

**REPORT**

**on the**

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

**HEOLGERRIG PRIMARY SCHOOL  
HEOLGERRIG ROAD  
HEOLGERRIG  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
CF48 1SB**

School Number: 675/2022

Date of Inspection: 11 – 14 November 2002

**By**

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Under Estyn contract number: T/45/02P

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

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

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

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

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

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

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

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

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## 1. CONTEXT

### The school and its priorities

Heolgerrig Primary School provides education for pupils between 3-11. The school is located in the former coal mining village of Heolgerrig on the outskirts of Merthyr Tydfil. Around 50% of the pupils live in the village, and 50% attend from outside. The school reports that the area it serves contains both sizeable advantaged and disadvantaged groups. Around 17% of the pupils on roll are entitled to free school meals. A total of pupils 32 (15%), have been identified in Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 as having special educational needs (SEN.)

The predominant language spoken at home by 98% of the pupils is English; no pupil speaks Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. The school caters for two pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

There were 203.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) pupils on roll at the time of the inspection, including 22.5 (FTE) children of nursery age (21 who attend full-time and three part-time.)

There were 234 pupils on roll at the last inspection in the Summer Term 1997.

The school's educational aims and objectives are wide-ranging and appropriate.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### The main findings of the report

- The school is going through a period of considerable change in its staffing. Of the nine classroom teachers present during the week of the inspection, two commenced at the beginning of this term (one in the nursery as part of a new job-share arrangement,) one in KS2, and two in a temporary capacity about two weeks prior to the inspection. However, the situation is well managed.
- Standards of achievement by children under the age of five in the six areas of learning are as follows:

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Language, literacy and communication skills | Good      |
| Personal and social development             | Very good |
| Mathematical development                    | Good      |
| Knowledge and understanding of the World    | Good      |
| Creative development                        | Good      |
| Physical development                        | Good      |
- Provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Learning. Children, from the nursery stage, make good progress in all aspects of their work, including information technology (IT). Children in the nursery have direct access to outdoor play facilities but reception children do not.

- Pupils' standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) and religious education are as follows:

|                        | <b>KS1</b>   | <b>KS2</b>   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| English                | Good         | Satisfactory |
| Mathematics            | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Science                | Good         | Good         |
| Welsh second language  | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Design and technology  | Good         | Good         |
| Information technology | Good         | Satisfactory |
| History                | Good         | Good         |
| Geography              | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Art                    | Good         | Satisfactory |
| Music                  | Good         | Good         |
| Physical education     | Good         | Good         |
| Religious education    | Good         | Good         |

- A total of 61 lessons or sessions were seen. Standards were very good in 2% of these sessions, good in 66%, satisfactory in 30% and unsatisfactory in 2%. This is an improvement on the 1997 inspection. However, there is a lack of continuity and progression in pupils' development in a number of subjects, and work does not always challenge pupils sufficiently, resulting in some underachievement, especially among boys.
- Most pupils in KS1 achieve good standards in the key skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Throughout KS2, pupils continue to speak clearly and confidently in a wide variety of situations. Their listening skills are also good and, at times, very good, such as in whole-school gatherings. Pupils' reading skills in KS2 range widely, between satisfactory and good. Pupils in KS2 are not always challenged enough in their reading or build sufficiently on the foundations laid. Pupils' writing skills, including handwriting, also range widely, being good among the abler, but satisfactory overall. There is a lack of progression in pupils' writing skills. Abler pupils' numeracy skills are good. However, pupils do not use their numeracy skills enough to support their work across the curriculum and standards overall are satisfactory. Pupils display a high level of confidence and competence in IT from a young age, but a few important aspects of this work are underdeveloped, and standards overall are satisfactory. In several classes, key skills are not planned for on a day to day basis or reinforced sufficiently across the curriculum.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is uneven, ranging between very good and unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching was satisfactory or better in 85% of the 61 sessions or lessons seen, and unsatisfactory in 15 %. This compares very closely with the standards of teaching seen in the 1997 inspection. Teachers and pupils enjoy good to very good relationships. Teachers know their pupils well, provide good role models and receive good and, at times, very good support from classroom assistants. Where the quality of teaching is consistently good, teachers: have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach; have suitably high expectations of the pupils; give clear explanations and instructions; and manage pupils well. Where there are shortcomings: lessons are not well planned; the teaching lacks pace; pupils are not challenged enough according to their ability; and pupils' work is not consistently marked in a way which indicates how it can be improved.

- The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a worthwhile extra-curricular programme, including team games. The school meets the recommendations of the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) regarding the amount of teaching time provided. The school effectively promotes racial equality and cultural diversity and is socially inclusive; it ensures equality of access to the curriculum and opportunity for all pupils. The school has appropriate arrangements for child protection, and its personal, health and social education programme meets current recommendations. The staff respond well to pupils' personal needs. Procedures for promoting pupils' health and safety are in place, but the school's security arrangements are not carried out consistently. The provision of work-related education is satisfactory. There is a home-school agreement, and homework generally supports what pupils do at school.
- The school's arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress focus largely on the core subjects and are not implemented consistently from class to class. Assessments of pupils' work through, for example, marking and testing, are not always used to set targets for improvement or to set work matched to their abilities. The quality of the annual report to parents is good.
- The school's provision for pupils with SEN, the progress they make and the standards they achieve are satisfactory.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good overall; in some classes, they are very good. The vast majority of pupils display a high level of interest in their work, are attentive and concentrate well. They respond positively to their teachers and engage enthusiastically in the tasks set for them particularly when the teaching is good or very good. Overall, the quality of life within the school is good.
- Pupils' cultural, moral and social development is good; their spiritual development is satisfactory. The school promotes good moral and social values. It is a caring community in which all pupils are respected and valued and where they develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves are good. Pupils respect one another and work co-operatively together both within and outside the classroom. Pupils are courteous to visitors, with whom they converse easily and confidently. The school promotes pupils' knowledge and understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales and other cultures well. Opportunities to extend pupils' spiritual development in lessons and in assemblies are not fully exploited.
- The head's management of the school's staffing, finances and resources in the long term and from day to day is satisfactory. He provides supportive leadership and promotes a caring ethos throughout the school.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is generally satisfactory. The head has introduced sound procedures for self evaluation and school improvement, including the setting of targets and the tracking of individual pupil's progress. The school receives good support from the LEA in key areas of school improvement such as in the provision of local and national comparative data and on self-evaluation. However, the sound policies that are in place and the wealth of information available are not fully used

in order to secure a greater measure of continuity and progression in the provision and to raise standards further.

- Recent changes in the permanent teaching staff have resulted in the re-distribution of curriculum leadership roles in four subjects. The quality of leadership provided by curriculum leaders ranges between very good and satisfactory.
- There is an established monitoring system in place where the head monitors teaching and learning in classrooms and scrutinises teachers' planning. Monitoring in the core subjects is developing, but monitoring in the foundation subjects is underdeveloped. Subject leaders have also revised the school's curriculum policies and schemes of work to a good standard in line with Curriculum 2000; the school draws heavily on LEA schemes.
- All staff and governors are involved in producing, monitoring and evaluating the School Development Plan (SDP). The SDP for the current year contains a manageable and appropriate set of priorities. It is a suitably structured working document and is appropriately costed but the success criteria are not always stated in measurable terms.
- The school is well staffed and teachers are well supported by visiting teachers and assistants. The main school building dates from 1906. Overall, it is in generally good condition, is kept clean and free from litter by the caretaking and cleaning staff and the pupils, and is well used. The school's stock of learning resources ranges between good in some areas to generally satisfactory in others; overall, the quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory. The use made of resources is satisfactory overall.
- Classrooms and thoroughfares contain well-organised and attractive displays of work across the curriculum; but pupils' work is more prominently displayed in some classrooms than in others. The quality of displays range between satisfactory and good; overall, they are at least satisfactory.
- The governing body is active and highly supportive of the school. The school prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents do not fully meet the recommendations of the NAW Circular 22/96.
- Overall, the school's partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is good. Parents are made welcome to become involved in the life and work of the school and a number provide valuable support during the day and in extra-curricular activities. Parents also provide good support through the Friends of Heolgerrig Association. During the pre-inspection consultation with parents, the majority expressed their general satisfaction with most aspects of the school. However, among the questionnaires returned, a significant minority indicated that they were not kept well informed about their child's achievement and were not given a clear understanding of what is taught. This was reflected in responses at the pre-inspection meeting with parents. However, both personally and in writing, the school does seek to keep parents informed. The school serves the community well. There are many sporting links with other local primary schools, and links with the comprehensive school to ease the transition for pupils are varied and very well organised.
- Pupils' attendance is satisfactory but the school does not fully comply with the requirements of NAW Circular 3/99 with regard to the completion of attendance registers.

During the inspection, a few pupils in several classes arrived late in school at the beginning of the day.

- Seven key issues for action were identified in the previous inspection in 1997. The school has satisfactorily addressed three of these issues but further work remains to be done on aspects of the other four, and these form part of the key issues identified in this inspection.

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

#### **3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning**

- A total of 61 lessons or sessions were seen. Standards of achievement vary across the school; they were very good in 2% of the sessions seen, good in 66%, satisfactory in 30% and unsatisfactory in 2%. This is an improvement on the 1997 inspection.
- Provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for learning. Children, from the earliest stage, make good progress in all aspects of their work. Standards are very good in children's personal and social development throughout the early years. Standards are good in literacy skills, in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. They make rapid progress in information technology (IT) skills and especially in their control of the mouse and in the development of keyboard skills. Pupils in the nursery have direct access to outdoor play facilities but reception children do not.
- Standards of achievement in the various subjects of the NC and religious education in KS1 and KS2 are good in science, design and technology, history, music, physical education and religious education. In KS1, standards are good in English, IT and art, and satisfactory in KS2 in these subjects. Standards are satisfactory in KS1 and KS2 in mathematics, Welsh second language and geography.
- There is a lack of continuity and progression in pupils' development in a number of subjects, and work does not always challenge pupils sufficiently, resulting in some underachievement, especially among boys.
- In KS1, the average percentage of pupils achieving Level (L)2 in the NC assessments in the school between 1997 and 2001 was above the LEA and Welsh average over these years. In the NC assessments in 2002, 100% of the pupils achieved L2 or above in reading and mathematics, and 94% in science. In the 1999, 2000 and 2001 NC assessments, the school's performance in KS1 was among the middle 50% of schools in Wales with a similar percentage of free school meals.
- In KS2, the average percentage of pupils achieving L4 or above in the NC assessments in the school between 1997 and 2001 was also greater than the LEA and Wales average over these years. During these years in NC assessments, in English and to a lesser extent in mathematics, boys in the school underachieved compared with girls. In 1999, 2000 and 2001, the school's performance in KS2 was among the lower 25% of similar schools in Wales.

- In KS2, the correspondence between the scores awarded the pupils through teacher assessment and those obtained through NC tasks and tests is satisfactory overall.

### **3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum**

- Provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Learning. A good foundation is laid for children's future development in the early years in the six areas of learning. Their personal and social development is very good. They communicate well through language and make good progress in developing numeracy skills. Children, from the earliest stage, make rapid progress in IT; they control the mouse well and have well developed keyboard skills.
- Most pupils in KS1 achieve good standards in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Pupils in KS2, pupils continue to speak clearly and confidently in a wide variety of situations. Their listening skills are also good and, at times, very good, such as in whole-school gatherings. Pupils' reading skills in KS2 range widely, between satisfactory and good. However, pupils in KS2 are not always challenged enough in their reading or build sufficiently on the foundations laid. Pupils' writing skills, including handwriting, also range widely, being good among the abler, but satisfactory overall. There is a lack of progression in pupils' writing skills.
- Overall, pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactory, but good among the abler; they do not use their numeracy skills enough to support their work across the curriculum.
- Pupils display a high level of confidence in their work in IT, but a few important aspects of the work are underdeveloped, especially data handling and the use of e- mail. Standards overall are satisfactory.
- In several classes, key skills are not planned for on a day to day basis and are not reinforced sufficiently across the curriculum.

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

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

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

- The school promotes good moral and social values. It is a caring community in which all pupils are respected and valued. As a result, pupils develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
- Relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves are good. Pupils respect one another and work co-operatively together both within and outside the classroom. The older pupils conscientiously carry out responsibilities and duties in the daily routines of school life. Pupils are courteous to visitors, with whom they converse easily and confidently.

- A range of extra curricular activities, particularly sport, enhances pupils' social development.
- Pupils' social awareness is effectively promoted by the school's regular support for a range of charities, both local and national.
- Visits to places of interest provide pupils with first hand experiences and develop their cultural knowledge and understanding. The range of pupils' cultural interests is further extended through links with other countries, such as the Czech Republic and Finland.
- Pupils' awareness of the culture of Wales is enriched by a suitable range of visits, for example, to St. Fagan's Museum of Welsh Life, and through the school's involvement with the Urdd Movement which includes residential experiences for pupils in Y5 and Y6.
- Acts of collective worship provide opportunities for reflection and prayer. Pupils listen very attentively, participate well and contribute through tuneful singing. Opportunities to extend the spiritual dimension on these occasions are not always fully exploited and insufficient planning takes place to ensure that they cover a suitable range of themes.

## **4.2 Behaviour and attitudes**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good.

- There is a happy atmosphere within the school and there are positive and frequently good-humoured relationships between teachers and pupils. The quality of life within the school is good.
- Pupils are reminded of the school's expectations of behaviour at school assemblies and through the effective recognition and rewarding of good behaviour. Some classes extend this by discussing and prominently displaying adopted classroom rules.
- Pupils conduct themselves with courtesy as they move around the school and there is sensible and friendly interaction between pupils in the playground, the dining area and generally around the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good overall; in some classes, they are very good. The vast majority of pupils display a high level of interest in their work, are attentive and concentrate well. They respond positively to their teachers and engage enthusiastically in the tasks set for them particularly when the teaching is good or very good.
- The school expresses its strong disapproval of bullying behaviour. Pupils feel confident that they are able to discuss any concerns that they may have with their teachers.

## **4.3 Attendance**

Levels of attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

- Whole school average attendance has remained consistently above 90% in the past three terms. However, attendance in YR is consistently below 90% and in KS1 is just below

90% in one of those terms. During some terms, the incidence of pupils being absent for family holidays significantly affects the overall attendance levels.

- There is no instance of unauthorised absence recorded in the school's published statistics. However, the school's class attendance registers rarely make the required distinction between authorised and unauthorised absences as required by its own staff guidelines and the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99.
- The school promotes the importance of good attendance by recognising and rewarding the attendance records of different classes and individual pupils.
- The school does not set itself targets for the improvement of attendance. However, the head and the school clerk monitor attendance on a weekly basis and effective links are maintained with pupils' homes if the attendance of any individual is a cause for concern.
- Overall, punctuality is satisfactory although a few pupils in several classes arrived late at the start of the school day during the inspection, which disturbed the beginning of teaching sessions.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

The quality of teaching throughout the school is uneven, ranging between very good in 10% of the 61 lessons or sessions seen, to unsatisfactory in 15%. Overall, the teaching was satisfactory or better in 85% of the lessons seen. This compares very closely with the standards of teaching in the 1997 inspection where they were satisfactory or better in 87% of the lessons seen and unsatisfactory in 13%.

- All teachers and pupils enjoy good to very good relationships and are well supported by classroom assistants. Teachers know their pupils well and provide good role models.

Where the quality of teaching is consistently good or better, teachers:

- have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach;
- have suitably high expectations of the pupils;
- encourage pupils to evaluate what they are doing;
- give clear explanations and instructions;
- ask and distribute questions effectively; and,
- manage pupils well.

Where there are shortcomings:

- lessons are not well planned, especially the identification of clear learning objectives and the key skills to be developed;
- teaching lacks pace;
- work set does not challenge pupils enough according to their ability; and,
- work is not consistently marked in a way which indicates how it can be improved.

## **5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting**

The school's arrangements for assessment and recording are satisfactory overall. The quality of reporting to parents is good.

- An assessment policy is in place that details the range of assessments used for children in the early years and for assessment in the core subjects in KS1 and KS2.
- Pupils' achievements in the early years are assessed systematically using baseline assessments.
- Detailed systems are in place to track pupils' progress in English and in mathematics. Published assessments are used to set targets for achievement in NC tests and to monitor and compare the progress of boys and girls. The schemes of work used to support the teaching of foundation subjects in the school clearly identify assessment opportunities. However, the use of these assessments and assessment opportunities to inform future work is underdeveloped.
- In the majority of classes, pupils' work is marked regularly. In KS1, marking in English is used to identify targets for improvement. In some classes in KS2, use is made of target sheets and, on occasion, the marking of work makes reference to targets set. Overall, the use of target setting to raise standards is inconsistent in KS2, and marking does not always indicate to the pupils what needs to be done to improve.
- Procedures for assessing pupils with SEN are satisfactory, and the majority of assessments are used to inform future targets set for pupils.
- Assessment of pupils for whom English is an additional language is undertaken by the LEA and reflected in the level of support provided within the school.
- Appropriate arrangements are made for parents to discuss their children's progress with class teachers.
- Annual reports to parents focus on standards of achievement in both core and foundation subjects. The reports for pupils in KS1 and KS2 contain specific targets for improvement in the core subjects, and reports for early years pupils include a section on the way forward for each child. The quality of reporting is good.

### **5.3 Curriculum**

Overall, the school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

- The arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) are good and are in line with ACCAC's guidelines. The school's policy for sex education forms part of its PSHE policy and is taught within the context of science.
- The school effectively promotes racial equality and cultural diversity and is socially inclusive; it ensures equality of access to the curriculum and opportunity for all pupils. However, there is some underachievement among boys, as shown in the NC assessments.
- Schemes of work and other supporting materials are of generally good quality and are appropriately revised in line with Curriculum 2000, however, individual lessons are not always well planned. All curriculum policies are clearly written and appropriate. These are well supported by a range of other policies on pertinent issues which contribute to the smooth running of the school.
- The provision of work-related education is satisfactory.
- The provision for the two pupils who are learning English as an additional language is appropriate and they work well alongside their peers in class.
- There is a satisfactory home-school agreement, and homework generally supports what pupils do at school.
- The school provides well for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig.
- Pupils' learning is enhanced by a worthwhile and broad extra-curricular programme, especially team games. Teachers, parents and governors provide valuable support in these activities. Pupils of Heolgerrig have gained many successes, both locally and nationally, in a range of activities of a sporting and cultural nature, including those organised by the Urdd movement.
- Governors are closely involved with the school on curriculum matters; each governor has a curriculum responsibility and links with the relevant teacher in his / her role as a curriculum leader.
- The school meets the recommendations of the NAW Circular 3/99 regarding the amount of teaching time planned for each week.

### **5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

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

- Teachers provide a happy and comfortable learning environment for the pupils. Individual pupils are well known to staff who respond well to their personal needs. However, the identification, recording and response to pupils' educational needs are not as consistent.

- All pupils receive equal access to the curriculum and other school activities, regardless of gender or race. At times, in some classes and in some classroom activities, there are examples of unnecessary gender-based practices.
- The school's Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE) programme meets current recommendations and includes an appropriate sex education programme. However, the governing body has not yet discussed and approved the policy and delivery of the sex education programme.
- The school has appropriate arrangements for child protection and there are effective links with the relevant agencies.
- The school's health and safety policy is comprehensive and provides staff with guidance on safe practice in the full range of school activities. Individual responsibilities are clearly defined. Fire evacuation drills are reported to be held termly but they have not been consistently recorded and evaluated.
- The school has installed appropriate security measures at the points of access to the school buildings. However, these measures are not consistently carried out.

## **5.5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)**

The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN), the progress they make and the standards they achieve are satisfactory.

- Thirty two pupils are identified as having SEN. Currently, no pupil has a statement of SEN. Provision includes a weekly visit from a Language Support Teacher who supports pupils from Y2 upwards on a withdrawal basis.
- A comprehensive school policy on pupils with SEN is in place that has been updated in line with the new Code of Practice on SEN and disability discrimination requirements. The policy includes clear guidance on roles and responsibilities.
- All pupils on the SEN register have a current Individual Education Plan (IEP) that contains targets for improvement. Targets are not always matched to individual pupil's current level of achievement and, on occasion, are insufficiently precise, so that long periods of time are required before a pupil can achieve the target set.
- The majority of targets are aimed at improving pupils' reading skills. Work within classes indicates that support is also required to raise achievement in writing.
- Evaluations on the majority of IEPs show that pupils make good progress.
- Links with parents and appropriate outside agencies are well established.
- Pupils receive good support from class teachers, support teachers and classroom helpers. Withdrawal groups are well organised. The Language Support Teacher is fully aware of IEP targets and works closely with the SEN Coordinator (SENCO) and class teachers to ensure continuity of provision.

- Pupils who have SEN are identified early in YR, but no additional support, other than that given by the class teacher, is provided for them before Y2.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive appropriate support to develop their understanding of the English language.

## **5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions**

Overall, partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is good.

- During the pre-inspection consultation, the majority of parents expressed their general satisfaction with most aspects of the life of the school. However, among the questionnaires returned, a significant minority expressed dissatisfaction with the level of communication between the school and parents. This was reflected in responses at the pre-inspection meeting with parents. However, the school provides clearly written monthly newsletters, a parents' notice board and two open consultation evenings for parents during the year. The head and teachers make themselves available at the end of each school day for discussions.
- In some classes, parents have been provided with explanatory meetings about literacy in KS1. In addition, YR parents attending the PAL group receive a valuable insight into teaching methods and guidance on how to support their children's learning.
- The school prospectus and the governing body's annual report for parents do not meet the recommendations of the NAW and there are a number of omissions. The home-school agreement meets statutory requirements.
- Parents are made welcome to become involved in the life and work of the school. A number provide valuable support in KS1 and KS2 by assisting in reading sessions, craft-work and IT sessions and make an important contribution to the organisation and running of the Dragon Sports activities. Parents provide good support for the fund-raising events organised by the Friends of Heol Gerrig Association.
- The school serves the local community well. The school buildings are used for evening community activities and, notably, local adults use the new IT suite. Regular visits by local clergy enhance community worship. Y6 pupils regularly prepare an informative column for a local newspaper.
- The school links with other local primary schools in a cluster project organised by its partner comprehensive school. Links with primary schools are mainly in sport and to a lesser extent in music. There is little collaboration on curriculum matters. Transitional activities with the comprehensive school are very well organised. Y6 pupils are well prepared for the transfer and there is much valuable co-operation between staff, including bridging projects.
- The school benefits from placements of NNEB trainees from a local tertiary college.
- Links with European countries through the Comenius project are of good quality and serve to extend their learning, as in a Y6 geography project.

## **5.7 Partnership with industry**

Partnership with industry is satisfactory.

- The school benefits from its policy of exploring all opportunities for pupils to take part in competitions and initiatives sponsored and promoted by industry and commerce. Consequently, Y4, Y5 and Y6 pupils' learning in geography, history and design and technology have been enhanced by their involvement. These are also opportunities for staff development.
- Notably, a Welsh Heritage Initiative Project provided pupils with the opportunity to learn about their local heritage and use their skills in collecting first hand information from a variety of local sources.
- Equivalent opportunities are less well developed for KS1 and younger pupils although, occasionally, pupils visit local supermarkets and a post office when relevant to their studies.
- The school has effective links with Education Business Partnership (EBP) that provides information on relevant initiatives and opportunities for staff development.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement**

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

- The head has introduced sound procedures for self evaluation and school improvement, including the setting of targets and the tracking of individual pupil's progress. Following an appraisal of pupils' achievements at the end of each year in various tests, targets are set for the end of the following year. The school receives good support from the LEA in key areas of its work in the form of, for example, national and local comparative data and on self-evaluation and school improvement matters. However, the sound policies that are in place and the wealth of information available are not fully used in order to secure a greater measure of continuity and progression in the provision and to raise standards further.
- All staff and governors are involved in producing, monitoring and evaluating the School Development Plan (SDP). It is based on a review of the previous year's SDP leading to targets for improvement and actions to address these targets. The SDP is monitored and evaluated on a regular basis and, following consultations with the governing body, any necessary changes are made. The SDP for the current year contains a manageable and appropriate set of priorities. It is a suitably structured working document and is appropriately costed, but the success criteria are not always expressed in measurable terms. The school's in-service training programme links appropriately with the SDP and the impact of these courses is to be seen in certain areas in the school.

- The governing body is active and highly supportive of the school. The school prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents do not fully meet the recommendations of the NAW Circular 22/96.

## **6.2 Leadership and efficiency**

The head's management of the school's staffing, finances and resources in the long term and from day to day is satisfactory. He provides supportive leadership and promotes a caring ethos throughout the school.

- Recent changes in the permanent members of staff have resulted in the re-distribution of curriculum leadership roles in four subjects. The quality of leadership provided by curriculum leaders ranges between very good and satisfactory.
- There is an established monitoring system in place where the head monitors teaching and learning in classrooms and scrutinises teachers' planning. Two core subject leaders have also monitored classroom teaching, teachers' planning and pupils' work. Monitoring in the foundation subjects is, however, underdeveloped. Findings from monitoring activities are discussed with the individuals concerned and recorded, and common issues are pursued in staff meetings. Subject leaders have also revised the school's curriculum policies and schemes of work to a good standard in line with Curriculum 2000; the school draws heavily on LEA schemes.
- The school has a sound Continuing Professional Development policy which is linked to local and national priorities and, in turn, to the SDP. The programme includes annual meetings with the head leading to the setting of negotiated targets for development, further training and support. This policy has been extended this term into an appraisal model which applies to all teachers and the head.
- The effects of the above leadership and professional development initiatives are unevenly spread across the school; overall, they are satisfactory.
- The LEA's financial audit in 2001 concluded that the standard of administration was satisfactory.

## **6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- The school is well staffed, and teachers are well and, at times, very well supported by classroom assistants. Overall, the accommodation is in generally good condition. The quantity, quality and use made of resources are satisfactory.
- The school is going through a period of considerable change in its teaching staff, however, the situation is satisfactorily managed. Most of the teaching staff are experienced and well qualified and are well supported by classroom assistants, visiting teachers for language support, English as an additional language and music tuition.
- The main school building dates from 1906. Overall, it is in generally good condition, is kept clean and free from litter by the caretaking and cleaning staff and the pupils, and it is well used. The school is well resourced in certain areas, such as in IT, art and religious

education. The school's collection of books contain a mixture of new and dated volumes. Overall, the school is satisfactorily resourced and resources are satisfactorily used.

- The head's management of the school building, its staffing, finances and resources in the long term and from day to day is satisfactory.
- Classrooms and thoroughfares contain well-organised and attractive displays of work across the curriculum; but pupils' work is more prominently displayed in some classrooms than in others. The quality of displays range between satisfactory and good; overall, they are at least satisfactory.

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

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

#### **Provision for the under-fives**

The quality of the provision for the under-fives overall is good. The school's provision covers all areas of learning and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Nursery and Reception children make very good progress in personal and social development, and achieve good standards in all other areas of learning.

Curriculum planning is good in reception and very good in nursery. Careful planning in the nursery between both teachers who work in a job-share arrangement provides detailed guidance for nursery nurses, who give very good support for the class teachers.

#### **Good features**

##### **Nursery (3-4 year olds)**

- Nursery children listen attentively to their teacher and other adults, and follow instructions well. The majority talk confidently and communicate their personal needs effectively. They enjoy listening to a story read by the teacher and join in parts of the narration. They hold books correctly and enjoy sharing them. They also enjoy making marks on paper and are developing a good understanding of the functions of writing through their play in 'The House of the Three Bears'. Pupils understand and respond satisfactorily to basic instructions and commands in Welsh and have an increasing repertoire of Welsh songs.
- Children make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. They recall and sing a range of number rhymes. They can count to five and many beyond. They sort and match objects and compare objects by size and weight. Most of them recognise basic 2D shapes such as circles, triangles, rectangles and squares.
- Children's personal and social development is very good. The routines in nursery are well established and children confidently move around the classroom. Children show sensitivity to their peers and take turns during play. The standard of co-operation during

activities is very good. All children take responsibility for their own belongings and seek help when needed, for example, to put on coats or painting aprons.

- Nursery children make good progress in gaining a knowledge and understanding of the world. They are developing an awareness of the times of the day and of the seasons of the year. They discuss the weather, reflecting on the effect it has on their own activities and on the environment. They talk freely about their own lives and about jobs in the community.
- Children's physical development is good. They show a good awareness of their own bodies and understand the difference between running, skipping and jumping. Children control the speed and direction of wheeled toys competently and show a good awareness of other pupils during these activities.
- Pupils in nursery are learning to play a selection of musical instruments correctly and to name them. They respond enthusiastically to a range of songs and rhymes. When playing outside, pupils use large apparatus to build models. Pupils respond imaginatively and creatively in role play and drama activities. They paint and draw using a good range of media and tools.

### **Reception (4-5 year olds)**

- Overall, reception children listen well and offer opinions, frequently speaking in full sentences. They answer questions confidently and most speak clearly. They recall and recount the main events in a story and provide descriptive words to describe a character in the story of 'The Three Billy Goats.' Some pupils read text from cards with accuracy. They make good progress in more formal writing; overwriting and underwriting, with most of their letters clearly shaped.
- Most children at this stage recognise and count numbers to 10 and some beyond. They demonstrate a clear understanding of mathematical concepts such as 'more than' and 'less than' and use mathematical language to compare objects by size. When discussing the length of an object they put forward a sensible estimate. They measure using everyday objects and record their results pictorially. They make effective use of apparatus to create patterns.
- Pupils understand and respond satisfactorily to instructions and commands in Welsh.
- Children's personal and social development is very good. They co-operate very well when working in groups and on the computer. Most reception children concentrate well on tasks given. They take responsibility for tidying the classroom after practical activities and do so quickly. Pupils dress and undress themselves for physical education with a minimum of support.
- Reception pupils show a good awareness of the world around them. They can talk about their homes and where they live. They discuss the different types of weather and certain physical features. They can distinguish between, and name, a variety of materials. They are developing their awareness of time and know what humans need to live.

- Reception children move with control during physical education lessons, showing a good level of spatial awareness. They hop and skip well. Pupils' fine motor skills are well developed. They manipulate pencils and colouring materials well, for example, when colouring carefully between the outlines of pictures.
- Reception children sing a range of songs and rhymes in both English and Welsh tunefully and with enjoyment. They draw pictures of different ways to cross a river and use a range of construction materials to build a bridge for the Three Billy Goats. They play imaginatively with the doll's house and use the computer to generate pictures using a range of colours and shapes. Children select from a range of materials to make map sticks.

## **English**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good. In KS2, standards of achievement in speaking and listening are good, and satisfactory in reading and writing. Standards of achievement overall in KS2 are satisfactory.

### **Good features**

- Pupils of all abilities are confident speakers. They express themselves clearly and speak well particularly when sharing their work with the class and in role-play situations. They are eager to respond in class when questioned and contribute well to class discussions.
- In KS1 and KS2, the majority of pupils listen attentively. At times, the standard of listening is very good. Pupils understand and follow instructions accurately and promptly.
- Standards of reading are good in KS1. Pupils read with clarity, confidence and increasing expression. They discuss text with enthusiasm and willingly express their likes and dislikes of a selection of stories. They make good use of phonic skills to tackle new words.
- In KS2, pupils read a wide range of literature. Some read texts fluently and with appropriate expression. Many pupils talk at length about a range of literature and their favourite authors. Some pupils give thoughtful and perceptive reasons for their preferences. Competent use is made of non-fiction material for research and reference purposes.
- Pupils in KS1 write for a wide variety of purposes in response to a good range of stimuli, for example, a visit to Bristol Zoo. Pupils write good quality poems and descriptive pieces that show imaginative use of language. Most pupils have a good understanding of basic punctuation which they use with increasing accuracy. Pupils' work is very well presented.
- Pupils in KS2 show a good awareness of audience in their writing. At the early stages of the key stage, pupils use a good and appropriate range of adjectives and synonyms. They develop their use of punctuation. Pupils at the end of the key stage show an awareness of

tenses in their story writing. A number of Y6 pupils use appropriate language and good layout when writing a story in the form of a newspaper article.

- Pupils are making good progress in word processing.

### **Shortcomings**

- With some exceptions, KS2 pupils' ability to read fluently and with understanding is underdeveloped.
- There is a lack of progression in pupils' writing skills in KS2.
- A number of pupils in KS2 do not make satisfactory progress in their handwriting and presentational skills.

### **Welsh second language**

Standards of achievement in KS1 and KS2 are at least satisfactory with some good features.

#### **Good features**

- Welsh is given appropriate attention in the school, for example, through displays and captions. It is used in all classes during registration times and incidentally throughout much of the day to give commands and instructions. Welsh is also used in morning assemblies, and pupils in a few classes recite a Welsh prayer at the end of the day. Welsh is also used occasionally by some teachers in physical education lessons.
- Welsh is introduced from the earliest age. Pupils enjoy the work and respond enthusiastically at all times.
- Most pupils in KS1 and KS2 have at least a satisfactory recall of basic sentence patterns, including the positive and negative forms. They respond to basic questions accurately, using complete sentences, and their range of responses increases broadly satisfactorily with age. Most have acquired at least a satisfactory oral vocabulary about, for example, the weather, clothes, foods, colours and body parts. Older pupils have a satisfactory grasp of a wider range of relevant oral vocabulary, for example, to talk about their likes and dislikes or to describe themselves. They respond well to a range of commands and instructions. Older KS2 pupils ask and respond to questions using the past tense. Some can build new sentences. Their pronunciation is good. Progress in speaking is at least satisfactory.
- Pupils of all ages read isolated words and passages with expression. Progress is satisfactory.
- Pupils of all ages write in Welsh, for example, to complete sentences, to compose descriptive passages or simple conversations. Older pupils also write personal profiles, telephone conversations and other passages on relevant topics. Progress is satisfactory.

## **Shortcomings**

- There is a lack of progression in pupils' knowledge, understanding and use of Welsh and this limits their ability to reach the higher levels of which they are capable.

## **Mathematics**

Overall, standards of achievement are satisfactory with about a third of the pupils in KS1 and KS2 achieving good standards.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of conventional signs, place value, number bonds and patterns, odd and even numbers, the language of number, and respond orally to mental challenges at least satisfactorily. Most have a satisfactory grasp of the language of number, can count on to 100 and beyond, recognise odd and even numbers, and can sort and match objects according to a variety of criteria. Most are progressing at least satisfactorily in their understanding and use of money, can tell the time on the hour, the half and quarter hour. Many are confident in identifying common 2D and 3D shapes and in naming some of their properties. They can also measure in centimetres. Pupils use the computer to consolidate work in, for example, basic number skills, shape and symmetry. About a third of the pupils achieve good standards in the above processes.
- In KS2, pupils' ability to respond quickly to oral challenges is developing at least satisfactorily. Pupils generally are making satisfactory to good progress in their understanding of number and are progressing at least satisfactorily in their understanding of length, time and money. Some pupils achieve satisfactory standards in their ability to approximate when using money. Many of the older pupils can identify a range of 2D and 3D shapes and some of their properties, and understand aspects of their work in fractions, decimals, percentages, angles and area.
- Occasionally, pupils make satisfactory use of the computer, for example, to complete mathematical exercises, in work on shape, and in graphical representation.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' ability to use IT to collect, record (including in graphical forms) and interpret data in mathematics is underdeveloped.
- Many pupils in KS2 are uncertain of aspects of their work on fractions, decimals, angles and area.
- Many pupils throughout KS2 lack mental strategies to approximate.

## **Science**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 have a good body of knowledge about materials and their properties, life processes and living things, and physical processes. They undertake a wide range of purposeful investigations into, for example, electricity in the home, various habitats, exploring changes after heating, and different light and sound sources (including on a sound walk.) They competently observe and describe various features of objects, materials and their properties, living things and events. They label and record their findings well.
- KS1 pupils are acquiring effective scientific enquiry skills. They have a good understanding of sorting, fair testing and predicting.
- KS2 pupils have undertaken much investigational work in the three main aspects of the science curriculum and, overall, have a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of subject matter, such as, materials, healthy living, rocks and soils, circuits, solids, liquids and gases, food, light and sound.
- Overall, KS2 pupils have a good understanding of the key processes in science including the need for careful observation and recording, predicting, the control of variables and fair testing. Pupils generally use scientific vocabulary confidently and competently, and give due attention to safety. Most pupils present their work well including in writing, through annotated drawings and tabulations.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' use of numeracy and IT skills to support their work in science is underdeveloped.

## **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- At the end of KS1, pupils use a range of tools to create models of penguins with moving sections. They evaluate their finished products and reflect on the difficulties encountered.
- Pupils in both key stages make good quality puppets using a range of materials. Y3 pupils work with parental support to design and dress puppets using clay which they model with good control.
- Pupils have undertaken a range of projects in KS2: in Y3, they made mezuzah boxes to support their work in religious education; Y4 pupils designed and made games; Y5 pupils designed and made musical instruments; and Y6 pupils made toys for the younger pupils.

These items are planned in detail and demonstrate a range of joining skills and simple mechanisms. The completed work is of good quality.

- Pupils in both key stages use a range of tools safely and correctly.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Information technology**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and satisfactory with good features in KS2.

#### **Good features**

- Pupils throughout the school are confident in their use of computers. From an early stage, pupils are able to open programs and show a good level of independence moving through them. They are competent in saving and printing their work and their keyboard skills are developing well across the school.
- Pupils in KS1 make good progress and quickly become competent in their use of a range of programs. At the end of the key stage, pupils are able to manipulate text to change the font and size of their work. They can use clip art and insert photographs to enhance their work. They make good use of an art package to illustrate their stories.
- In KS2, pupils in Y3 use a program to develop their work on punctuation; pupils in Y4 use a program to support their reading activities, and Y6 pupils use ICT to support their studies on rivers.
- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 use a range of CD-Roms and, in KS2, they use them to locate and print information for reference work. Older pupils have some experience of using the internet for individual and group research. Pupils in Y4 explore an internet site and record details of the weather forecast.
- The recently opened computer suite is used to develop pupils' knowledge of a word processing package and pupils are making good progress in this aspect.

#### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils make limited use of data-handling programs to enter data, interrogate it and produce appropriate graphical representations.
- Across the school, pupils' ability to use e mail is underdeveloped.
- Pupils do not follow a progressive programme of work, so they do not build effectively on previously learned skills.

## **History**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 show a developing sense of chronology and, following a visit to St Fagan's Museum, they can identify similarities and differences between different periods and artefacts. They identify some of the different ways in which the past can be represented.
- They are acquiring a good knowledge about some famous Welsh people, such as Caradog and Gerald of Wales.
- In KS2, pupils are developing a good body of knowledge about Wales and Britain and other areas. They describe the characteristics of past societies and periods, such as at the time of the Celts, Romans, Tudors, Victorians and World War 2, and identify changes across periods. They can give some of the causes and consequences of the main events and changes.
- Many pupils have a clear understanding of chronology.
- They know that some events, people and changes have been interpreted in different ways. They are aware of the nature of evidence. Older KS2 pupils' skills in historical enquiry are developing well.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' IT skills in relation to history are underdeveloped.
- A significant number of pupils are unsure of chronology in relation to the periods they have studied.

## **Geography**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS1 and satisfactory overall in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils recognise and make observations about physical and human features of specific places. They select information from various resources provided and they ask and respond to questions about places. They show a satisfactory awareness of places beyond their locality. They express views on attractive and unattractive features in their locality.
- In KS1, pupils communicate ideas and information clearly through speaking and drawing.
- By the end of the KS1, pupils recognise and name different types of housing in the area. They make and use maps and plans, such as, of the classroom and arising from a visit to Bristol Zoo. Their early mapping skills are at least satisfactory.

- In KS2, pupils know about their own area and can suggest ways of improving the amenities and quality of life.
- They use observational skills to make simple comparisons between their own area and a contrasting locality in Wales.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the climate and conditions in an economically developing country which they are currently studying.
- Pupils in KS2 describe geographical patterns and appreciate the importance of location in understanding places. They recognise and describe physical and human processes, describe features of places and know that these can affect the lives of people living there.
- Y6 pupils' use of IT skills in their study of rivers is good.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' mapping skills develop unevenly across the school.
- A significant number of pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of places beyond their locality.

### **Art**

Overall, standards of achievement in KS1 are good. Standards of achievement in KS2 are satisfactory with good features.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 use a wide range of materials to make paintings, drawings and collages. They experiment with paint and colour and shade appropriately. They make good progress in handling materials and tools.
- Pupils at the end of KS1 reflect well upon the quality of their work and suggest improvements.
- Good use is made of artwork in KS1 to enhance other areas of the curriculum, and pupils' work is well displayed.
- In KS2, there is evidence of pupils using textiles, producing work on Celtic designs and working with a local artist in residence. Pupils work with the artist to produce Roman tiles for a foyer display.
- In Y5, pupils use pencils effectively to complete self-portraits, showing skill with line and form. This work reflects good progression through the key stage.

- Visits by Y6 pupils to Llancaeach Fawr and Cyfarthfa Museum are used to enhance work on art appreciation. Pupils, on these visits, respond imaginatively to the ideas of others and to study the work of great artists.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils at the end of KS2 shown insufficient progress in using materials other than pencils.

## **Music**

Standards of achievement are good overall in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- Pupils use their voice and various other instruments to confidently perform to an audience. They keep a steady beat.
- Pupils in KS1 understand basic musical vocabulary and use hand movements to show pitch. They sing with increasing accuracy and are becoming aware of the need to control pitch and breathing.
- Pupils in KS2 have good diction and a good understanding of musical elements and dynamics. They give good attention to phrasing, breathing, pitch, intonation and posture. The quality of singing in KS1 and KS2 is good. Pupils sing with a gusto but in a controlled and tuneful manner.
- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 are developing a very broad understanding of different styles of music from other cultures. They listen well to a range of music and confidently and competently compare and contrast various styles of music.
- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 learn and develop composition skills. They apply what they have learned from listening to music, including music from Wales, and by discussing different styles, and make suggestions about how moods and incidents can be represented in sound.
- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 enjoy music. They evaluate their own performance and suggest ways to improve performance.
- Older pupils make good progress in composing and reading music which they also appraise.
- A few pupils in the school attend lessons with peripatetic teachers, to learn to play the violin and brass instruments. This provision effectively extends the skills of pupils who are committed to developing their musical knowledge.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Physical education**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1 and KS2, pupils benefit from a full and varied programme. The school reports that pupils in KS2 are making good progress in swimming. In addition, Y5 and Y6 pupils benefit from outdoor education experiences, including residential experiences, and many from a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities.
- Pupils of all ages, and staff, dress appropriately for lessons and understand the need for warming up and cooling down. Pupils listen attentively to instructions, sustain effort and concentration. They observe safety rules well and move around in a controlled fashion.
- In gymnastics, KS1 pupils use space well. They demonstrate a good range of controlled movements. They respond well to music and demonstrate variations in movement according to the music. Younger KS2 pupils listen well to music and respond appropriately. They perform confidently and with enjoyment.
- KS2 pupils demonstrate a range of appropriately controlled movements in response to music. They work well together and make good use of space.
- In KS2, pupils display good agility in gymnastics lessons. They move well and in a good, flowing fashion when they take up a starting position, leading to a change in height, direction and speed before ending in a good position. They work well on a range of apparatus, and collaborate well.
- KS2 pupils demonstrate good skill levels in a range of games, for example, in passing, catching and dodging.
- Pupils respond well to the challenges given them to evaluate their own work and that of others.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' ability to evaluate their work and that of others is unevenly developed over the years.

## **Religious education**

Standards of achievement in KS1 and KS2 are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in both key stages can recall Bible stories that are appropriate to their stage of development.

- Pupils in Y4 study the reasons why people pray, and pupils in both key stages write their own prayers.
- Pupils' knowledge of other faiths is developed well in both key stages. Pupils in KS1 and KS2 have studied the beliefs and practices of Jews. Y1 pupils explore the religious celebration of Hanukah, and pupils in Y3 explore the use of the Torah and its significance to the Jewish Religion. Y5 and Y6 pupils study Islam and visit a mosque. Most pupils know some of the main similarities and differences between major world religions, and older pupils also understand the importance of showing respect for the differing beliefs of others.
- In KS2, pupils reflect well on how issues discussed in religious education relate to their own lives.
- Pupils in KS2 benefit from visiting Llandaff Cathedral to study artefacts within the Cathedral and features of the building.
- Pupils make good use of the artefacts available within the school to support their learning.

### Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

## 8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

### 8.1 Progress since the last inspection

Seven key issues were identified in the previous inspection report in the Summer Term 1997 namely, the need to:

- **ensure schemes of work are completed in design and technology, information technology, physical education and history in KS1;**
  - This has been addressed satisfactorily.
- **check regularly that worksheets used suitably match pupils' needs and abilities;**
  - This has been addressed satisfactorily.
- **improve curriculum planning, including references to cross-curricular issues to secure, in practice, more effective monitoring of progression in the work;**
  - This issue has been partly addressed. There is a continuing need to ensure that teaching plans indicate more precisely how key skills are to be taught. Planning is a key issue in this report.
- **produce an overall assessment policy to ensure better consistency in assessing pupils' performance in both key stages;**

- This has not been fully addressed. The school now has an assessment policy that includes the early years and the core subjects but not the foundation subjects. Assessment and recording form a key issue in this inspection.
- **extend the role of the senior management team and co-ordinators so as to ensure better leadership to colleagues and in monitoring standards in pupils' work;**
  - There is now a system in place to monitor standards but there is a need to ensure that the process is undertaken more rigorously. This is a key issue in this inspection.
- **revise the SDP to include priorities that deal directly with improving teaching and learning especially in KS1 and identify long-term objectives;**
  - This matter has been resolved.
- **improve the day time security of the school in outside classrooms and side and main entrances of the building.**
  - Appropriate measures have been taken to improve security at the school but these are not carried out consistently. This matter is a key issue in this inspection.

## 8.2 Key issues for action

There is a need for the head, staff and governors to:

- i. address the shortcomings identified in all subjects and aspects in the report where standards are satisfactory;
- ii. disseminate the existing good practice in teaching in the school and ensure that the school's monitoring procedures are implemented more rigorously leading to a greater measure of continuity, progression and challenge in the teaching and learning;
- iii. ensure that certain key whole-school procedures are implemented rigorously and consistently, and especially those in relation to:
  - assessment and recording;
  - target setting;
  - planning;
- iv. ensure that the security measures in place are consistently carried out;
- v. comply fully with National Assembly for Wales requirements with regard to:
  - the completion of attendance registers;
  - the governing body's annual report to parents;
  - and the school prospectus.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic information about the school

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Name of School       | Heolgerrig Primary                              |
| School type          | Community                                       |
| Age -range of pupils | 3 – 11  |
| Address of school    | Heolgerrig Road<br>Heolgerrig<br>Merthyr Tydfil |
| Post-Code            | CF48 1SB  |
| Telephone Number     | 01685 722571                                    |

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Headteacher                                  | Mr I E Power          |
| Date of appointment                          | January 1994          |
| Chair of Governors/<br>Appropriate Authority | Mr G Morgan           |
| Registered Inspector                         | Mr D Gwenallt Rees    |
| Dates of inspection                          | 11 – 14 November 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                           | 25.5    | 18 | 25 | 14 | 29 | 31 | 30 | 33 | 205.5 |

| <i>Total number of teachers</i> |           |           |                            |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
|                                 | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time equivalent (fte) |
| Number of teachers              | 8         | 3         | 9.2                        |

| <i>Staffing information</i>                                       |        |
|---|--------|
| Pupil:teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes) | 22.5:1 |
| Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes                        | 17:1   |
| Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in special classes                        | N/A    |
| Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes         | 25.7   |
| Teacher (fte) : class ratio                                       | 1.1:1  |

| <i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i> |       |       |       |              |
|---|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
|   | R     | KS1   | KS2   | Whole School |
| Term 1  | 87.2% | 91%   | 92.1% | 91.5%        |
| Term 2  | 87.7% | 89.9% | 94.3% | 93.1%        |
| Term 3  | 85.9% | 98.3% | 95.1% | 93.5%        |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection | 0 |
|--|---|

## C. Results of National Curriculum assessments and public examinations

**END OF KEY STAGE 1: School's results for 2002, National results for 2001.**

| <b>National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2002</b> |                    | Number of pupils in Y2: 29 |   |   |    |    |    |   |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------|---|---|----|----|----|---|
| <b>Percentage of pupils at each level</b>                |                    |                            |   |   |    |    |    |   |
|  |                    |                            | D | W | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4 |
| ENGLISH:   | Teacher Assessment | School                     |   |   |    | 59 | 41 |   |
|  |                    | National                   | 0 | 4 | 13 | 62 | 21 |   |
| EN: Reading  | Teacher Assessment | School                     |   |   |    | 59 | 41 |   |
|  |                    | National                   | 0 | 4 | 13 | 54 | 29 |   |
| EN: Writing  | Teacher Assessment | School                     |   |   | 6  | 68 | 28 |   |
|  |                    | National                   | 0 | 5 | 13 | 70 | 12 |   |
| EN: Speaking and listening                               | Teacher Assessment | School                     |   |   |    | 34 | 66 |   |
|  |                    | National                   | 0 | 3 | 11 | 63 | 23 |   |
| MATHEMATICS  | Teacher Assessment | School                     |   |   |    | 48 | 52 |   |
|  |                    | National                   | 0 | 2 | 9  | 60 | 29 |   |
| SCIENCE  | Teacher Assessment | School                     |   |   |    | 38 | 62 |   |
|  |                    | National                   | 0 | 2 | 10 | 67 | 21 |   |

| <b>Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment</b> |      |                  |     |
|--|------|------------------|-----|
| In the school: (2002)  | 100% | In Wales: (2001) | 81% |

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

## END OF KEY STAGE 2: School's results for 2002, National results for 2001

| National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2002 |                    |          |   |   |   |   | Number of pupils in Y6: 28 |   |    |    |    |   |
|---|--------------------|----------|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|---|----|----|----|---|
| Percentage of pupils at each level                |                    |          |   |   |   |   |                            |   |    |    |    |   |
|   |                    |          | D | A | F | W | 1                          | 2 | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6 |
| English   | Teacher Assessment | School   |   |   |   |   |                            |   | 18 | 46 | 36 |   |
|   |                    | National |   |   | 1 |   | 1                          | 6 | 19 | 48 | 25 |   |
|   | Test/Task          | School   |   |   |   |   |                            |   | 18 | 29 | 50 |   |
|   |                    | National |   | 2 | 2 |   |                            | 4 | 14 | 47 | 31 |   |
| Mathematics                                       | Teacher assessment | School   |   |   |   |   |                            |   | 21 | 36 | 43 |   |
|   |                    | National | 1 |   | 1 |   |                            | 4 | 19 | 47 | 28 |   |
|   | Test/Task          | School   |   |   |   |   |                            |   | 29 | 46 | 25 |   |
|   |                    | National | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |                            | 4 | 18 | 42 | 32 |   |
| Science   | Teacher assessment | School   |   |   |   |   |                            |   | 18 | 43 | 39 |   |
|   |                    | National |   |   | 1 |   |                            | 3 | 15 | 52 | 29 |   |
|   | Test/Task          | School   |   |   |   |   |                            |   | 11 | 57 | 29 |   |
|   |                    | National | 1 | 2 |   |   |                            | 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: (2002)   | 67.8% | In the school: (2002) | 64.2% |
| In Wales:(2001)   | 68%   | In Wales:(2001)       | 68%   |

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

## **D. Evidence base of the inspection**

- The team of three inspectors, between them, spent 10 days in the school;
- aspects of the life and work of the school were discussed in pre-inspection meetings with the headteacher, teaching staff, governors and parents;
- questionnaires from 47 families (around 28% of all the families in the school) were received and analysed;
- forms and documents produced by the school were examined;
- the minutes of meetings and documents relating to the financial management of the school were scrutinised;
- discussions were held with pupils, staff and the head;
- a total of 61 lessons or sessions were seen;
- pupils were observed in different situations throughout each day;
- pupils were heard reading and were examined in their knowledge and understanding of all subjects of the NC and religious education;
- a wide range of pupils' work was examined;
- attendance registers, pupils' records and teachers' assessments and planning files were inspected;
- inspectors attended daily acts of collective worship.

## **E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team**

**Mr D Gwenallt Rees (Registered Inspector):** Introduction, Main Findings, Standards (3.1, 3.2), Teaching, Curriculum, Management (6.1, 6.2, 6.3), Mathematics, Science, Welsh second language, Geography, History, Music, Physical Education, School Improvement, Key Issues, Appendix.

**Mrs L Jane Williams (Team Inspector):** Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural Development, SEN, Assessment, Recording and Reporting, English, IT, Design and Technology, Art, Religious Education, Early Years.

**Mr J Eilian James (Lay Inspector):** Behaviour and Attitudes, Attendance, Partnership with Parents, Community, Schools and Other Institutions, Partnership with Industry. Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare.

*The inspectors wish to express their thanks to the headteacher, staff, governors, parents and pupils for their courtesy and co-operation throughout the inspection.*