the Day*.
- 139 The majority of reception children show an interest in what they are doing and are happy to wait for their turn during conversations or when talking. The majority are confident and are able to concentrate and persevere until their task is completed. They behave well and work together happily. Overall, the children exhibit considerable self-discipline when working on specific tasks.

Mathematical development

- 140 The nursery children enjoy singing number rhymes and playing with number games and jigsaws. They can effectively count familiar objects and recognise simple numbers. They are able to match number and object from one to five. They recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. They understand and use

simple mathematical language relating to capacity and volume when playing with water and sand. They are able to follow patterns of colour and size, and distinguish between large and small, tall and short.

- 141 The reception children are able to sort, match, count and arrange numbers. They make good progress in their number work and recognise numbers up to a minimum of 20. Their understanding of *one more* and *one less* is developing well. They use their printing skills to create a series of two-dimensional shape patterns for their shape characters. They understand a number of measure-related concepts, such as largest/smallest, tallest/shortest, longest/shortest, heavy/light. They are able to recognise simple items of coinage, using them in their role-play work in the Post Office.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 142 In the nursery class, the children are able to talk about the weather and the majority are able to recognise a series of simple weather symbols. They make effective use of computer programmes, showing appropriate mouse control. Their awareness of the growth of a flower is good. They understand that ice is frozen water and the majority of children are able to predict what will happen to the ice cubes when placed in a warm area.

- 143 The reception children show an interest in their environment and are able to talk knowledgeably about the main characteristics of winter. They are able to recall their experiences of planting bulbs and can record their growth to date. They know how to dress according to weather conditions. They talk confidently about types of workers, with particular reference to the work of the postman. Their mouse control skills are well developed, enabling them to fulfil a number of different tasks on the computer, such as dressing the snowman. They use a range of computer programmes to support and sustain their current work. They are able to use terms related to the passage of time when discussing teddies and dolls from various periods.

Physical development

- 144 The nursery children use a range of materials and equipment such as dough, jigsaws, scissors and crayons practise their fine motor skills. They move with ease inside and outside the school. Their balancing skills are developed by using the bicycles, scooters and play equipment that are located outside their classroom.

- 145 The reception children are able to control, pull and push as they steer movable toys. They are able to handle small items such as beads, pencils and paintbrushes with great dexterity. They exhibit good control of scissors as they cut out shapes for their three-dimensional models. They make appropriate use of the surrounding space as they develop their movement skills in the school hall. They are able to undertake a range of movements and change direction in response to teachers' instructions.

Creative development

- 146 The nursery children enjoy their role-play experiences. They receive good opportunities to experiment and create, using a range of media and

techniques. They are able to experiment and mix their own paint. They show the ability to sing tunefully and pronounce clearly when singing rhymes and lullabies.

- 147 In the reception class, the children are able to describe how to produce a sound by using percussion instruments such as scraping, striking and shaking. They can create and perform a piece conveying stormy weather, using a range of percussion instruments and their own bodies to produce sounds. They are able to distinguish between loud/quiet and high/low sounds. They use various materials to produce individual pictures, making choices in relation to colour and medium.

Shortcomings

- 148 There are no significant shortcomings.

Welsh

Key Stage 1 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 149 Pupils in key stage 1 express themselves effectively for various purposes and with increasing confidence and accuracy, responding to questions and showing interest and understanding that promotes and extends their learning. They listen purposefully to teachers' presentations and to those given by their fellow pupils.
- 150 Pupils in key stage 2 listen well and respond with equal effect to closed and open-ended questions. A number of pupils are able to speak expressively and can perform before an audience, modifying their speaking styles for differing situations.
- 151 Pupils in key stage 1 are able to master their reading skills according to age and ability, and the more able can use punctuation to read expressively. Their ability to respond to and discuss the contents of their books is appropriate. They can tell a story in simple order, predict events, express opinions and feelings to good effect. They listen attentively and with interest to stories. Their ability to follow instructions is good.
- 152 In key stage 2, pupils' reading skills continue to develop well. The majority read fluently and correctly, talking knowledgeably about books and their favourite authors, including authors and poets who are invited to school. They use dictionaries and a thesaurus with relative confidence. They can discover information from various sources, including reference books, the Internet and CD-ROMs to good effect.
- 153 A number pupils in key stage 1 achieve good standards in their written work. They exhibit a growing understanding of sentence patterns and punctuation,

and of the importance of writing for various purposes, such as the preparation of questions for a visitor or a book review. By the end of the key stage, pupils show good progress in their ability to write simple stories, using extended vocabulary and spelling familiar words with a fair degree of accuracy.

- 154 Overall, pupils in key stage 2 achieve good standards in their written work. They receive opportunities to write regularly in a range of different forms, including letters, a diary of an evacuee coming to rural Wales, information leaflets and poems, as they realise that the form of language depends on its purpose and audience. Their work is paragraphed and presented neatly, and the majority have a satisfactory understanding of punctuation.

Shortcomings

- 155 Minor errors in their oral and written work are a feature of the work of a number of pupils in key stage 2.

Science

Key Stage 1 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 156 In key stage 1, the pupils have come to be able to make sensible predictions and to ensure that tests are conducted fairly. They record their findings accurately, using diagrams and drawings as and when required.
- 157 They are aware of the extensive use made of electricity around them. They realise that great care must be taken when using electricity and are able to refer to some of the dangers around the house.
- 158 Their understanding of materials is developing well. They are able to group a good range of them according to their characteristics, and they come to understand the effects of warming and cooling on various materials such as chocolate, water and butter, and that they change when exposed to different temperatures.
- 159 They are able to correctly describe the movement of familiar objects, and are aware that pushing or pulling can cause an object to gather speed, slow down or change direction.
- 160 In key stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in the development of their investigative skills through conducting increasingly complex investigations.
- 161 Younger pupils in this key stage exhibit skills that develop well as they investigate whether water changes its temperature over time. They come to appreciate the need to work accurately and systematically.

- 162 The older pupils have a very good knowledge of the background and characteristics of various materials. They are confident in their understanding of the difference between natural and synthetic materials. They exhibit good skills in correctly mixing various materials and recording any change in them.
- 163 Following their investigative work, they come to understand that upthrust is a force that acts on objects in water and that it is an influential factor in determining whether an object floats or sinks.
- 164 The recent work conducted on the effect of light on various materials is thorough, and was completed with a fair measure of accuracy.

Shortcomings

- 165 There are no significant shortcomings.

Design and technology

Key Stage 1 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 166 In key stage 1, the pupils respond well to the task of investigating how mechanical toys work. They come to understand and correctly use terms such as pulley, winch, axle and hook.
- 167 They can offer good initial ideas in response to the task of solving problems set for them by their class teacher.
- 168 They have successfully investigated different types of cakes and are able to talk about some of the ingredients required to make a birthday cake. They can list the different foods suitable for a party.
- 169 Pupils in key stage 2 also appreciate the importance of research as a key pre-condition to the design process. For example, by discussing a good range of different types of lights, they come to understand how suitable they are for the task of lighting a treasure-laden cave. Similarly, the research work undertaken by the older pupils into different types of bread has been conducted in a very systematic manner. They discuss their work well and are able to justify their viewpoints.
- 170 They are aware of the importance of hygiene when handling food.
- 171 They know of the importance of having suitable axle and wheels if a vehicle is to move freely. They are able to talk knowledgeably about the strengths and weaknesses of different types of wheels.

- 172 The quality of the finished articles, such as models of different vehicles and flags, is good, and the majority of pupils are able to evaluate their own work effectively, offering meaningful suggestions for improvements.

Shortcomings

- 173 In key stage 2, the design work does not always reflect a sufficient degree of development of ideas, and there is a tendency for some pupils to be over-dependent on their teachers.

Information technology

Key Stage 1 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

- 174 In key stage 1, the pupils develop into confident computer users. They exhibit good independent skills, and they use computers to present a wide range of work across the curriculum.
- 175 They show a good level of competence in their use of the mouse and keyboard.
- 176 They are able to make careful and confident selections from the on-screen menu, such as placing words in the correct order to create sentences. The older pupils are able to retrieve and store work, and add pictures and borders.
- 177 They make successful use of the *Dazzle* programme in order to create a range of pictures and produce repetitive patterns.
- 178 Modelling has developed well across the key stage. Pupils are able to make confident use of the *Fy Myd* programme and this develops their skills and understanding. They undertake *pre-Logo* work using the Roamer.
- 179 In key stage 2, pupils exhibit outstandingly good word processing skills. They are able to create an extensive body of work that displays their ability to use their knowledge and understanding very skilfully. There is evidence of this in their current and earlier work. The posters, information pamphlets, newspaper articles are of very good quality.
- 180 They exhibit their competence as they use their skills to produce a *Power Point* presentation for parents as part of their work on the Second World War.
- 181 Pupils make skilful use of graphics programmes, as in their outstanding work on psychedelic patterns.
- 182 They make extensive and confident use of Modelling software such as *Logo*, *Gêm yr Hwyaeden* and *Balloon Car Racer*.

- 183 They are able to make very good use of CD-ROMs and the Internet to undertake investigative work. Their ability to use a digital camera and e-mail is developing very well.
- 184 They use the computer to organise, question and analyse databases, as seen in their work on children's novels.
- 185 They are able to create simple spreadsheets related to sales in their fruit shop.

Shortcomings

- 186 There are no significant shortcomings.

Religious education

Key Stage 1 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

- 187 Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in their awareness and understanding of celebrations, such as weddings, and they discuss the feelings associated with such events.
- 188 They are able to appropriately describe the main features of certain celebrations, such as the special book and the clothing associated with the Jewish faith.
- 189 Pupils in both key stages have an appropriate awareness of the Bible as a special book, and they are well informed about stories from the Old and New Testaments.
- 190 They understand the importance of helping others and of accepting rules that can affect the quality of life.
- 191 Pupils in key stage 1 begin to appreciate that it is possible for them to adapt the moral lessons of the New Testament for their own lives.
- 192 In key stage 2, pupils begin to appreciate and understand religious and cultural diversity, and that communities can be similarly diverse. They recognise the characteristics of the Jewish and Hindu places of worship, and are aware of the importance of special books in the various religions.
- 193 They develop an understanding of meaning and of the need for care of the world in the context of current affairs.
- 194 They come to understand the features and significance of rituals such as Baptism, which is central to the Christian faith, after holding a ceremony and

service with a local minister. They are able to compare this with a similar ritual in the Jewish faith.

- 195 Their investigations into relationships have enabled them to effectively discuss moral and social issues such as bullying and the need for co-operation.
- 196 Pupils in both key stages exhibit an awareness of Christian values such as sharing, caring for others and that they have a responsibility to their fellow human beings through activities such as raising money for a school in Lesotho.

Shortcomings

- 197 In key stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of other religions have not been sufficiently developed.
- 198 Pupils' work does not reflect a sufficiently thorough awareness of the aspects and basics of religious education, such as celebrations, religious leaders, special places, in order to enable them to achieve good standards in their work.

School's response to the inspection

It is the intention of the school to build on the good progress noted and to continue to move the school forward as a team of people who work together to create a close, homely and happy community, in the interest of all our pupils.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Glanrafon
School type	Community School
Age-range of pupils	3-11 years
Address of school	Lôn Bryn Coch Mold Flintshire
Post-code	CH7 1PS
Telephone number	(01352) 700384
Headteacher	Miss Llinos Mary Jones
Date of appointment	April 1997
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Nesta Gibson
Reporting inspector	Mr D M Cray
Dates of inspection	11-13 January 2005

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	16	31	23	27	45	34	37	36	249

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	12	2	13

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	8:3
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	22.5
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Autumn 2004	97.2%	93.5%	95.6%	95.4%
Summer 2004	93.7%	92%	95.4%	93.7%
Spring 2004	90.6%	94.6%	93.2%	92.6%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	10%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 1

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y2:		45			
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School			9	71	20	
		National	1	1	11	64	23	
Welsh oracy	Teacher Assessment	School			9	71	20	
		National	1	2	12	63	22	
Welsh reading	Teacher Assessment	School			20	60	20	
		National	1	3	17	59	21	
Welsh writing	Teacher Assessment	School			38	51	9	
		National	1	3	20	65	10	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School			29	62	9	
		National		2	11	63	24	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School			20	78	2	
		National		2	10	66	22	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	68.9%	In Wales	79%

National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 2

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y6		41							
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School						2	8	51	39	
		National					1	6	16	45	31	
	Test/Task	School			2				12	42	44	
		National		2	2				5	12	38	40
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School							2	54	44	
		National	1			1	1	4	18	51	25	
	Test/Task	School			1		1	4	17	49	28	
		National	1	1	2			3	15	50	28	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School						2	5	61	32	
		National						4	19	46	30	
	Test/Task	School						2	7	44	47	
		National		2	1			4	18	42	33	
Science	Teacher assessment	School							5	56	39	
		National						2	13	49	35	
	Test/Task	School						2	3	56	39	
		National		2				1	9	48	39	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	93%	In the school	90.2%
In Wales	70%	In Wales	71%

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

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- The team of four inspectors inspected work in all classes. Between them they spent 11 full days at the school;
- pre-inspection meetings were held with governors, staff and parents;
- a range of documentation produced by the school was examined, including examples of work by the pupils across the curriculum in the early years and the two key stages;
- fifty four lessons or sessions were observed;
- morning assemblies were attended;
- pupils were listened to reading and were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum;
- school registers were inspected;
- discussions were held with the headteacher and school staff relating to curricular and management matters;
- minutes of governors' and staff meetings were examined as well as documents relating to the school's financial matters;
- pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school, and during breaks;
- twenty seven parents were present at the pre-inspection meeting and 57 questionnaires were returned;
- a post-inspection meeting was held with the staff and governing body.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspects	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr D M Cray	Rgl	Context; Summary; Recommendations; Annexes; Key questions 1; 5 and 6.	Science; design technology.
Mrs SA Taylor	Team	Key questions 2 and 3.	Under fives; information technology.
Mrs EW Honour	Team	Key questions 4 and 7.	Welsh; religious education.
Mr W Owen	Lay	Contributions to key questions 1; 3; 4 and 7	

Contractor: Arolygiadau Deheubarth Inspections; Afallon; Heol Llandeilo; Gorslas; Llanelli; SA14 7LU.

Acknowledgement

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

SUMMARY REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF YSGOL GLANRAFON

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Ysgol Glanrafon was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. **The full report can be obtained from the school.**

The inspection of Ysgol Glanrafon took place between 11-13 January 2005 . An independent team of three inspectors, led by Mr Martin Cray undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

The inspection team agreed with the school's judgements in six of the seven key questions. The lower rating awarded to one question can be mainly attributed to an issue relating to health and safety.

Table of grades awarded

The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

Key question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	4
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	3
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

Standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Areas of Learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 3

The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

The nursery and reception children make generally good progress in the development of their communication and mathematical skills, and in the application of their information technology skills across the curriculum. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 also achieve good standards in the development of their key skills across the curriculum. Pupils exhibit increasing development as they work through both Welsh and English across the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs make good, and often very good, progress.

In key stage 1 in 2004, the school's results were considerably higher than national and county averages (2003) in Welsh, they were considerably lower in mathematics and were lower in science. In key stage 2 in 2004, the results were considerably higher than national and county averages in Welsh, English, mathematics and science. There are no obvious patterns of difference in the performance of boys and girls in either key stage.

In relation to comparator schools in Wales, performance in key stage 1 has been in the lowest 25% in two of the last three years. During the same period, performance in key stage 2 has been in the lower 50%, but outside the lowest 25%. In 2004, it was in the upper 25%.

The majority of pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and they exhibit real interest in their lessons. The majority behave well inside and outside lessons.

Average attendance levels over the last three full terms are approximately 94%, and in the last full term, the autumn term, they rose to over 95%. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection. However, there is room to improve further.

The quality of education and training

In the lessons observed, it was adjudged that the quality of teaching was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	66%	23%	----	----

Lessons are carefully planned and structured. Teachers use an appropriate range of teaching strategies that encourage pupils to apply themselves to working purposefully and confidently. In the majority of lessons observed, teachers succeed in maintaining a clear and consistent focus on the learning objectives. However, it was sometimes seen that teachers' presentations are

too long, that excessive guidance was given to pupils and that some activities were not sufficiently differentiated to challenge the most able pupils.

The school has comprehensive, systematic and manageable procedures for assessment of the core subject areas. They provide accuracy and consistency across the school. The school is currently engaged in refining the methods it uses for assessment and recording pupils' progress in the foundation subjects.

The annual reports provided for parents are of good quality and they contain purposeful observations on their children's academic progress.

The school offers a broad range of experiences and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

The partnership and links with parents are good, and the pre-inspection meetings and the questionnaires returned to the inspectors are testimony of parents' appreciation of the school's work. They co-operate willingly with the school on the issue of the home-school agreement. There are minor shortcomings in the school prospectus.

The school is a happy community that provides good support for pupils. Teachers know the different needs of each individual pupil, and make supportive provision for them. Support staff at the school make a good contribution.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs is an outstanding feature. The school ensures that the pupils attending the special needs resource unit are fully integrated into its life and work.

During the inspection, the inspection team identified an important health and safety matter and brought it to the attention of the governing body, the local education authority and the county council.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, together with her newly appointed deputy, provide a clear and purposeful sense of direction to the work of the school, and undertakes their duties effectively. The major staffing changes that have taken place recently have affected the school's ability to implement its self-evaluation processes with the thoroughness it would have wished for, but despite this, it has succeeded in maintaining its focus on improving standards and its provision. The progress made in standards in information technology is a good example of its success in this regard.

The governors operate in an atmosphere of support, but as critical friends. They are knowledgeable of the school's performance and of the key factors in this respect. They make an important contribution in steering the school's direction and in its strategic planning.

The school fulfils the requirements in relation to teaching time, but there are some minor shortcomings in the annual report distributed to parents.

Their subject responsibilities are very new to a number of teachers and their roles as subject leaders are in the early stages of development. The need to develop this aspect of the work is acknowledged in the school's self-evaluation report and in the priorities that are identified in its development plans.

There is room to strengthen the school's planning for improvement by ensuring a rolling programme of development as opposed to a time-limited programme that expires at the end of every third year, as is currently the case.

The self-evaluation report that was presented to inspectors prior to the inspection is of good quality. It is an evaluative document and is very open in its identification of shortcomings as well as strengths.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection.

Overall, the school has a good supply of resources for all age ranges. The resources are used effectively and are kept in good condition. There is a reasonable supply of computers in classrooms, and pupils and teachers alike were seen to be making regular and very good use of them. However, there are not enough interactive whiteboards for a school of this size.

In general, the teaching rooms are spacious. However, there is a shortage of space in the room used by pupils attending the special needs resources unit.

The school campus is pleasant and expansive. The school seeks to operate a programme whereby all rooms are painted in turn. However, parts of the building suffer from dampness and are in a tired state of repair.

Expenditure decisions are regularly reconciled with the school's priorities and are well linked to the planning for improvement. The governing body makes generous provision for the funding of special educational needs, and pupils benefit greatly from this.

Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve the areas inspected at the school, staff and governors need to:

- R1: continue with the efforts to raise standards, by:
 - acting on the shortcomings identified in the subject section of this report;
 - ensuring that the work set for pupils is at all times challenging;
- R2: addressing the health and safety matter brought to the attention of the governing body, the local education authority and the county council;

- R3: develop the role of subject leaders and the work of monitoring standards and the quality of provision, as identified by the school;
- R4: strengthen the school's arrangements for planning for improvement by ensuring a rolling programme of development;
- R5: work with the local education authority to secure more space for the special needs resource unit;
- R6: ensure that the school prospectus and the annual report of the governing body fully satisfy the requirements.

The governing body is responsible for changing its present development plan to incorporate action steps to be taken in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receipt of the report showing how the school intends to address the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be distributed to all parents at the school.

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