

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

***HOLLYBUSH PRIMARY SCHOOL
TON ROAD
CWMBRAN
TORFAEN***

School Number: 678-2271

Date of Inspection: 7-10 June 2004

***By
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Registered Inspector***

Date: 26 July 2004

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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:

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

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

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

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

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

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1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Hollybush Primary School was founded in 1972. It is situated in the residential suburb of Coed Eva within the town of Cwmbran in South-East Wales. It is located in a three-storey building, formerly designed for and occupied by a secondary school, and benefits from extensive accommodation. It is surrounded by large, pleasant playing fields and well-kept planted areas. The school houses a Hearing Impairment department, which meets the needs of 17 pupils from several local authorities. It serves the adjoining suburb of Hollybush. After school hours, the community uses the main building and an annexe for a range of activities. Pupils usually transfer to Llantarnam Comprehensive School on reaching the age of 11.

- There are 269 pupils on roll from Reception to Year (Y) 6, including 40 in two full-time Reception classes. Children first start at the school in Reception when they reach the age of four, most having experienced some pre-school, nursery education. The school's numbers on roll are considerably below its maximum, formal capacity, but numbers have increased a little in recent years. The present headteacher, the school's fifth, was appointed in January 2002, the school having had one headteacher, one acting headteacher and three consultant headteachers, between the end of its last inspection in May 2000 and the appointment of the present headteacher in 2002.
- The school reports that the intake of pupils represents the full ability range. Approximately half comes from backgrounds, which are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged, and the remainder from backgrounds, which are economically disadvantaged.
- Almost 45 per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is well above the national average. The pupil population is mostly English speaking and white. Less than one per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, and no pupils receive support in speaking English as an additional language. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language. The local authority cares for six pupils. The school excluded three pupils temporarily in the last year, but none permanently.
- There are 77 pupils on the register of special educational needs (SEN), which at 29 per cent is above the national average. There are 20 pupils, each with a formal statement of SEN. The school provides for pupils with SEN in mainstream classes, in withdrawal groups, and in classes for those with hearing impairments. Twelve pupils receive additional support for dyslexia. All pupils receive tuition in using British Sign Language (BSL) and practise it regularly.
- There are 13 full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers (14 full-time equivalent). None of the present staff are newly qualified teachers. During the inspection, two staff were temporary teachers, covering for staff who were absent. The school experienced a high turnover of staff after the last inspection and six of the present staff have been appointed since 2002.
- The school's mission statement is "Signing on to Success". It has gained the Quality Mark of the Basic Skills Agency in May 2004. The school is one of only four in the United Kingdom to be a Lighthouse school for the First Steps to Literacy programme. It is Torfaen local education authority's (LEA) pilot school for the new Foundation Stage for children aged from three to seven. The school's aims are set out in detail in its school development plan (SDP). They include the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning as a first priority. Teachers also aim to address the individual needs of all pupils as closely as possible. The school seeks to promote an ethos of problem-solving. The school's priorities

include the development of an Integrated Children's Centre for children aged from two to four over the next two years.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

Hollybush Primary School is a good school, which has made significant improvements in overall standards of achievement, the overall quality of teaching, and the quality of leadership and management since its last inspection.

Standards of achievement

- Overall standards of achievement are good. Standards of achievement were very good in 15 per cent, good in 56 per cent, and satisfactory in 29 per cent of the work seen.
- The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Learning.

The six areas of learning for children under five	Reception
Personal and social development	Good
Language, literacy and communication skills	Good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Creative development	Good
Physical development	Satisfactory

Standards of achievement for pupils by the age of 7 and 11

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Good	Very good
Welsh second language	Good	Satisfactory
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Very good
Music	Good	Good
Physical education	Good	Good
Religious education	Good	Good

- In the Key Stage (KS) 1 2003 national curriculum (NC) teacher assessments, pupils' achievements in attaining NC Level 2 or higher, were slightly above national results and LEA results in English. The teacher assessments in mathematics were slightly below national and LEA averages by about two per cent. Key Stage 1 teachers' assessments in science were above national and LEA averages by about three per cent.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher NC Level 3 was above national and LEA averages in English, slightly below average in mathematics and a little above average in science. Pupils achieved more highly in writing than reading. The results achieved by girls have been consistently higher than those of boys in English and mathematics, but below

boys' achievements in science. The school's KS1 results have improved steadily over the last three years, particularly in English and science.

- The school's results at KS1 compare well with similar schools, that is, those with broadly similar percentages of pupils in receipt of free school meals. The school's analysis shows that its results made it the second-highest performing school for English and science, and third-highest for mathematics.
- In the KS2 2003 NC test results, pupils' achievements in attaining NC Level 4 or higher, were below national and LEA results in English by 10 per cent, in mathematics by about 11 per cent and above national and LEA results in science by three per cent. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher NC Level 5 was substantially below national averages in English, mathematics and science.
- Overall, however, the school has done well in helping pupils to improve their attainments in the last two years and standards are improving.
- Pupils with hearing impairments in KS1 and KS2 achieve very good standards, and make very good progress, relative to their ages and abilities. Pupils with other forms of SEN achieve good standards relative to their ages and abilities.
- In many subjects, standards of achievement in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are good; standards in numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) are satisfactory.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, whilst provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The overall quality of assemblies and acts of collective worship is very good. Pupils' responses to the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. This represents an improvement on provision since the last inspection.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning

- Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are lively, happy, keen and co-operative. They have positive attitudes to their work and play. They settle quickly to tasks and sustain concentration well.
- The school has a good policy to promote racial equality, and has satisfactory measures in place to prevent bullying, sexism and other forms of discrimination. There are good links with the community police service. A community police officer visits the school regularly and helps to promote positive racial awareness amongst the pupils. However, inspectors found that pupils sometimes have a very limited knowledge of other world cultures.
- Attendance rates are satisfactory, averaging 91.6 per cent for the past three terms.
- Procedures for monitoring attendance are effective. The school complies with the statutory requirements set out in the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 3/99, *Pupil Support and Social Inclusion*.

The quality of education provided

- The overall quality of teaching is good, being good or better in 80 per cent of lessons observed. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed, being very good in 24 per cent, good in 56 per cent, and satisfactory in 20 per cent. This is a substantial improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

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- There are many aspects of teaching which are good and a few which are outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of learners and plan very well for the short and the long term. Specialist teaching is often very good.
 - Where teaching is satisfactory, the work in KS2 mathematics, KS1 science, and for information technology in KS1 and KS2 is not matched sufficiently well to pupils' abilities. Teachers make insufficient use of ICT to extend pupils' skills and knowledge and occasionally teachers' knowledge of Welsh grammar and pronunciation is underdeveloped.
 - Classroom assistants are essential supporters of learning in many classes and enjoy very productive partnerships with teachers.
 - The overall quality of assessment is good. The extent to which the school uses assessment to promote higher standards is also good. The arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements have been recently refined and are very good.
 - The quality of the curriculum for children aged under five is good. The quality of the curriculum for pupils in KS1 and KS2 is also good. The school's curriculum meets the requirements of the NC.
 - Clear policies and schemes of work have been written for all subjects within the last two years. Some, such as those for English and mathematics, are very good. Other schemes of work are at least good. The quality of planning for the teaching of key skills is very good. It is underpinned by very thorough planning to guide the teaching of key skills, which has been introduced two terms ago.
 - Teachers make good provision for mainstream pupils with SEN. Teachers provide very well for pupils with hearing impairments in mainstream classes and in the hearing impairment department. Pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum and there is a separate policy to promote equality of opportunity and social inclusion.
 - The school has established a good overall partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions. The school has a good dialogue and useful links with parents but one in five parents is dissatisfied with the work their children are given to do at home.

The management and efficiency of the school

- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good with some outstanding features. The SDP is a very useful document, which is very effective in setting the key priorities for school improvement. It has clear priorities, costings and success criteria and it indicates timescales and persons involved. It is monitored and evaluated rigorously. The headteacher has played a key role in not only monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching but also in appointing six new teachers.
- The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. Management systems are very effective. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has the full confidence of teachers, governors and pupils. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team (SMT) lead school development very well.
- Four years ago, at the time of the last inspection, the school reports that staff morale was very low. For a number of years, many temporary teachers were employed to cover for an above-average number of staff absences. During this inspection, however, it was clear that the situation has been reversed. The staffing situation is now stable and staff morale is high.
- Governors provide good leadership, working with the headteacher and her colleagues to identify, monitor and evaluate the school's strengths and areas for further development. Governors made it plain to inspectors that their first priority is to raise pupils' standards of achievement.

- The school prospectus and the annual report of the governors to parents are informative and well-presented but they do not comply fully with the statutory requirements and guidelines provided by the Welsh Assembly Government.
- Financial management is good. The school provides good value for money. The school's routine administration and organisation are effective and efficient.
- The adequacy of the accommodation for the number of pupils on roll is good. The internal accommodation has some outstanding displays of pupils' work. The school has benefited from remodelling and refurbishment.
- In general, the school's outdoor areas are very spacious with plenty of room for competitive games. The indoor areas for children aged under five are good. The outdoor accommodation for children aged under five is satisfactory but there is no secure, fenced outdoor area for children's physical development.
- The overall quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory. Teachers use good resources for learning in their lessons in a well-planned way. Much has been done to improve the school libraries, but there remain serious shortfalls in library resources. There are not enough books to cater for the needs of all pupils. The quality and quantity of computers are unsatisfactory.

The effectiveness with which the issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed

- The school last received a Section 10 inspection in 2000. Its progress was then closely monitored by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) for two years and the last Section 3 (HMI) inspection was in Autumn 2002.
- Overall, the school has made outstanding progress in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection. In addition to the very good progress made in addressing many of the key issues identified in the last inspection, the school has recovered from a period of high staff turnover, and rebuilt and retained the team of leaders and teachers.
- Standards have improved in almost all subjects. The quality of teaching is significantly higher than it was. The quality of leadership and management has improved and is now very good. Although there is much still to do, the school has much to be proud of.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Overall standards of achievement are good. Standards of achievement were very good in 15 per cent, good in 56 per cent, and satisfactory in 29 per cent of the work seen.

- Initial assessments show that the standards of many children on joining the school are below average when compared with the attainments of children in other schools in the county.
- In the KS1 2003 NC teacher assessments, pupils' achievements in attaining NC Level 2 or higher, were slightly above national results and LEA results in English. The teacher assessments in mathematics were slightly below national and LEA averages by about two per cent. Key Stage 1 teachers' assessments in science were above national and LEA averages by about three per cent.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher NC Level 3 was above national and LEA averages in English, slightly below average in mathematics and a little above average in science. Pupils achieved more highly in writing than reading. The results achieved by girls

have been consistently higher than those of boys in English and mathematics, but below boys' achievements in science. The school's KS1 results have improved steadily over the last three years, particularly in English and science.

- The school's results at KS1 compare well with similar schools, that is, those with broadly similar percentages of pupils in receipt of free school meals. The school's analysis shows that its results made it the second-highest performing school for English and science, and third-highest for mathematics.
- In the KS2 2003 NC test results, pupils' achievements in attaining NC Level 4 or higher, were below national and LEA results in English by 10 per cent, in mathematics by about 11 per cent and above national and LEA results in science by three per cent. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher NC Level 5 was substantially below national averages in English, mathematics and science.
- Overall, however, the school has done well in helping pupils to improve their attainments in the last two years and standards are improving.
- The results achieved by girls are consistently above those of boys. The school's KS2 results for pupils who gained at least NC Level 4 in all three core subjects were below national averages in 2003 by 17 per cent. These results have improved significantly compared with those of 2002.
- The school's results at KS2 compare well with similar schools, that is, those with broadly similar percentages of pupils in receipt of free school meals. Benchmarking analysis shows that the school's results made it the third-highest performing school in its group for English and science, and fifth-highest for mathematics.
- In KS1, pupils achieve good standards in all subjects, apart from ICT where standards are satisfactory. In KS2, pupils achieve very good standards in science and art, and good standards in all the other subjects, apart from in reading, Welsh, mathematics and ICT, where they are satisfactory.
- Pupils who have hearing impairments make very good progress and achieve very good standards, relative to their ages and considering their sometimes-significant disabilities.
- Pupils who are gifted or talented make good progress and achieve good standards, relative to their ages and abilities, in mainstream classes, in their English sets and art classes, and in extra-curricular activities.
- The few pupils who have minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress and achieve good standards.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Pupils achieve good standards in speaking, reading, writing and ICT across the curriculum. Their standards in listening and numeracy are satisfactory.

- Pupils' skills in speaking in a range of subjects are good. They speak clearly and their use of vocabulary is good. Their listening abilities are good.
- Pupils develop good skills in reading and writing. They read accurately and with understanding, and write fluently for a range of purposes in different subjects.
- Pupils read a suitable range of literature to develop their reading skills, within the confines of the school's limited resources for reading. They also read for pleasure and enjoyment. They use good research skills to investigate selected activities.

- Pupils' writing is good for a range of purposes. They make good progress in adapting their writing styles to suit different contexts and audiences.
- Pupils apply their numeracy skills satisfactorily across the curriculum. They make some effort in design and technology and science when they measure objects and predict results. Pupils also apply simple counting skills in Welsh during registration periods.
- In KS1, pupils have satisfactory opportunities to apply their ICT skills in the range of subjects.
- In KS2, pupils use ICT to reinforce their numeracy and literacy skills, and to research in history. Pupils make use of word processing programs to record and present their writing. They use art programs to produce colourful pictures and designs.
- Pupils have used a computer well in the SEN rooms in their literacy work.
- Children under five develop good skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing as they talk about and record all aspects of their curriculum. They make good progress in the use of number when weighing ingredients when they cook, or when measuring and comparing their own growth rates as they discuss how animals grow.
- Standards in the key skills, in general, are improving as the very good planning for the development of key skills – introduced two terms ago – becomes more embedded.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development.

The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good.

- The school has clear aims reflected in its mission statement 'Signing on to Success'. The school emphasises the need for care and mutual respect in its curriculum and its daily life.
- The school's emphasis on worship, morality and caring for others, particularly those who are less fortunate and those who have significant physical disabilities, ensures that pupils are very aware of the spiritual dimension in their lives.
- Visitors, such as members of local churches and evangelists, lead assemblies and help pupils gain a deeper spiritual understanding through retelling Christian stories and exploring Christian values and beliefs.
- The school's provision for collective acts of worship meets statutory requirements well. When assemblies are held in the hall, they are often of very good quality. The pupils' enthusiasm and tuneful singing in both English and Welsh adds greatly to the spiritual dimension of their lives. During the weekly awards-assemblies, teachers take many opportunities to enhance the pupils' self-esteem and celebrate their achievements.
- Assemblies are at times very moving occasions when teachers present powerful and positive role-models for their pupils, for example, when leading the singing in a highly professional rendition of the song "The Rhythm of Life".

The provision for pupils' moral development is very good.

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes, particularly towards other pupils with hearing impairments, are very well developed. Pupils demonstrated a strong sense of caring for each other; many were learning to sign in order to communicate with pupils with hearing impairments.

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- The school raises funds for charities: recently a collection was made for Euro-aid.
 - Most pupils were familiar with the rules and expectations set within each class. Pupils co-operate very well and share resources with each other both in lessons and when playing together.

The provision for pupils' social development is very good.

- Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities as well as having the opportunity to go on educational visits.
- Representatives from KS2 classes make up the school council and they play an active part in the life and leadership of the school. Pupils put forward their views with confidence.
- Hollybush Primary School is strongly inclusive in its approach and teachers do all in their power to include all pupils in the school's daily life.

The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.

- Pupils' awareness of *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is at an early stage of development. The school makes satisfactory efforts to develop the pupils' knowledge of Wales by visits to places such as St Woolos' Cathedral.
- Studies of different customs and cultures are limited and mainly restricted to work undertaken in religious education and geography. Pupils in Y6, for example, have studied Botswana as part of a geography project.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

Standards of behaviour are good and pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall. Pupils' behaviour is very good around the school and during break times. The school has very good strategies to promote good behaviour and teachers use these consistently and well.

- There is a detailed and effective policy on behaviour, discipline and anti-bullying; teachers and assistants implement it well using the principles of assertive discipline. Teachers place a clear emphasis on pupils developing self-discipline. Staff have been trained in applying the policy consistently, particularly in relation to classroom management.
- There are very good arrangements for promoting good behaviour and a variety of interesting and positive rewards and privileges are used. Teachers make clear the consequences for misbehaviour and ensure all pupils understand them. Parents are encouraged to play a central role in the whole process and the key elements of the policy are included in the home-school agreement.
- Most pupils approach their work with interest and show an ability to sustain concentration. Their attitudes make a very good contribution to their standards of achievement.
- Pupils are friendly and courteous to each other and to visitors. They are orderly and well behaved around and inside the three-storey building.
- The quality of relationships, the care and diligence of staff, the work of older pupils during break times and the influence of the school council, all help to reduce incidents of bullying and other forms of discrimination.

4.3 Attendance

Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and staff work diligently to improve attendance levels. The importance of good attendance is continually impressed on pupils and parents.

- Attendance averaged 91.6 per cent in the last three complete terms prior to the inspection.

- The school provides clear guidance for staff, pupils, parents and guardians on the procedures to follow in the event of unexpected absence. Unauthorised absence is declining.
- The school has set itself a very ambitious attendance target of 95 per cent and although the monitoring of attendance is regular it is not yet rigorous enough to reach the target set.
- The school uses a computerised system to record attendance and all staff effectively administer this. There is also a very good working arrangement with the school's education welfare officer (EWO).
- Overall punctuality at the start of the day and throughout the school day is good.
- Procedures for monitoring attendance are effective. The school complies with the statutory requirements set out in the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 3/99, *Pupil Support and Social Inclusion*.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The overall quality of teaching is good, being good or better in 80 per cent of lessons observed. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed, being very good in 24 per cent, good in 56 per cent, and satisfactory in 20 per cent. Although there are some shortcomings, this is a substantial improvement on the quality of teaching in the last inspection, when 25 per cent was unsatisfactory.

Good features

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in lessons, use a good range of techniques, plan well, and make effective use of resources. They are supported well in their work by the headteacher, nursery nurses, the SEN co-ordinator (SENCo), and peripatetic staff.
- Classroom assistants are essential supporters of learning in many classes and enjoy very productive partnerships with teachers. They often lead learning in the Reception classes, in classes for pupils with hearing impairments, and for those with dyslexia. They have received good training and the school's investment in them is being repaid with dividends.
- Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of most of the subjects they teach. The ongoing programme of in-service training (INSET) is thorough and relevant.
- Teachers have improved their planning in many subjects within the last two years. The planning and organisation of lessons in a broad range of subjects are often very good and ensure that pupils build their learning progressively from year to year.
- Teachers plan together effectively for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding with a joined-up, whole-school approach. The headteacher, in conjunction with many subject coordinators, has been instrumental in this process.
- Teachers make clear what they expect of pupils in terms of achievement and behaviour. Teachers and assistants manage pupils' behaviour skilfully. They reward pupils' good work in a good range of ways.
- Teachers use a good range of organisational strategies. They provide pupils with opportunities to work as a whole class, in groups, pairs and as individuals. Teachers are particularly successful in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills through detailed preparation and analysis of how groups work well together, and how pupils can play positive roles in discussions.

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- The setting of pupils in classes of similar abilities in English and mathematics helps ensure a good, basic match of work to the capabilities of pupils.
 - The school's deployment of teachers to teach their specialisms in many afternoon classes is an effective use of resources, which enables pupils to learn in more depth.
 - Teachers use a good mix of teaching techniques and well-prepared resources to enliven their lessons.
 - Teachers make good provision for pupils with SEN in mainstream classes as well as in specialist groups.
 - Teachers provide pupils with good exemplars of the standard of work expected of them. Teachers and pupils read aloud pieces of work to the whole class and focus upon various features. The school has developed a learning culture of thorough preparation and clear setting of aims and objectives.

Shortcomings

- Within some mathematics sets in KS2, the work is not matched well to all of the pupils' abilities and some of the pupils with average abilities do not make the expected progress. This is also true in some science lessons in KS1, and for information technology in KS1 and KS2.
- Teachers make insufficient use of ICT to extend pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Occasionally, teachers' knowledge of Welsh grammar and pronunciation is underdeveloped.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' achievements and progress are good. Overall, assessments are accurate and consistent. Appropriate systems are used to meet the schools' requirements.

- The school has a good policy for assessment. Guidance on assessment is included in all subject policies. All pupils in both mainstream and the hearing impairment department are assessed using school procedures. A map of discrete assessments outlines clearly the standardised assessment tasks and the teacher assessments that occur every half term.
- Teachers evaluate pupils' work in the core subject areas accurately by using clear criteria, which are applied consistently across subject areas. Each half term, the assessment co-ordinator moderates the assessments of a random group of pupils in the foundation subjects. Feedback is then given to each teacher on the quality of his or her assessments. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work carefully with the aim of setting themselves achievable learning targets.
- Assessments in each NC subject are linked to the programme of study requirements, level descriptions or end-of-key-stage statements. All pupils have child friendly targets in the back of their books linked to NC level descriptors. These are reviewed every half term with the child. If targets are achieved then they are highlighted with coloured markers.
- All books are marked daily, whenever possible with pupils present. The learning objectives for each lesson, which are linked to the targets at the back of the books, are made clear and noted. This ensures that each pupil knows his or her own targets. Teachers give regular feedback on strengths and weaknesses.
- All assessment requirements of the NC are fully met and due regard is given to the SEN Code of Practice for Wales.

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- Teachers monitor pupils' progress closely every half term with assessments in all subject areas. The school assessment records contain a good picture of pupils' achievements and progress both academic and personal.
 - Teachers place pupils in KS1 and KS2 in sets for English and mathematics, according to teacher assessments and standardised tests results. Teachers use the information gained from these assessments to plan future work effectively.
 - Pupils are encouraged to use assessment to improve their own work by being involved in target setting every half term and responding to teacher comments.
 - The headteacher and the assessment co-ordinator analyse information gained from standardised tests and national tests effectively. This helps to improve pupils' performance and forms part of the school's very good self-evaluation programme.
 - Parents receive regular reports, which provide a full accurate statement of the achievements of their pupils and guidance for further improvement. All statutory requirements are met.

5.3 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum for children under five, and for pupils in KS1 and KS2 is good. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, which is often exciting and challenging.

- The headteacher manages the curriculum very effectively and subject co-ordinators support, guide and monitor subject teaching and provision well.
- The general quality of the curriculum provided for children under five is good. The work programme is carefully organised to ensure that the Desirable Outcomes in the six areas for learning are promoted successfully.
- The curriculum in KS1 and KS2 is appropriate and conforms to statutory requirements. The provision is socially inclusive ensuring equality of access and opportunities for all pupils.
- All policies and schemes of work are at least of good quality, and those for English and mathematics are of very good quality. Curriculum planning shows progression and continuity from year to year, as well as across and within subject areas. All short and medium-term plans contain clear objectives for learning.
- The planned curriculum addresses the development of the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* satisfactorily. Teachers develop cultural, economic, environmental, historical, and linguistic links to some degree in a number of subjects. A local artist, Leonie Rintler, has visited the school to work with pupils to decorate areas of the school with scenes from the '*Mabinogion*'.
- Teachers co-operate well to share planning for parallel classes in weekly meetings to ensure all have a common overview of what is taught.
- Homework supports classwork appropriately and promotes pupils' independent learning skills well.
- The school follows closely a skills-based curriculum. Teachers aim to teach pupils the skills they need to learn so they can access any information that they need now and in the future.
- The quality of whole-school planning for the development of key skills is very good, although it has only been introduced two terms ago. Teachers use subject content as the means to improve pupils' key skills and provide good opportunities to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills.

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- The headteacher’s weekly monitoring of planning ensures that all teachers implement the planning policy consistently.
 - Teachers' specialisms are used well to maximize effective learning in a range of subjects. The physical education co-ordinator, for example, teaches physical education to many classes; similarly, the music and science co-ordinators teach music and science to most KS2 pupils.
 - Pupils are grouped according to ability for English and mathematics, allowing teachers to differentiate more accurately. Pupils work in similar, mixed-ability groups and pairs for other subject areas.
 - Teachers use a range of practical activities and strategies to improve the standards of pupils' work. Teachers use the model, share and guide strategies in many lessons effectively. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and to help one another.
 - Pupils are not excluded from any activity or part of the curriculum and teachers ensure that all have equality of opportunity.
 - The arrangements for pupils’ personal, social and health education (PSHE), including health and sex education, in KS1 and KS2 are good. The school follows the guidance provided by the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales’ (ACCAC) in its framework for PSHE.
 - The school has a good policy to promote racial equality and has good links with the community police service. A community police officer visits the school regularly and helps to promote positive racial awareness amongst the pupils. However, pupils sometimes have a very limited knowledge of other world cultures.
 - The curricular provision for mainstream pupils with SEN is good and the curricular provision for pupils with hearing impairments is very good.
 - Educational visits and a very good range of extra-curricular activities enrich pupils’ experiences across a number of subjects.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils’ Welfare

The quality of personal educational guidance and support is very good. Pupils are cared for well pastorally.

- The school’s mission statement emphasises a supportive environment for learning, achieving individual potential, and teamwork. Older pupils said that they felt valued and safe in school. Teachers encourage pupils to share their problems in confidence in “circle times”. In addition, pupils think highly of “golden times” which are earned for good behaviour, good attitudes to work, and good achievements.
- Teachers and other adults working in the school know the personal needs of their pupils and deal with them sensitively.
- Child protection arrangements are well-established and fully understood by all staff. A small number of children are “looked after” by the local authority and another group is on the “At Risk” register. The school does its best to care for them well. The school has good, working relationships with support agencies, including the LEA, the police, the EWO and Social Services.
- Sex and drug education is taught well within science and PSHE lessons.
- The school actively promotes the value of healthy eating. The school nurse visits the school regularly and health-related issues are reported and documented.

- Committees of the governing body meet regularly and report the findings relevant to pupils' support, care and guidance to all governors.
- The marking of pupils' work further enhances the quality of educational guidance. The setting and monitoring of targets for pupils to aim for are rigorous and helpful.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

The provision for pupils with SEN who have hearing impairments is very good. The provision for pupils with SEN in mainstream classes and in the dyslexia group is good.

- Approximately 29 per cent of the pupils on roll are identified as having SEN. Three mainstream pupils have a formal statement of SEN. Three pupils are currently in lieu of receiving a statement. There are 24 pupils on the SEN register at school action plus stage of the new SEN Code of Practice for Wales. There are 35 pupils on the SEN register at school action stage and 18 pupils are at the school concern stage.
- In total, 17 pupils, many with profound hearing loss, receive very good support from appropriately trained staff of the hearing impairment department. All these pupils have a statement of SEN. Currently seven pupils attend lessons in the KS1 hearing impairment class and eight pupils are in the KS2 hearing impairment class.
- Two pupils with hearing impairment are fully integrated in the Reception class supported by a teacher of the hearing impaired and a nursery nurse conversant with BSL.

The provision for pupils with SEN in mainstream classes:

- The SEN policy and provision comply with the current SEN Code of Practice for Wales.
- Initial assessments provide valuable information for early identification and intervention. Teachers use assessment procedures very effectively to monitor pupils' progress.
- Pupils make good progress and move up or down the SEN register depending on their progress. School successes during the review last February record six pupils moving from School Action Plus stage to School Action stage, five pupils moving from School Action stage to Concern stage and two pupils moving off the school SEN register altogether.
- A wide range of outside agencies provide good support. These include the Educational Psychological Service, the Speech and Language Service, the Physiotherapist, the Occupational Therapist and the Nurture Group. Parental agreement is always sought and records are clear, informative and regularly updated.
- Pupils' individual educational plans (IEPs) are of good quality overall. They are reviewed three times a year. Parents are informed of pupils' progress at each stage and sent a sensitive letter inviting them to attend meetings in order to contribute to IEPs. If parents are unable to attend the reviews, IEPs are sent to them for their comments and signature.
- Class teachers are responsible for compiling pupils' IEPs in conjunction with nursery nurses and inform the SENCo at each stage of the procedure. They set small, manageable targets, which are realistic, measurable and achievable.
- Targets and the teaching strategies are matched well to pupils' individual learning needs. They include literacy, numeracy and behavioural targets, stringently addressing the individual needs of pupils.
- Throughout the school, staff attitudes to pupils with SEN are very inclusive. Pupils with SEN on the stages of cause for concern, action and action plus are fully integrated in mainstream classes. All mainstream pupils receive literacy and numeracy lessons in ability-

based sets each morning. Pupils with SEN respond well and make good progress in all subject areas relative to their ages and ability.

- The SENCo holds a SEN surgery during lunchtime once a week for any members of staff who have questions relating to SEN.
- Assertive discipline strategies are in place for pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties. Class teachers consistently employ these techniques to maintain a well disciplined, learning environment for all pupils. They are supported well by parents who have signed the Home-School Agreement.
- The Educational Psychologist takes a small group of pupils to develop anger management strategies, which promote appropriate behaviour.

The provision for pupils with dyslexia:

- Teachers identify pupils with dyslexic tendencies in KS1 and KS2. A small group of KS1 and KS2 pupils receive extra specialist support, following screening by a nursery nurse. Standard dyslexic assessments are used well to assess pupils' educational needs.
- Pupils with dyslexia have good access to a computer to aid and address their learning needs.
- The group's membership is flexible and regular assessment procedures allow pupils who have responded well to extra help to return to mainstream classes.
- Pupils work well in small groups to address the specific areas identified on their IEPs. They focus well on specific tasks and practise reading words and spellings confidently. They make good progress.

The provision for hearing impaired pupils:

- The annual review of SEN statements for pupils with hearing impairment meets the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales. Parents are involved in reviews and are kept well informed about their child's progress at all times. The hearing impairment department encourages parents to visit the school regularly.
- All pupils in mainstream classes in KS1 and KS2 receive a short session in BSL weekly. Year 6 pupils, who have SEN and those who do not have SEN, demonstrate that they have a good grasp of BSL in mainstream lessons and sessions.
- All staff assisting pupils with hearing impairment are familiar with their statements of SEN and strive continuously to meet their needs.
- The teaching and support staff for pupils with hearing impairments have identified aims, which are beneficial to the pupils, including visits from speech and language therapists and increased deployment of hearing impaired adults to work with hearing impaired pupils.
- The school has installed a commercial surround-sound system in the hall, which is beneficial to pupils with hearing impairments during assemblies.
- The school maintains excellent, regular contacts with a wide range of outside agencies, schools and neighbouring LEAs.
- During afternoon sessions, pupils from mainstream classes are integrated into KS1 and KS2 hearing impairment class lessons for science and other foundation subjects. The school terms this "reverse integration" and it has a good effect on pupils' understanding of their peers, and the spirit of inclusion.

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- Staff in the hearing impairment department have excellent skills in using BSL and ensure that their pupils are fully involved in whole-school activities, including assemblies, film showings and hymn practices.
 - All pupils in hearing impairment classes make very good progress in relation to their different ages and abilities. They are developing good communication skills and are confident in speaking to an audience.
 - Teachers use good resources well to support teaching and learning. Assessment, record keeping and daily monitoring of pupils' work are very good. They are used efficiently to identify how well pupils are learning and to inform teachers' future planning.
 - Teachers and support assistants who work with hearing impaired pupils have a sound knowledge of how to maintain the technological aids for hearing impairment. They share this expertise with other members of staff and parents.
 - Pupils with hearing impairments in KS1 and KS2 respond appropriately and regularly to incidental Welsh phrases during registrations and in physical education lessons.
 - Pupils with hearing impairments benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
 - Parents commented in the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors that the school's provision for pupils with hearing impairments was very good and inspection findings confirmed this to be true.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The overall quality of the partnership with parents, the community, other schools, institutions and a range of external agencies is good.

- A comprehensive range of information is provided for parents and guardians on a wide range of school activities, including the school prospectus, half-termly curriculum newsletters providing information to parents on class themes and topics and twice-termly general newsletters.
- The home-school agreement has been revised and signed by most parents and guardians. Although the school prospectus and the Annual Report of the Governors to the parents provide detailed and extensive information, they do not meet with new Welsh Assembly Government requirements.
- The school values parental support for the benefit of both pupils and staff and has responded to many of the concerns expressed by parents in a parental survey. The responses from the pre-inspection parental questionnaire indicate that the school receives the overwhelming support of parents and guardians for its efforts in many areas. However, one in five of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were dissatisfied with the work their children were given to do at home.
- Staff work hard to maintain regular contact with parents, and families are encouraged to attend school functions and performances and to discuss their child's work at anytime during the academic year.
- The Parents and Friends Association plays an important role in supporting the work of the school and makes a good contribution to the provision of resources for the pupils. The association is active in organising many social events for adults and supporting staff with school events during the year.

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- The school participates fully in the life of the local community and further afield. Extensive use is made of the school internal and external facilities by a range of voluntary, performing arts and sporting organisations.
 - Pupils participate in the life of the community and in addition to the traditional festive concerts and other performances at the school they also perform at civic events, for nursery groups and the senior citizens.
 - There is a close and effective working partnership between the school and the pre-school playgroup, after-school club, the summer play scheme organisers and local sporting organisations. This is of great benefit to pupils.
 - Pupils and staff support a number of local and national charities and the school's council is particularly effective in this respect.
 - A number of members of the community visit the school, including representatives of religious, business, voluntary, performing arts, charitable, sporting and environmental organisations as well as the medical, fire and police services. They all share their experiences and expertise with the pupils and staff and provide good support including supporting the delivery of the PSHE programme.
 - The partnership with two local comprehensive schools in relation to transition arrangements for pupils from KS2 to KS3 is satisfactory. The initial pastoral arrangements are good. There are regular meetings between the cluster group of headteachers and staff have observed each other teaching in Y6 and Y7. Limited curriculum links exist.
 - The school has good partnership arrangements for initial teacher training with the University of Wales (Newport) at Caerleon. There are effective working relations with college representatives on induction, mentoring and evaluation arrangements and practices. Good arrangements also exist with other local colleges for the training of classroom assistants.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

The school has established good partnerships with the world of work and pupils' standards of achievement have been enhanced by these work-related education experiences.

- The school has a clear statement of intent to develop links with the world of work in order to widen the knowledge, skills and understanding of the pupils.
- Opportunities for teaching staff to experience the world of work through placement in a number of different businesses and agencies are limited and the school recognises the need to address this.
- Through the effective partnership arrangements that exist with a number of businesses and other work-related organisations, the pupils have been able to broaden their knowledge and understanding of industry.
- Visits have been made to local supermarkets, a computer design technology company, a water treatment works, a garden centre, a community farm and a newspaper-publishing house. Some of these visits have led on to project work such as designing plant moisture detectors in two/three-dimensional images.
- A public utility company, local supermarket and other local businesses have supported the school in a variety of ways by refurbishment of the library and ICT suite, sponsorship of various social events and provision of other resources.
- Pupils benefit from the visits made to the school by representatives from the world of work who tell them about their work experiences particularly in relation to recycling, the

environment and safety. A good initiative has been arranged through the Education Business Partnership whereby adult readers from the business world visit the school to support the pupils in their reading.

- Effective liaison exists with Careers Wales particularly in relation to providing work placement opportunities at the school for disaffected comprehensive school pupils and adults. Such contacts enrich the experiences of the pupils.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good with some outstanding features.

- The school uses a wide range of procedures to evaluate standards and the quality of provision. Teachers use assessment data and comparative information very effectively to identify targets for improvement. The SMT monitors, reviews and evaluates progress towards meeting improvement targets closely. Co-ordinators identify areas for development accurately and keep them under constant review.
- Current priorities for development are identified and agreed and are appropriate to the needs of the school. Governors are closely involved in realising the school's aims and improving its educational provision. They work in partnership with staff to effect improvements in provision, to raise standards of achievement and to enhance the quality of the learning environment.
- Teachers have evaluated school policy documents and schemes of work carefully. Constructive, evaluative reports are drawn up by subject co-ordinators, which identify strengths and areas for development.
- The SDP is a very effective document. It has clear priorities, costing and success criteria and it indicates timescales and persons involved. The school monitors carefully and evaluates perceptively the effectiveness of strategies used for its improvement. The headteacher has rightly placed great emphasis upon improving the quality of teaching and this has been very successful.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The quality of leadership has improved considerably in the last four years. The present headteacher, the school's fifth, was appointed in 2002, having taught in and led a range of schools prior to that.

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She is supported ably by the deputy headteacher, and has implemented a rigorous and challenging series of measures to improve the quality of teaching and standards of achievement.
- The headteacher has the full confidence and support of pupils, teachers and governors in her concerted drive for school improvement.
- Hollybush Primary School is a very well-run organisation, which seeks to improve its provision through fruitful links with a wide range of other schools and individuals.
- Governors provide good, committed leadership, working closely with the headteacher and her colleagues to identify, monitor and evaluate the school's strengths and areas for further development. The governing body is supportive and well-informed.
- In the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors, governors made it clear that their first priority has rightly been to raise standards of achievement.
- The school prospectus and the annual report of the governors to parents are informative and well-presented but they do not comply fully with the statutory requirements and guidelines provided by the Welsh Assembly Government.

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- The quality of subject leadership is good, overall. It is very good in English, science and art, and good in all other subjects.
 - Subject co-ordinators have monitored the quality of provision in all subjects, and schemes of work are reviewed and updated in a planned cycle of improvement. Co-ordinators have produced action plans for all subjects, which are relevant, concise and very helpful in defining key priorities.
 - The school has established a good relationship with a range of other institutions. Good arrangements are in place to work with and mentor students training to be teachers at the University of Wales's Newport campus at Caerleon.
 - The school budget is managed well. Decisions on expenditure are closely linked to the priorities identified in the SDP. Much redundant equipment and out-of-date resources have been removed to enable better use of classrooms. Investments have been made in resources in the library, for ICT through sponsorship, and for outdoor play for children aged under five and good plans are being implemented to improve these areas further.
 - The school runs smoothly. Routine administration and organisation are good. Appropriate systems are in place and the school secretary and school clerk ensure that administrative routines are efficient and effective. The school provides good value for money.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The quality of staffing is good, the accommodation is good and learning resources are satisfactory.

- Four years ago, at the time of the last inspection, the school reports that staff morale was very low. For a number of years, many temporary teachers were employed to cover for an above-average number of staff absences. During this inspection, however, it was clear that the situation has been reversed. The staffing situation is now much more stable and staff morale is high.
- Teachers are appropriately qualified and have job descriptions. Very good arrangements are in place for the induction, appraisal and professional development of all staff.
- A planned programme of INSET, closely linked to the SDP, effectively supports staff in most subjects.
- Staff are well motivated and undertake performance management interviews annually.
- All adults working in the school play an important part in promoting positive values in the pupils. Some adult support staff have acquired specialist teaching skills, for example, in dyslexia, to help them support pupils with specific learning difficulties and pupils with hearing impairment.
- The hearing impairment department is well staffed with additional adult helpers who work effectively with the teachers to improve pupils' standards. Many pupils in mainstream classes are also taught to sign by support staff from the hearing impairment department.
- Midday supervisors, canteen assistants, the caretaker, the cleaning staff, the school secretary and the school clerk, all perform their duties conscientiously and effectively.
- The school premises are kept very clean. The buildings are kept in a good state of repair. The accommodation includes a separate gymnasium, a large hall, a separate canteen, specialist rooms for music, ICT, and for SEN, and many spacious classrooms. It provides sufficient room for all activities.

- Colourful, interactive displays are of very high quality and provide a stimulating environment for learning.
- The playground and playing fields are large, spacious and well maintained. Pupils benefit from the use of these facilities, which are also open for community use out of school hours.
- Children in the reception classes do not have access to a safe outside play area to support their physical development.
- The quality and quantity of computers are unsatisfactory. Breakdowns in computer equipment happen regularly. Although the school has developed a separate computer room, partly financed through sponsorship, the computers it contains do not all have the same software applications and at times, access to the Internet is restricted.
- The school has only one interactive whiteboard and this is not always fully functioning. Teachers make limited use of the school's interactive whiteboard to enrich pupils' learning. Further investment in ICT resources has not happened because the school's financial resources have been used primarily to improve the quality of staffing.
- This situation inhibits pupils' ICT skills in the computer suite and in the classrooms.
- Pupils' progress in learning to read is restricted by the lack of sufficient reading books. Although many older books have rightly been discarded, they have not yet been replaced with enough fiction, non-fiction books and reading scheme books.
- The quality and range of resources in other subject areas are adequate to support the pupils' learning.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for children aged under five

Overall, the educational provision for children under five is good.

Hollybush Primary School provides a spacious and colourful environment, rich in stimulating activities for children in the Reception class. Good arrangements are in place to assess and care for children when they enter the Reception class on reaching the age of four.

There are currently 40 children in four ability groups taught by two teachers, one being a teacher of the hearing impaired, two NNEB-trained assistants and two learning support assistants. Two children with hearing impairments enjoy full integration in the reception class.

The overall quality of educational provision for children under five is good and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for their learning in language, literacy and communication skills, mathematical development, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Standards in physical development are satisfactory.

Good features

Children's language, literacy and communication skills are good.

- Reception children listen appropriately and respond well to adults in small groups. Many children exhibit good concentration skills and a developing vocabulary. Some children are beginning to use more complex sentences in their imaginative role-play. Some children are developing questioning skills.

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- Most children show a good understanding of incidental Welsh phrases and use them regularly during registration.
 - Depending on their ability, reception children write short sentences emergently, copy under or over, show developing pencil control and letter formation. They sequence topical stories regularly, some adding their own pictures.
 - Children artistically record a variety of topical situations with varying degrees of accuracy. More able children confidently create topic-related books with pictures and captions.
 - Children recognise an increasing number of sounds, clearly identify objects beginning with these sounds and go on a 'b' hunt. Some children recognise short words, jump onto the word mat and read the word.
 - The children all eagerly join in group reading sessions and predict outcomes and rhyming words in familiar poems and stories. However, opportunities to share books with an adult individually are infrequent.
 - All the children enthusiastically play a wide range of adult-lead games in small groups to reinforce the acquisition of literacy.

Children's mathematical development is good.

- Children sort and match a range of minibeasts hiding in the sand. They complete and continue repeating patterns of colours and shapes according to their ability.
- Many children confidently count by rote to at least 20, recognise the numbers of their addresses and coins to the value of 10p. Most children count ladybirds' spots or minibeasts' legs to five, 10 or more.
- Some children find out how many there are altogether by counting on. All the children are developing subtraction concepts and knowledge of the days of the week.
- Reception children develop mathematical language to describe weight and position. They work in pairs on computers drawing a range of shapes.
- They can recognise, name and talk about similarities and differences between basic two-dimensional shapes. Some can talk about three-dimensional shapes and link them to everyday objects.
- Some children can count and record using tally charts. Many children show improving number formation. The children all explore different ways to fit four eggs in an egg box.

Children's personal and social development is good.

- Most children show friendly co-operation when playing. They readily help to tidy up, take turns when playing games and show developing concentration with self-chosen as well as adult-allocated tasks.
- All the children are developing caring attitudes towards adults, other children in their environment and pets. They show increasing understanding of how to treat minibeasts with close adult guidance.
- Most children make good progress when undressing or dressing for physical education sessions and are increasingly independent.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

- Children respond well to structured, adult-guided, graded activities in the sand and water trays.

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- They experience a wide range of very well planned scientific investigational activities relating to minibeasts and record their findings onto a tape recorder.
 - Most children confidently sequence the life cycle of frogs and hens with pictures and emergent writing.
 - Children make good oral responses to open questions and relay information to other adults with increasing confidence and eloquence. They effectively complete an activity to classify minibeasts with some support.
 - Children confidently draw the story of how milk is produced and know the farmer's jobs. They clearly recall farm-related activities using the five senses and compare farming techniques now and long ago.
 - Children expertly describe the weather and keep weather charts. They remember their local environment after going on a walk. They record their findings in their books according to their ability using pictures and words. However, children's regular access to the computer to acquire and develop ICT skills is limited.

Children's physical development is satisfactory.

- While they pretend to be worms, beetles and butterflies, the children balance, wriggle and jump with developing agility and co-ordination.
- They follow behind each other sensibly showing awareness of the safe area to stay within. The children respond well to musical and verbal instructions to change speed, stop and move their arms and legs in various ways.
- Children exhibit good developing fine motor skills due to the many opportunities provided. They cut expertly around frogs to make masks and around circles to stick on ladybirds.
- They make detailed objects including birthday cakes with candles using play dough, which they show and talk about imaginatively. They search for insects in the sand, connect and dismantle a wide variety of construction toys and use a range of colouring tools.

Children's creative development is good.

- Children paint and confidently talk about beautiful, topic-related pictures using bright, bold colours. Children make good progress with imaginative and observational drawings, adding varying amounts of detail and dimension to their figures over the year.
- All children make a range of topic-related, worms, frog masks and ladybirds using a variety of techniques including collage. They stick and cut enthusiastically and enjoy exploring a wide range of materials.
- Children respond energetically to musical experiences with a variety of percussion instruments. They join in singing counting songs and action rhymes to reinforce learning.
- Children develop good imaginative play with support and role modelling from the staff. They enjoy the excellent range of role-play areas, constructive toys and newly acquired equipment.
- The children play collaboratively and constructively in small groups, and are constantly guided by staff.

Shortcomings

- Children do not have a safe and secure, fenced area outdoors to play in. Their physical development is underdeveloped. However, this resource is currently being improved.

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- Children's gross motor skills and physical confidence using large equipment outdoors to hang on, climb on, slide down and ride on are underdeveloped.

English

Overall standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Most pupils in KS1 listen attentively to their teachers' explanations and to other pupils' contributions.
- They speak in a variety of contexts with increasing confidence and are keen to answer teachers' questions and offer their own comments and observations.
- Standards in reading are good in KS1. Pupils display a good understanding of the characters, settings and structure of stories. Some can identify grammatical conventions such as an exclamation mark or a question mark in a Big Book.
- Year 1 pupils recognise full stops, capital letters and speech marks. They can sequence events and retell a story in their own words.
- By the end of KS1, more able pupils read unfamiliar texts with confidence and fluency. Other readers have a positive attitude to reading and use a range of reading strategies to help them understand the text. They generally apply their knowledge of letter and sound correspondences effectively when they meet an unfamiliar word.
- Standards in spelling are generally good. Many have developed a good knowledge of the alphabetical order of letters.
- Pupils make good progress in their writing during KS1, from emergent to independent writing. They write for a range of purposes and audiences and, by the end of KS1, most pupils can write a story using some of the key features of narrative. The handwriting of most is legible, neat and regular. They have written using alliteration to good effect.
- Year 2 pupils suggest some creative ideas for the ending to stories read aloud to the class. They are quick to learn the meaning of new words.
- More able KS1 pupils write quickly and at some length. Their writing is well organised and they are beginning to plan, draft and revise their work. Their writing is good when they write in response to stimuli that have inspired them.
- Most pupils in KS2 listen respectfully to their teachers and to others. In lessons, they remain focused for a sustained time. When answering questions, most give answers, in writing and verbally, in full sentences. They are confident in discussing their ideas and opinions with their peers.
- They make good progress in speaking for different purposes and audiences and collaborate effectively in discussions. Most pupils use similes and metaphors well.
- Pupils in lower KS2 read aloud clearly and confidently to a good standard.
- Pupils in KS2 understand and use the conventions for writing letters, and many show an awareness of different degrees of formality in writing. They identify examples of alliteration in the poems they read, and suggest interesting and evocative words. A minority is familiar with the differences between fiction and non-fiction texts. They understand terms such as contents, index and glossary and recognise that these are guides to finding information.

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- Pupils build a good understanding of the differences between direct and indirect speech and use connectives in compound sentences effectively. Pupils know what instructional text is and write it well.
 - Overall standards in writing are good in KS2. Pupils' writing shows a good command of the characteristics of persuasive and informational writing as well as good use of punctuation.
 - The work of more able pupils is good, showing a good use of adjectives, neat sentence construction and good punctuation.
 - Year 6 pupils ask questions about a topic they are investigating and suggest and use appropriate sources of information. They skim the pages to find the answers to their questions and use dictionaries and thesauruses well to find the meaning of unfamiliar words. Most pupils read fluently and discuss plot and character with some insight.

Shortcomings

- A large minority of pupils have satisfactory standards in spelling.
- Pupils have underdeveloped skills in extended, creative writing.
- Pupils' skills in writing using an ink pen are undeveloped in KS2.
- Some pupils in KS2 are unfamiliar with using computers for communication.

Mathematics

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

Good features

- Key Stage 1 pupils develop good investigational skills and use them when they find ways of grouping objects to complete a Carroll Diagram. Some pupils investigate different ways of grouping the same items.
- Younger KS1 pupils investigate ways of arranging stamps on an envelope to make 10p. Most pupils can add and subtract from 10p, but some need help to complete the task.
- Key Stage 1 pupils can measure a magic potion in millilitres to make a spell. Pupils can measure accurately the capacity of a range of containers.
- Older KS1 pupils write hundreds, tens and units on individual whiteboards during mental warm-up sessions quickly and accurately. All pupils could write the number after 721 and the number before 493.
- Key Stage 1 pupils recognise right angles in a square. They know a circle has no right angles. All pupils sort two-dimensional shapes into those with right angles and those without right angles correctly.
- Younger KS1 pupils use a computer to record their results after tallying their favourite play equipment. The pupils represent their information on graphs or charts accurately.
- Younger KS2 pupils calculate savings using percentages and can explain how to calculate 20 per cent of £20. Most pupils complete web diagrams to find percentages of £40 and show a good understanding of the process.
- Pupils also make good progress with problem-solving techniques to calculate the area of combined shapes. They successfully calculate the area of an L shape.
- Key Stage 2 pupils have a good knowledge of the properties of three-dimensional shapes. They successfully classify shapes according to the faces or curved faces and vertices.

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- Older KS2 pupils use mirrors to help them complete symmetrical patterns using a combined number of patterned tiles. They know how to make a tessellated pattern and work well to complete the tasks.
 - Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate a developing knowledge and understanding of the terms 'radius', 'diameter' and 'circumference'. Most pupils can complete an investigation to discover the relationship between the measurements.
 - Some older KS2 pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of problem solving. They compose problems, partners solve their problems and pupils evaluate the problems rigorously.

Shortcomings

- A minority of KS2 pupils are insecure in their recall of number facts and their multiplication tables. Their understanding of mathematical vocabulary is underdeveloped.
- A minority of KS2 pupils cannot make sensible estimates for length, capacity or weight. Some pupils are unsure about which units to use to measure capacity and weight.
- Many pupils in KS2 have limited skills in using computer software to extend their mathematical knowledge.

Science

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils show good responses to investigating objects, which can be seen with very little light in dark boxes. Most pupils can talk about needing light to see objects. Some pupils understand that lighter colours such as yellow and orange can be seen more easily than darker colours.
- Pupils in KS1 record their findings using a variety of ways. They develop independent, scientific thinking skills and record in ways which best suit their ability. They enjoy sharing and evaluating their work positively with the class.
- Most KS1 pupils can explain how to alter the amount of sound entering their ears by using a wide range of materials. They are beginning to explore and develop the ideas of what constitutes a fair test when carrying out investigations.
- All KS1 pupils confidently make predictions prior to their investigations. They are keen to test their predictions, and take turns to help each other. They discuss findings with each other in an atmosphere of mutual co-operation and exploration.
- All KS1 pupils are developing the scientific language and skills to enhance and develop investigative work. They ask and respond well to science-related open-ended questions.
- Pupils in KS1 make good distinctions between objects which are attracted to magnets. They record their findings using both pictures and writing. They are all confident when identifying and recording magnetic objects within their immediate environment.
- In work on plants, Y1 and Y2 pupils can identify parts of a plant. More able pupils add more detail to the plant diagrams. All the pupils can explain that plants need water to survive and grow.
- Key Stage 1 pupils accurately name parts of the body. They all carefully sequence changes which occur in the body and observe similarities and differences in their peers' height, size and colour of eyes and hair.

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- Pupils in lower KS2 make and use a decision tree to identify and classify minibeasts. They work co-operatively in small groups, asking and answering questions requiring yes/no answers to create a decision tree.
 - Year 3 and Y4 pupils are keen to extend their research to a wider range of animals. They test the effectiveness of their decision trees when going on a minibeast hunt in the school grounds. They consequently evaluate and improve their decision trees together at the end of the session.
 - Pupils in lower KS2 investigate changes which occur when solids are added to liquids. They all show a good grasp of the appropriate scientific language for example solid, liquid, dissolve and H²O and use it confidently when explaining what they are doing.
 - Pupils in KS2 exhibit very good responses to open-ended questioning. They ask and answer confidently and carry out interesting discussions related to the learning objectives. There is a very lively atmosphere of enthusiastic debate, which enhances and complements investigative learning.
 - Key Stage 2 pupils offer predictions independently as a matter of course. They show a good understanding of using planning boards to develop independent approaches and thinking to aid their investigative work. They report their progress to the class clearly and welcome positive, evaluative feedback.
 - Pupils in KS2 work excellently together in small mixed-ability groups. Each pupil contributes to the group findings. Their roles are clearly identified and they all help to achieve an orderly and constructive outcome. They confidently select and use scientific equipment, co-operating well with each other to test their hypotheses.
 - Key Stage 2 pupils test which sugar solids will dissolve best to make a solution to feed to their butterflies. They are well versed in the idea of a fair test and confidently proffer predictions and suggestions. Pupils maintain a lively pace throughout their investigations.
 - In work on force, Y3, Y4 and Y5 pupils describe the direction of a force on an object. They plan and carry out an investigation to find out how the steepness of the incline affects the distance a car will travel.
 - Middle KS2 pupils show good awareness of a fair test. They record their findings using tables and graphs. They are confident to convey their findings in comparative statements, for example the steeper the incline, the greater the distance.
 - In work on materials, middle KS2 pupils draw, identify, label and justify the materials, which are used to build a house. They think independently and develop thinking skills to aid scientific problem solving. They develop increasing confidence to convey and justify their findings to their peers.
 - Year 6 pupils make informed decisions about what constitutes healthy living. They use appropriate vocabulary confidently to discuss what impact peer pressure has on their decisions. All the pupils make valuable and thoughtful decisions. They listen very well to each other, respond sympathetically and generate an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.
 - In work on light, Y6 pupils show a clear understanding of how light travels from a source in straight lines and how it can be reflected back. They comprehensively investigate which materials reflect light. They draw neatly labelled diagrams of the eye. They can describe the functions of the pupil and the iris when responding to light and dark.

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- Year 6 pupils confidently predict the responses of various materials to sound and describe how the volume and pitch of instruments can be changed. They carry out investigations to substantiate their learning objectives. Upper KS2 pupils independently make predictions, record changes and share and evaluate their observations positively with their peers.
 - Pupils in Y6 carry out investigations to reverse the changes in mixtures. They find out that irreversible changes to mixtures can be caused by heating and cooling. They predict and discover that some mixtures cannot be easily reversed and that burning can produce new solids, liquids and gases.
 - Pupils in KS1 and KS2 confidently share their findings with the whole class, discuss whether the learning objective has been achieved and positively evaluate their work with a star and a wish.
 - Pupils in KS1 and KS2 show very good awareness of the safety issues involved when undertaking scientific investigations.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Welsh second language

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

Good features

- Key Stage 1 pupils listen well to their teachers' introductions and respond keenly and with enthusiasm to the variety of experiences introduced to them. They understand the phrases used during the Welsh lessons and can offer an oral response using a range of patterns. All KS1 pupils are involved regularly and participate positively during Welsh lessons.
- Pupils respond well to the well-planned schemes of work, which include the introduction of a Welsh phrase of the week. Pupils in all classes practise this.
- Pupils in KS1 read familiar words and short phrases correctly and are beginning to write short sentences in Welsh.
- Key Stage 2 pupils respond well in Welsh during registration to questions about attendance and school lunches. They know a good range of incidental Welsh phrases, and use them often.
- Key Stage 2 pupils recognise and respond correctly to greetings and the most able pupils show confidence when responding orally to group and class discussions. They can participate in simple role-play in Welsh using the vocabulary and sentence patterns learnt during the lesson with increasing confidence.
- Most KS2 pupils understand the phrases used during Welsh lessons. The pupils respond to short items spoken by the teacher by the means of short oral phrases and speak with intelligible pronunciation and intonation.
- Older pupils write questions and answers in Welsh and some can write about their favourite personalities.

Shortcomings

- Most pupils in upper KS2 pupils can only understand and use limited vocabulary and sentence patterns. They cannot freely use the language patterns acquired during formal lessons in informal conversations or answer questions without prompts.

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- Most pupils, particularly in upper KS2, are unable to speak confidently in different contexts about experiences and events without the support of the written word.
 - Displays of KS2 pupils' personal and imaginative pieces of writing in an extended style are very limited.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 and KS2 are making good progress in design and making activities. Younger pupils evaluate their work orally. Older pupils write evaluations of increasing complexity.
- All pupils use a range of tools to cut different materials. They use saws carefully to cut wood. They use hammers, nails and wood glue to join together pieces of wood.
- When making a model park, KS1 pupils use a wide range of construction toys and materials confidently to make their models.
- Younger pupils use sellotape, glue guns and adhesive carefully to join a range of materials they choose to use.
- When working with food, pupils investigate healthy foods and carry out taste preferences for foods when making hot potato fillings.
- When planning to make a bag, older KS2 pupils make good use of observational skills to investigate materials for the purpose.
- In KS1, pupils investigate static and moving joints when making swings, slides and monkey bars for a model park.
- When making an electric membrane switch, younger KS2 pupils investigate electronic toys, torches and electric staplers in terms of age of user and suitability for purpose.
- Key Stage 2 pupils successfully make circuits with a membrane switch. The circuits are made using copper strips, ready to operate the games the pupils have designed.
- Older KS2 pupils design, make, evaluate and cost a rack for compact discs. They take careful measurements in design. The finished articles are particularly good.
- Key Stage 2 pupils co-operate very well when planning a mini-enterprise for the school's summer fair. Pupils outline the talents and skills, which they can use to make items to sell.
- When using fabrics, pupils investigate ways of colouring materials. Some pupils use fabric pens and others tie-dye. They analyse the finish and suggest ways of improving the end product.
- All pupils are well aware of health and safety issues. They recognise hygiene issues associated with working with food. Pupils know the risk associated with the instruments used for cutting, gluing and hammering.
- Pupils develop their understanding of strengthening structures when investigating the materials used to make carrier bags and boxes for hot potatoes.
- Younger KS2 pupils show a very good understanding of the design process when designing an instrument to test pot plants for moisture.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.



Information technology

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Pupils learn to use ICT to communicate and handle information, to some degree, in a range of subjects. They have occasionally used a digital camera well to record their work.
- In KS1, pupils have learned how to program a robotic toy accurately. Pupils develop their understanding of mathematics as well as ICT through learning how to control this robot.
- They have developed a number of basic skills such as executing program commands, saving their work, using the mouse and pointer, and operating a number of facilities on the tool bar such as the airbrush, the spray and the pen.
- Pupils in Y1 have developed colourful pictograms from tallies they have made. They use a mouse, icons and the screen pointer well.
- Pupils have developed skills in word processing: creating and printing simple sentences. They can highlight blocks of text and change the colour, type and size of font.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress in literacy and numeracy by using appropriate computer programs, with good support from specialist assistants.
- Key Stage 1 pupils know that people communicate via the telephone, electronic mail or mobile telephone texting. Some pupils use simple electronic mail programs effectively to send and receive information. They are increasingly aware of the dangers of the Internet.
- In KS2, pupils have had some experience in conducting Internet research, for example, about geographical statistics of the countries of Europe. Most pupils can access appropriate sites on the Internet and many have manipulated digital imagery.
- Pupils can find appropriate files on a hard disk, and can open and use them. They use computers to support their research, for example, by using digital encyclopaedias on multimedia compact discs.
- They have used computers well to combine text and images.
- Pupils in KS2 can explain the meaning and purpose of different file commands such as edit and print.
- Pupils have written for different audiences using Publisher, ClipArt and WordArt. They have also explored, collected and presented information and modelled effects on screen.
- Year 6 pupils have used the Internet effectively to research and gather information. They use and compare a small range of search engines, such as "Google" or the BBC website, for fitness for purpose.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' overall ICT skills in many classes are underdeveloped because they have not had sufficient opportunities to use computers regularly in their classrooms as well as in the ICT room.

History

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 confidently identify different ways of travelling to school today. They compare today's methods of travel with those used over 100 years ago.
- They enthusiastically identify the differences between vehicles now and over 100 years ago, making astute comments about the lack of door handles on old cars.
- Year 1 and Y2 pupils enthusiastically research modes of transport 100 years ago using a variety of secondary sources. They are keen to discuss their findings with adults and each other and some ask relevant questions.
- Pupils draw and write about ways to travel longer distances (to Cardiff) and evaluate why some means of transport would be better than others.
- Pupils in KS1 confidently identify modern appliances and make good comparisons with 50 year-old electrical appliances seen in Pontypool Museum.
- Key Stage 1 pupils accurately describe the origins of Penarth and make comparisons with its contemporary features.
- In work on the Victorians, pupils in KS1 can place pictures of Queen Victoria in sequence to supplement work on timelines. They recall three facts about Dr Barnardo and record their work independently.
- In Y3, Y4 and Y5, pupils write lively descriptions about a visit to Llancaiach Fawr, identifying what aspects of their visit they most enjoyed. They competently compare the structure of Llancaiach Fawr Manor House to their own houses.
- In work on the Tudors, middle KS2 pupils carry out research using a variety of resources. They record their findings in cloze procedures and independent writing using a range of literary styles.
- Middle KS2 pupils identify Tudor monarchs and place them on a timeline showing good chronological awareness. They give informed reasons describing how Tudor monarchs came to power.
- Year 3, Y4 and Y5 pupils formulate well-grounded opinions relating to a range of historical events. These include discussions which explore why Henry VIII changed the nature of the official religion of England.
- Year 5 pupils confidently write and use ICT to present the consequences for the break with Rome in the 16th century, and the reasons for the dissolution of the British monasteries.
- Upper KS2 pupils make Venn diagrams, which illustrate the reasons why Tudor sailors explored the world. They comprehensively compare exploration in Tudor times with exploration nowadays. They accurately sequence and individually comment on the events of the Spanish Armada.
- In work on 19th century Blaenafon, pupils in Y6 use a range of literary techniques including writing a diary, compiling shopping lists and answering questions based on research from primary and secondary sources. Year 6 pupils are clearly aware of the differences between primary and secondary sources.
- Year 6 pupils can convert old pounds, shillings and pennies into contemporary decimal currency to make comparisons between costs in Victorian times and costs now. Individual

pupils use the computer to research history topic-related websites and write up their findings using a variety of fonts.

- Pupils are familiar with census materials and most pupils confidently peruse and make up their own true or false questions to test out on each other during the plenary session.
- Most Y6 pupils talk enthusiastically about visiting Blaenafon Iron works and the Big Pit coalmine. They confidently describe what conditions were like in the coalmines during the 19th century, discuss the iron smelting process, and make posters to show the conditions which working people experienced.
- Pupils in Y6 are used to regular opportunities to feed back their findings to the rest of the class. They discuss collaboratively whether the learning objective has been achieved and willingly contribute to the positive evaluation of their work with a star and a wish.
- Year 6 pupils research the causes of the Second World War. They write news items based on the Blitz and make sensitive and well-considered comments on Second World War shelters and the blackout. They write empathetic letters to relations they have left behind as evacuees.
- Pupils in Y6 show a clear knowledge of the changes, which the steam train brought to the rural and industrial lives of Welsh people. They give coherent opinions to justify their responses.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' skill in using ICT to support, develop and enhance their work is underdeveloped.

Geography

Few lessons were taught during the inspection. From the evidence of work scrutinised and discussions with teachers and pupils, standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Pupils positively respond to making use of the local environment in geography fieldwork. They talk confidently about their area, naming its main physical and human characteristics.
- Pupils understand and use reference marks and mapping skills with increasing confidence.
- Older pupils can identify Wales on a map of Britain and show the town they live in and other major towns.
- Pupils develop their geographical vocabulary consistently.
- Key Stage 2 pupils use a range of geographical skills appropriately.
- They have researched into two contrasting localities and studied the theme of environmental change and physical and human processes. In learning about Botswana, pupils can discuss the main features of this contrasting locality and list similar and different characteristics.
- Key Stage 2 pupils can analyse evidence, draw conclusions and present what has been learnt in an appropriate way.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Art

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 make regular and effective use of pencils, crayons, chalk and paint.
- Pupils in KS2 experiment appropriately with different styles, colour, tone, pattern, texture and a variety of materials. They create a wide variety of interesting pictures in various media including pastels, paint and pencil.
- Pupils have explored and applied the elements of line, tone, colour, texture, shape and form to a very good standard in KS2. Their work is vibrant, colourful and imaginative.
- Pupils can communicate what they see, feel and think using different art processes. Some pupils produce detailed designs, which are of very good quality.
- Pupils take good advantage of opportunities to explore ideas and meanings through the work of artists and designers.
- Pupils develop their basic skills of speaking and listening effectively through the subject.
- Pupils use ICT software to explore shape, colour and pattern in their work and use digital cameras well to record information.
- Pupils' understanding of shape and space is developed effectively through 2-D and 3-D work during studies of the human form.
- Pupils use their own ideas from their first-hand experience in imaginative artwork. They control materials, tools and techniques well.
- Pupils are significantly motivated by photographs of the works of famous artists and visits to art galleries in Newport and Cardiff.
- They are knowledgeable about the work of famous artists such as Picasso and can imitate their styles effectively. They imitate artists such as Degas effectively as part of a project on 'Movement and the human form'.
- Pupils are developing a good understanding of art, making use of various materials and tools. They investigate using sketchbooks and make accurate observational drawings of the human form in various poses.
- Pupils celebrate their work in art through very interesting displays around the school. They evaluate their work effectively, discussing thoughtfully what materials are used and the reasons for modifications.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Music

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 sing in tune, have clear diction, and can vary pitch and rhythm when required. They clearly derive much enjoyment from singing in both English and Welsh.

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- Younger pupils in KS1 perform a steady beat demonstrating much concentration in the process. They listen carefully to modern Welsh pop songs and with the minimum of help can identify the rhythm and beat time through slapping, clapping and clicking fingers.
 - They recognize the different qualities of sound made by musical instruments. They identify and explain that the different sounds engender different and often contrasting feelings.
 - In lower KS2, pupils enjoy the rhythm games they play. They use their listening skills well, as the game demands, to distinguish between those rhythms they are allowed to perform and those they are not. They are keenly competitive and strive hard not to be caught out.
 - In upper KS2, pupils use a variety of tuned and untuned, percussive, musical instruments in their composition work. Working in groups, they co-operate well, practicing and appraising their work to achieve a good standard. Their ostinato work is effective in enriching the final class performance.
 - Throughout KS2, pupils are familiar with words such as ‘arpeggio’, ‘ostinato’, ‘harmony’, and ‘diminuendo’ and ‘allegro’ and respond well in their music making when such words are used.
 - Pupils sing well, sometimes melodiously, sometimes lustily. They use their voices well to create colour and texture in the songs they sing. They perform four part rounds and two-part harmonies well and clearly enjoy singing.
 - Pupils have strong views about the kinds of music they like to listen to. They often contrast music from different genres and analyse music from different periods in history.

Shortcomings

- Pupils have a limited understanding of the music of Wales.

Physical education

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2. Year 5 pupils swim for half an hour once a week. Staff at the swimming pool regularly assess their progress over the year. This is related to a detailed swimming programme showing the pupils’ initial standards, their progression on a weekly basis and their achievement over the year. Pupils also enhance their physical performance by involvement in extra-curricular activities, including football, rugby, tennis and netball. These after-school clubs are all well attended. Pupils are also involved in extra-curricular sporting competitions in the school and the wider community.

Good features

- In both KS1 and KS2, pupils change into appropriate clothing to carry out physical education. They are aware of the safety issues arising from wearing jewellery and girls have their hair tied up appropriately.
- Pupils in KS1 clearly understand that staying within the boundaries will ensure their safety during warm-up sessions. They give reasons for warming up and discuss changes which occur to their heart rate and body temperature.
- Year 1 and Y2 pupils apply themselves well to warm-up sessions at the beginning of lessons. All the pupils listen attentively, move confidently and respond accurately to incidental Welsh instructions and the tambourine.
- Pupils in Y1 and Y2 show good agility and co-ordination as they zigzag around the hall, exploring different paces of movement. They are clearly developing good spatial awareness while avoiding each other.

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- Key Stage 1 pupils expertly make a variety of arched shapes using body, arms and legs. They look at each other's body shapes and sequences to develop a wider range of responses.
 - Key Stage 1 pupils are sensibly able to perform a range of rolls including side, front and backwards rolls. They place them in short sequences with developing accuracy and control on the floor before trying them out on the apparatus.
 - Pupils in KS1 evaluate their responses to perform arches, rolls and balances. They make suggestions for improvements to these sequences on the floor prior to trying them out on the apparatus.
 - Key Stage 1 pupils take turns, are clearly aware of safety issues involving large apparatus and are keen to try out their sequences on the new apparatus.
 - Key Stage 2 pupils understand and describe fully the changes to their heart rates after warm-up exercises. They show good co-ordination and are developing expert running skills.
 - In lower KS2, pupils are developing ball skills when they learn how to pick up, put down and pass rugby balls. They listen well to instructions, whistle commands, and are keen and eager to learn and perfect these techniques.
 - Pupils in KS2 work well with their partners, helping each other to follow instructions and develop the skills identified in the learning objective.
 - Pupils in Y6 move and respond enthusiastically to rap music in the warm up. Both boys and girls show improving gross motor responses and are developing the skills and confidence to create a short dance sequence using mirroring, sequencing and contrasting movements in mixed gender pairs and groups.
 - Year 6 pupils demonstrate their sequences to the rest of the class well and positively evaluate what they have done. They work well to time targets.
 - Pupils in Y6 take part enthusiastically in outdoor rounders sessions and are developing good bowling and batting skills. They work well in teams and show a clear understanding of the rules of the game.
 - Year 6 pupils know the names of rounders positions and can listen and respond quickly to the umpire's suggestions and decisions. They all make positive remarks to encourage team members, which foster a general feeling of team spirit.
 - Year 6 pupils enjoy learning indoor bowls skills at Cwmbran stadium. They each receive a certificate of achievement. Photographs of sporting events are displayed on the school physical education display board and events are recorded in the sports newsletter.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Religious education

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- Most pupils know that the Bible is regarded as a sacred text. They know that other religions such as Judaism and Islam also have sacred books.
- Younger pupils know the story of Noah. They know that two animals of each species went into the ark. The pupils understand that all animals have to be cared for very carefully.

- Pupils have a good understanding of the main Christian feasts and festivals, particularly Christmas and Easter. They understand the significance of symbols such as the Cross and candles to Christians.
- Pupils are increasingly aware of the beliefs, customs and practices of other faiths. They develop, for example, a good understanding of Islam through studies of Islamic artefacts.
- Younger pupils have enacted the service of marriage at a chapel and remember the importance of this holy sacrament.
- Older pupils are aware of the main features of a Christian Church and understand the significance of holy symbols such as the font and altar.
- Pupils have increased their knowledge of Christian teachings and practices through visits to St Woolos' Cathedral, and local churches and chapels.
- Pupils understand the similarities and differences between major world faiths. Pupils in KS2 have reflected on the roles of a Christian minister and a Muslim Imam.
- Older KS2 pupils use religious stories well for report writing in literacy lessons. The quality and range of work showed pupils have a well-developed sense of spirituality.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The school last received a Section 10 inspection in 2000. It was then closely monitored by HMI for two years and the last Section 3 (HMI) inspection was in Autumn 2002.

Overall, the school has made outstanding progress in improving its provision since the last inspection. It has addressed the issues raised in the last inspection report as follows:

Key Issue 1: Raise standards in mathematics throughout the school, and especially in KS2.

Standards in mathematics were unsatisfactory in KS2 and are now satisfactory. Much remains to be done but satisfactory progress has been made.

Key Issue 2: Improve progress and achievement in key skills across the curriculum in both key stages.

Very good progress has been made in establishing a very good policy and guidance for teaching key skills. The school has a heightened awareness of the teaching of key skills as a result. Pupils now achieve good standards in speaking, reading, writing and ICT across the curriculum. Their standards in listening and numeracy are satisfactory. Good progress made.

Key Issue 3: Raise standards throughout the school in the large majority of subjects where they are satisfactory and especially in English and science.

Standards have been improved in almost all subjects. Very good progress made.

Key Issue 4: Ensure that the headteacher and senior management provide positive leadership to develop a whole-school approach to school improvement, through better self-evaluation and clear programmes of action to improve understanding of the school's performance and raise standards of pupils' achievement.

The quality of leadership and management is now very good. Very good progress made.

Key Issue 5: Reduce the variability in the quality of teaching and standards of teaching in those classes where it is unsatisfactory by:

- a) raising teacher expectations and providing a greater challenge for pupils;
- b) improving classroom management and the pace of lessons;
- c) establishing clearer learning objectives and ensuring a wider and more appropriate range of teaching strategies.

The quality of teaching has been improved and is now good. Very good progress made.

Key Issue 6: Improve the quality of medium and short-term planning to support:

- a) the raising of standards;
- b) the identification of clear learning outcomes;
- c) the inclusion of key skills.

The quality of planning is now at least good, and has very good features, for example in English. Very good progress made.

Key Issue 7: Develop a coherent, whole-school strategy in assessment and record-keeping.

The quality of assessment and record-keeping is now good and has very good features. Very good progress made.

Although there is much still to do, standards, teaching and leadership and many other aspects of school life have all been improved since the last inspection. The school has much to be proud of.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The governors, headteacher and staff now need to:

1. raise standards of achievement further:
 - in mathematics and Welsh in KS2;
 - in information technology in KS1 and KS2;
 - in the key skills of numeracy and ICT across the curriculum; and
 - in the physical development of children aged under five;
2. continue to improve further the quality of teaching, where it is only satisfactory, particularly with regard to:
 - the match of work set to the needs of different pupils;
 - teachers' subject knowledge of Welsh and ICT;
3. seek a full range of ways to promote positive racial awareness and an informed knowledge of other cultures;
4. improve the quality of resources for learning in the libraries, for ICT generally; and for outdoor play for children aged under five;
5. ensure that the school prospectus and the annual report of the governors to parents meet the statutory requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government; and
6. continue building on the outstanding progress made since the last inspection.



APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Hollybush Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	4–11
Address of school	Ton Road Coed Eva Cwmbran
Post-Code	NP44 7LE
Telephone Number	01633 877501

Headteacher	Ms Karen Godwin
Date of appointment	1 January 2002
Chair of Governors	Cllr Collette Thomas
Registered Inspector	Mr Robert Alun Isaac
Dates of inspection	7 th to 10 th June 2004

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	nil	40	37	37	34	37	46	36	269

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	13	2	14

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23.2 : 1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	25.6
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.07 : 1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Spring 2004	92.4	92.2	93.3	92.85
Summer 2003	88.7	89.7	90.3	90
Autumn 2003	90.7	93.9	93.4	93.1

Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	2
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C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2003			Number of pupils in Y2: 29					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	2+
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	15	58	24	82
		National	0	4	13	63	20	83
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	12	61	24	85
		National	0	4	14	54	28	82
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	1	6	61	24	85
		National	0	5	13	71	10	81
EN: Speaking and Listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	9	66	25	91
		National	0	2	11	64	22	86
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	15	64	21	85
		National	0	2	9	61	26	87
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	9	69	22	91
		National	0	2	10	68	20	88

KS1 CORE SUBJECT INDICATOR: Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, and English by Teacher Assessment			
In the school:	76	In Wales:	80

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2003			Number of pupils in Y6: 41								
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4	5	4+
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	2	7	27	49	16	65
		National	0	0	0	1	5	16	45	29	74
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	7	20	44	24	68
		National	0	2	1	0	4	12	41	38	79
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	36	56	9	65
		National	0	0	0	1	4	19	46	27	73
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	2	33	56	7	63
		National	0	2	0	0	4	19	43	30	73
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	29	56	16	72
		National	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	33	81
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	9	72	13	85
		National	0	3	0	0	1	10	47	38	88

KS2 CORE SUBJECT INDICATOR: Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and English			
By Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	51	In the school:	53
In Wales:	70	In Wales:	68

D Pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 and 365 of the Education Act 1996.

A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence.

W Pupils who are "working towards" level 1, but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1.

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection team of five inspectors, including the lay inspector, was at the school for a total of 15 inspector days.

- During this time, all teachers were observed and all classes were seen. A total of 85 sessions, part sessions or interactions were observed and a wide range of pupils' work was scrutinised. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and life in the school, and listened to them reading their own work and extracts from class reading books.
- Documentation made available by the school was scrutinised. Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors, teachers, classroom assistants, other staff and pupils. Pre- and post-inspection meetings were held with 12 governors and staff, and 12 parents attended a pre-inspection meeting with inspectors. Questionnaires completed by 60 parents were also analysed.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr Robert Alun Isaac	RgI	Context; Main findings; Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning; Standards in key skills across the curriculum Quality of Teaching Leadership and efficiency Progress since the last inspection Key issues for action	English information technology music
Mr Gwynoro Jones	Lay	Behaviour and attitudes to learning Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and community, and links with schools and other institutions Partnership with industry Self-evaluation	
Mr Gareth Atwell	Team	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing, accommodation and resources for learning	mathematics design and technology religious education
Mrs Linda Pedelty	Team	Provision for pupils with SEN Provision for children aged under five	science history physical education
Mrs Nan Williams	Team	Assessment, recording and reporting to parents The Curriculum	Welsh geography art

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

