

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF
THE EDUCATION (SCHOOLS) ACT 1996**

Libanus Primary School

**Libanus Road
Blackwood
Caerphilly
South Wales
NP12 1EH**

SCHOOL NUMBER: 676/2084

DATE OF INSPECTION: 27 – 30 January 2003

BY

A D Fear

REGISTERED INSPECTOR No W043/15698

DATE: 25 February 2003

Under Estyn contract number C/T/106/02P

© Crown Copyright 2002

This Report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the Education (Schools) Act 1996, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

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

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

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

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

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

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

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

CONTENTS

1. CONTEXT	1
The school and its priorities	1
2. MAIN FINDINGS	1
The main findings of the report	1
3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY THE PUPILS	5
3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	5
3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum	5
4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL	6
4.1 Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	6
4.2 Behaviour and attitudes.....	7
4.3 Attendance	7
5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION	8
5.1 Teaching	8
5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting	9
5.3 Curriculum	10
5.4 Support, guidance and pupils’ welfare.....	11
5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN	11
5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions.....	12
5.7 Partnership with industry.....	13
6. MANAGEMENT	13
6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement.....	13
6.2 Leadership and efficiency	14
6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.....	15
7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	16
Standards achieved by pupils.....	16

Provision for the under-fives	16
English	19
Mathematics.....	20
Science	21
Welsh second language	22
Design and technology	23
Information technology.....	24
History	25
Geography.....	26
Art.....	27
Music	28
Physical education	28
Religious education.....	29
8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	30
8.1 Progress since the last inspection	30
8.2 Key Issues for Action	31
APPENDIX.....	33
A. Basic information about the school.....	33
B. School data as indicators.....	33
C. Results of national curriculum assessments and public examinations	34
D. The evidence base of the inspection	35
E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	35

1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Libanus Primary School is situated within the town of Blackwood. The school occupies a cluster of buildings including the main school, built in 1915, a separate building operating as a dining hall, an additional building housing two classrooms and two demountable classrooms. During the inspection there were 386 pupils on roll, including the nursery class. Pupil numbers have risen slightly over the last four years and by 5% from the time of the last inspection in January 1998.

The school considers that the residential area, from which the majority of pupils are drawn, is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Ten per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals: this is 8% lower than at the time of the last inspection and below the all Wales figure of 20%.

The school describes its intake as covering the full ability range. Sixty-one pupils (16%) are identified by the school as having some degree of special educational need (SEN), including four pupils who have statements of educational need. None of the pupils come from a home where Welsh is the first language and 2.5% of pupils are from a minority ethnic group. Pupils are taught in thirteen classes and pupils from outside the catchment attend the school. The school has a nursery, which pupils attend on a part-time basis.

The school has an appropriate statement of aims and values and its priorities for development in 2002/2003 include the establishment of a system of performance management, to develop the role of the subject leader and monitor pupil improvement, and improvements in reading, assessment and teaching and learning in science and English.

The school was last inspected in January 1998. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2001. There have been few staff changes and, with the exception of the headteacher, no changes in senior management staff.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

Libanus Primary School is successful in promoting the moral and social development of its pupils, in ensuring a caring and supportive ethos; pupils' behaviour is good and pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards. However, progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Only recently have changes been implemented which will enable the school to raise standards of achievement and improve teaching and learning for pupils.

The educational provision for the under fives successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning and is appropriate for their needs. Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

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

Standards of achievement in the subjects of the National Curriculum in key stage 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2) are as follows:

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

- When compared with similar schools, the 2002 teacher assessment results in KS1 are below the average in English, science and especially mathematics where the results fall within the lower quartile.
- When compared with similar schools, the 2002 test results for KS2 are below the average in English and mathematics and especially science where the results fall within the lower quartile.
- Standards in key skills are good in speaking and listening in both key stages. In writing and numeracy they are satisfactory; in reading and information and communications technology (ICT) they are unsatisfactory.
- Provision for pupil's moral and social development is good. The values of caring and mutual respect encouraged by the school are clearly evident. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory; while they are aware of the cultural heritage of Wales their awareness of other faiths and cultures is less well developed. Pupil's spiritual development is satisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to explore their own thoughts, ideas and concerns, through quiet focussed reflection around issues of faith are less well developed.

- The standard of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good. The school is a happy and supportive learning environment, based on good relationships and respect between adults and pupils. The school has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour.
- Attendance levels and punctuality are satisfactory. There are appropriate procedures in place to monitor and follow up absences.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in almost all the lessons observed. In 41% of the lessons the teaching is good and it is very good in a further 6%. In all classes the organisation and management of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils that enhance the quality of teaching. Teachers value the contributions that pupils make and respect the results of their efforts; they support pupils and offer appropriate support, praise and encouragement. Lessons are well prepared and appropriately introduced. Where teaching has shortcomings, too much of the work is the same for all pupils. This limits progress, especially for the more able.
- The overall quality of assessment is satisfactory. The quality of reports to parents is good. The quality of teachers' marking is variable. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic progress is not yet fully developed in order to further guide pupils' learning.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The school provides pupils with many rich, stimulating experiences. Educational visits and visitors to the school contribute greatly to pupils' learning. Schemes of work have been reviewed and re-written to reflect the requirement of Curriculum 2000. However, they do not provide teachers with sufficient guidance to ensure continuity and progression; in both key stages there is evidence of repetition without progression in many subject areas. There is no whole school planning for the development of key skills. Planning for pupils to work independently on open-ended tasks and to take more responsibility for their own learning is underdeveloped.
- The school needs to meet statutory requirements and devise and implement a strategy for racial equality.
- The quality of provision for the support and welfare of pupils is good. The school provides a secure environment where all pupils are equally valued and treated with understanding and respect. Pupils' personal and social development is effectively supported through aspects of school life.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good. Pupils make good progress and achieve good standards relative to their ability.
- Partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is good. Parents are kept well informed, though many would value additional curriculum information. The school is an integral part of the community and has

very good curricular and pastoral links with primary schools within the cluster and with the comprehensive school to which pupils transfer. Partnership with industry is good.

- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory. The headteacher and governing body have a clear and shared vision for developing and improving the school and have begun the process of establishing a whole school culture, which focuses on self-improvement. Much effort has been made by the recently appointed headteacher to create such a culture and empower staff to examine and evaluate school procedures with a focus on improving standards of achievement. Much work remains to be done. Subject leaders insufficiently evaluate the standard of pupils' achievements and the school's procedures for evaluating the standards of pupils' achievements, the quality of teaching and learning and overall educational provision are not yet sufficiently systematic and structured to identify relative strengths and weaknesses.
- The school is well led. The headteacher gives the school a clear direction and a commitment to school improvement. With other staff she has been successful in sustaining a caring ethos, which is a strength of the school. Subject leaders are now in place for all subjects of the national curriculum but they have too limited a role and the senior management team (SMT) has not yet developed a strategic role within the school. There are shared values and norms that enhance the quality of life in the school. The governing body is knowledgeable and fully involved in the life and work of the school.
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are generally satisfactory. The school is appropriately staffed and non-teaching staff give good support to pupils and teachers. Staff development is linked effectively to initiatives identified by the school. However, further work needs to be undertaken to ensure the effective dissemination of training programmes and to evaluate the impact of training.
- The main school building and adjoining demountables and dining hall are in a good state of repair and cleaned to a high standard. Attractive displays of pupils' work enhance the environment. Externally there are limited play areas for the number of pupils; flights of steps are crumbling; there is inadequate parking space for vehicles resulting in cars parked in playground areas and disused and unsightly outside toilet facilities remain. The external failings of the school, noted during the last inspection, remain.
- There is barely adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation for pupils in Y5 and Y6 classes limits pupils' access to resources and affects the development of pupils' practical and independent learning skills.
- The provision of learning resources is variable but never better than satisfactory. The school has no separate library resources for either key stage and facilities to develop information technology skills in pupils and its application across the curriculum are inadequate. The outdoor play area for early years children is limited with the lack of a suitable all weather surface. This alongside a lack of

suitable large construction equipment inhibits children's physical development.

- The key issues identified in the previous inspection report in January 1998 have not been fully addressed. In general progress has been unsatisfactory.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY THE PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Standards of achievement are good in 36% of lessons and satisfactory in 62%.

- Children under five make progress and achieve good standards in personal and social development. They achieve good standards in the nursery class and satisfactory standards in reception classes in mathematical development. In both nursery and reception classes children achieve satisfactory standards in language, literacy and communication, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.
- In both key stages, standards of achievements are satisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- In both key stages, standards of achievement are good in music. In Welsh as a second language, design and technology, history, geography, art, physical education and religious education, standards are satisfactory. Standards in information technology are unsatisfactory in both key stages.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve good standards relative to their ability.
- When compared with similar schools, the 2002 teacher assessment results in KS1 are below the average in English, science and especially mathematics where the results fall within the lower quartile.
- When compared with similar schools, the 2002 test results for KS2 are below the average in English and mathematics and especially science where the results fall within the lower quartile.
- Of particular significance is the small percentage of pupils attaining level 3 in all aspects of English and in mathematics and science at KS1.
- In both key stages, using data over several years girls perform better than boys. Although for 2002 at KS2 boys significantly outperformed girls in both mathematics and science.

3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum

The standards and progress in key skills achieved across the curriculum in the early years are satisfactory. In KS1 and KS2, standards in speaking and listening are good:

in writing and numeracy they are satisfactory. Standards in reading and information and communications technology are unsatisfactory.

- There is no whole-school approach to ensure that all pupils develop the key skills systematically and in a challenging and broad range of contexts.
- Pupils in both key stages develop good speaking and listening skills: they express themselves with increasing confidence in a range of contexts. During the sharing of texts and whole-class discussion, they listen attentively and express themselves well. They ask and answer questions sensibly, take turns to speak and listen and share ideas and offer opinions, courteously. Pupils use appropriate vocabulary and terms to discuss their work and members of staff reinforce pupils' use of subject-specific vocabulary.
- Standards in writing are satisfactory in both key stages. While there are some good examples of writing across the curriculum, such as contrasting household tasks and writing from the viewpoint of others in history, some work in KS2 is not challenging enough and there is insufficient development in pupils' writing across the curriculum.
- Standards in reading across the curriculum in both key stages are unsatisfactory. While many pupils read with accuracy and understanding, they have insufficient opportunity to use books effectively for independent research, investigation and study and have limited information retrieval skills.
- Numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed in several subjects. There is evidence of measuring in geography, science and design and technology and graphical representation and interpretation in history, geography and religious education.
- In both key stages insufficient use is made of information and communications technology to support pupils' work.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. For their spiritual and cultural development it is satisfactory.

- The school is successful in promoting shared aims and values, which are clearly understood by pupils and consistently reinforced by staff in a range of relevant contexts. The quality of pupil-teacher relationships is good and contributes towards a positive working environment.
- While acts of collective worship are pleasant occasions, which develop a sense of community, they do not effectively provide pupils with an insight or understanding of spiritual worth. There is a need for these to be further developed to enable pupils to reflect on a chosen theme.

- The quality of relationships within the school is good. Teaching staff and adult helpers work in partnership to ensure a calm working environment where pupils' needs are well met. The headteacher and staff provide good role models for pupils. They create an atmosphere of mutual respect where pupils' achievements are celebrated and their efforts valued.
- Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and willingly respond to opportunities to take responsibility and exercise initiative.
- Welsh culture and heritage have a secure place in the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged and enabled to appreciate their own cultural traditions. Pupils' awareness and understanding of other cultures and faiths requires further development.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

Standard of behaviour and attitudes is good.

- The school is an orderly environment that is conducive to learning. Pupils behave well, both inside and outside classrooms. They have a very positive attitude to their work and concentrate well in class.
- Pupils are friendly, courteous and polite to adults and to each other. Older pupils often take responsibility for the younger ones and this enhances the orderly movement around the school.
- Pupils in all classes have good attitudes to their learning, they are willing contributors to class discussions and are attentive to their teacher and to their peers. They organise themselves quickly into groups and pairs and co-operate and support each other.
- During the inspection no instances of bullying or discrimination were observed. No pupils have been excluded in the last twelve months; appropriate procedures are in place in respect of exclusion.
- The school has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour. Parents are supportive of the school's approach, which encourages mutual trust and fairness. Pupils respond well to the school's system. They feel that they are treated fairly, their efforts are valued and they can approach staff with any worries.

4.3 Attendance

Pupils' attendance at 93% is satisfactory and is close to the all Wales average.

- Despite much effort by the school absences due to family holidays being taken during term time adversely affects the school attendance levels and disrupts

learning.

- Registration is carried out appropriately and is often used as a teaching opportunity. During the inspection punctuality was good and lessons start promptly.
- Pupil attendance is monitored very closely and follow up procedures are in place with good support from the educational welfare officer. The school complies with the requirements of the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in almost all the lessons observed. In 41% of the lessons the teaching is good and it is very good in a further 6%.

- In all classes the organisation and management of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils that enhance the quality of teaching. Teachers value the contributions that pupils make and respect the results of their efforts; they support pupils and offer appropriate support, praise and encouragement. Lessons are well prepared and appropriately introduced with a good recapitulation of earlier work.

Where the quality of teaching is good or better:

- good questioning techniques by teachers allow pupils to provide extended responses to develop their oral skills and extend their understanding of the work studied;
- lessons are well structured with appropriate whole class introductions, which are not overlong. Direct teaching is well focussed and well paced;
- teachers intervene well to support and move pupils forward in their work;
- time management of lessons is good, the timing of activities is appropriate with objectives shared and clearly explained;

Where the quality of teaching is satisfactory:

- Teacher expectations are too low, much of the work is generally the same for all pupils; this often limits progress resulting in a lack of challenge for the more able pupil;
- Pupils are often over-directed and have too few opportunities to work independently and take more responsibility for their own learning;
- Plenary sessions that allow for a sharing of achievements and an understanding of

what has been learned, are often insufficiently developed;

- Key skill development is insufficiently detailed in planning to aid teaching and learning. In addition planning does not influence teaching enough and there is a lack of continuity and progression across subjects and year groups;
- Teaching is not taken from the needs and abilities of the child/ pupil and from a clear assessment of work previously learned.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is satisfactory overall.

- The school has a recently amended and evolving policy for assessment, recording and reporting which is overseen by the deputy head teacher: monitoring of its implementation by staff is yet to be fully undertaken.
- Procedures for recording pupil progress are currently being refined: a revised timetable for the on going assessment of pupil progress in the core areas of the curriculum is being implemented. An individual profile for each pupil along with samples of work in English, mathematics and science are retained. These are not yet annotated in sufficient detail to indicate the clear and continuous tracking of progress.
- Arrangements for the assessing the progress of pupils in the foundation subjects and religious education is limited and currently unsatisfactory.
- Assessment information is not used effectively to ensure that planning of future work is suitably matched to pupils' abilities. It does not sufficiently promote higher standards through providing appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able.
- A baseline assessment is undertaken when children enter the nursery and reception classes: this, along with teacher observations and on-going assessment enables early identification of pupils with special educational needs.
- The quality of teachers' marking is variable: the school has identified the need to formulate a new whole-school policy. Marking is undertaken regularly and often includes positive and encouraging comments. In the best practice, these relate to the lesson objective and highlight targets for action. In English, targets are helpfully highlighted in pupils' books.
- All teachers keep on-going records of pupils' progress in reading. Group reading records are recently introduced: the best examples indicate specific areas of strength and needs of pupils.
- In conjunction with other schools in the cluster, teachers have begun to moderate pupils' work in English to produce year group portfolios. These provide good

exemplar material for year group teachers and students.

- Test scores and on-going class assessments assist teachers in setting targets for pupils. The school is beginning to analyse national curriculum test results with the aim of using them to identify areas for development: this process, however, is at an early stage of development.
- Reports to parents are of a good quality and meet statutory requirements. Parents are invited to meet with teachers on two formal occasions during the year.

5.3 Curriculum

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements.

- The quality of provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils make satisfactory progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- Policy documents and schemes of work are in place for all subject areas. While many of these documents have been reviewed and re-written, they do not provide teachers with sufficient guidance to plan effective teaching and learning activities and do not ensure continuity and progression. In both key stages there is evidence of repetition without progression in many subject areas.
- Pupils are set in ability groups for English and mathematics in KS2. These arrangements are having a positive effect on raising standards of achievement.
- Some classteachers identify key skills in their planning documentation. However, their development is not supported by identified activities and planning is not consistently undertaken across all subjects and all classes.
- Class teachers produce medium term planning documents for core and foundation subjects. Planning for literacy and numeracy is detailed and sets out clear learning objectives. However, in both key stages, for many aspects of the curriculum there is insufficient detail of clear objectives, key skills, differentiation and assessment.
- The school's arrangement for personal and social education is satisfactory. Policy documents are available for health and safety, equal opportunities, and sex education.
- Homework tasks are set for pupils and include additional practice in English, mathematics and reading tasks. The enthusiasm and commitment of staff enables the school to offer a range of extra-curricular activities, which include football, netball, and music tuition.
- The school is aware of the importance of ensuring equality of opportunity for all its pupils. However, the school needs to meet statutory requirements and devise and implement a strategy for racial equality.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The quality of the school's provision for support and pupils' welfare is good. Educational guidance is satisfactory.

- The school provides a caring environment, which is based on the promotion of good attitudes and values. Relationships are good throughout the school. The head teacher and staff know and respect their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Pupils feel secure and are confident in approaching staff when necessary.
- Sex education is taught within a sympathetic framework tailored to the age and understanding of the pupils. Health education is an integral part of the curriculum and much stress has been placed on the importance of healthy eating. The head teacher is the designated child protection officer and all staff are aware of the procedures that have been put into place.
- Lunchtime supervisors make a valuable contribution to the welfare of the pupils. They have received specific training to develop their role and they are responsible for their own budget; specialist play equipment to encourage cooperative and harmonious play has been purchased.
- Procedures for first aid and danger from fire have been carefully considered. Staff have been trained in first aid and the quantity and quality of the provision is good.
- All pupils would benefit from sharing in the best classroom practice in the marking of work which celebrates good effort and gives pupils an awareness of what steps to take next in order for them to improve. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic progress and the extent to which this informs the planning of lessons is not fully developed in order to further guide pupils' learning.

5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good.

- The new policy for SEN is in line with the Code of Practice and gives guidance to enable SEN pupils to make good progress. At present there are 25 pupils on school action, 30 pupils on school action plus and 4 pupils with statements. One pupil is receiving specialist part time tuition for English as an additional language. In addition, there are a further 26 pupils whose progress in the basic skills is closely monitored.
- There are two designated governors with responsibility for SEN who liaise closely with the SENCO to support pupil progress.
- Special educational needs are identified at an early age and all pupils on the SEN register have individual education plans (IEPs) which give good learning

objectives and programmes of work which are matched to pupils' needs and abilities. These assist pupils to progress commensurate with their age and ability.

- The progress that SEN pupils achieve in KS2 is notably enhanced by the tuition received from a specialist support teacher and classroom assistant in the SEN resource base. In this context, there are examples of good practice; pupils are aware of their personal and curriculum targets and have opportunities to discuss what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils with specific language difficulties are well supported by two LEA funded peripatetic teachers. The school has good links with outside agencies and pupils benefit from the contributions made by medical and EPS staff.
- Links with the local comprehensive school and local cluster group are good and these have a positive effect on the transition from KS2 to KS3 for SEN pupils.
- Parents are given information about SEN procedures in the school prospectus. They participate in the regular reviews of IEPs and the annual reviews for pupils with statements of SEN.
- Support staff assist SEN pupils with their learning in the classroom, but their effectiveness is often limited, as lesson planning is not always fully differentiated to match pupils' needs.
- The school has an equal opportunities policy and SEN pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school.

5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions

Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is good

- Parents are generally well informed of the life and activities within the school. However, during meetings with parents prior to the inspection and in the questionnaire a significant number of parents indicated that they would benefit from further information on the curriculum and what is being taught. Two consultative meetings are arranged between class teachers and parents each year, in the autumn and summer terms.
- A number of parents regularly assist in the work of the school and often are able to bring their own expertise to the classroom from which pupils gain much benefit. An active PTA assists in organising fund raising and social events.
- There are good links with the community, particularly the Christian Centre and the Miners Institute, where pupils participate in a range of activities including fund-raising for charities, church services and concerts. These contribute significantly to pupils' education.

- Representatives from the community make valuable contributions to the work of the school. There is an effective partnership with the local authority arts development service, which has assisted in developing a number of projects including the participation of artists in residence. Pupils benefit from these links.
- The school has very good curricular and pastoral links with primary schools within the cluster and with the comprehensive school to which pupils transfer. Transition procedures are well established including and LEA developed bridging unit in Maths and English.
- The school works in partnership with an initial teacher training institution and provides training and work experience for trainee teachers, nursery nurses and child carers; staff and pupils benefit from this link.

5.7 Partnership with industry

Partnership with industry is good.

- The curriculum is enriched by pupils visiting a number of nearby industrial and commercial organisation Pupils have designed advertising posters for a local bakery which supports their work in English and art.
- There are close links with the Education and Business Partnership (EBP) group who have arranged placements for most of the staff to a wide range of organisation such as the millennium stadium and a near by water treatment works.
- The EBP have also sponsored a maths and science circus at the school. Pupils attained further insights into science when they were invited by the sponsors to launch a new environmental activity at Techniquest.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

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

- The headteacher and governing body have a clear and shared vision for developing and improving the school and have begun the process of establishing a whole school culture, which focuses on self-improvement. Much effort has been made by the recently appointed headteacher to create such a culture and empower staff to examine and evaluate school procedures with a focus on improving standards of achievement and making teaching and learning better for pupils. Much work remains to be done.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the needs of the school and the way forward. She has been instrumental in making use of test results and external assessment data, including benchmarking and comparative data, to analyse pupils' standards of achievements and set appropriate targets for further improvement.

- Subject leaders insufficiently evaluate the standard of pupils' achievements. The school's procedures for evaluating the standards of pupils' achievements, the quality of teaching and learning and overall educational provision are not yet sufficiently systematic and structured to identify relative strengths and weaknesses.
- The school improvement plan (SDP) is a comprehensive document. It is based upon an honest self-evaluation of the school needs by the headteacher, supported by the LEA and governing body. It is costed effectively within the budget, indicates the school's priorities and is flexible enough to respond to new initiatives. Effectively linked to staff development the SDP identifies specific success criteria. However, specific strategies for measuring improvement and detail of the monitoring and evaluation procedures are limited.
- The school has a team of experienced teachers. The school has yet to devise clear programmes of action with all staff productively involved in the elements of planning for improvement. Individual teachers need to be fully engaged, with clear guidelines, procedures and strategies, in a whole school approach to school improvement.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

The leadership and efficiency of the school is satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership.

- The school has appropriate aims and a commitment to providing a positive educational experience for pupils. There is a caring ethos, which is a strength of the school; shared values and norms result in a consistently good standard of behaviour by pupils. This enhances the quality of life in the school.
- The governing body and headteacher provide positive leadership, which gives a clear direction to the work of the school. The governing body is well informed and fully involved in the life and work of the school; they have a positive impact on the development of the school.
- The school is well led. The headteacher provides a clear direction and a strong focus on school improvement. She tackles her tasks conscientiously and honestly. Sensitive to the needs of pupils, approachable and enthusiastic, she has worked hard to create a whole school approach, a sense of collegiality and a good team spirit.
- Subject leaders are now in place for all subjects of the national curriculum but they have too limited a role. They do not manage budgets, construct action plans, produce moderated portfolios of pupils work or monitor standards. As a result, no evaluation has been carried out of standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. All staff now need to ensure that they are productively involved in the elements of planning for improvement.

- The senior management team (SMT) has not developed a strategic role within the school. There is now a need for the SMT to aid the headteacher and give a clear direction to the work and development of the school; ensure the dissemination of best practice and ensure that there is a whole school approach in which all staff are actively involved.
- The budget is well-managed and appropriate financial priorities identified. Expenditure is carefully monitored and financial planning is well targeted. The governing body takes appropriate responsibility for the oversight of the budget. Improved procedures need to be taken to evaluate the effects of major spending decisions. The school gives satisfactory value for money.
- Administrative procedures are clear and operate efficiently, due in large measure to the efficiency of the school administrative officers. The recommendations of the last auditor's report have been implemented. The school runs smoothly.
- The school and the governing body need to fully comply with statutory requirements in drawing up an appropriate action plan and strategy for racial equality.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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

- Teachers are suitably qualified and provide the school with a spectrum of expertise and experience. Support staff are well deployed and assist and encourage pupils in a sensitive way.
- Staff development is linked effectively to initiatives identified in the SDP and whole school in-service training takes place and is focussed to meet the needs of the school. However, further work needs to be undertaken to ensure the effective dissemination of training programmes and to evaluate the impact of training.
- The main school building and adjoining demountables and dining hall are in a good state of repair and cleaned to a high standard. Attractive displays of pupils' work enhance the environment.
- There is barely adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation for pupils in Y5 and Y6 classes is inadequate and limits pupils' access to resources and affects the development of practical skills and pupils independent learning in a number of subjects.
- Externally there are limited play areas for the number of pupils; many flights of steps are crumbling and unmarked; there is inadequate parking space for vehicles resulting in cars parked in playground areas and disused and unsightly outside toilet facilities remain. The external failings of the school, noted during the last inspection, remain.

- The provision of learning resources is variable but never better than satisfactory. The school has no separate library resources for either key stage and facilities to develop information technology skills in pupils and its application across the curriculum are inadequate. There are deficiencies in several subjects, geography for example, and inadequate storage prevents easy access for both teachers and pupils.
- The outdoor play area for early years children is limited with the lack of a suitable and safe all weather surface. This alongside a lack of suitable large construction equipment inhibits children's physical development.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The educational provision for the under fives promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning and is appropriate to their needs.

Children in the nursery

Good features

Children's personal and social development is good.

- Children are happy, well settled and eager to explore their environment: they are familiar with nursery routines and confident when selecting independent activities. They relate well to adults and, during circle time, are encouraged to treat each other and the environment with care and consideration. Many children contribute sensibly to discussions and reflect quietly when asked to think about important messages.

Children's language, literacy and communication development is satisfactory.

- Most children listen attentively to stories and respond well to questioning by adults. They are beginning to use language purposefully during role-play, particularly in the animal hospital where they work amicably and readily take on the roles of people they have heard about. Some children make successful attempts to write their names and ages independently when involved in self-chosen activities: they are eager to share their success with adults.

Children's mathematical development is good.

- Children are developing a good understanding of early mathematical language, which is developed in a variety of contexts. They know a good repertoire of number rhymes and action songs and interpret these well as they gather for large group activities. The majority of children count confidently to 10. Small groups

of children work happily and independently of adults to identify, match and order numbers to 5: they select materials sensibly and organise themselves well. Children can identify (2D) shapes in a variety of settings: many are able to confidently match, pair and sort like objects during their water play and construction activities or when sharing meals in the home area or visiting the 'opticians'.

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

- Children are beginning to talk with increasing confidence about living things. They understand that wool comes from sheep and can describe items made from wool. Children know the days of the week and are developing a basic understanding of the seasons: they investigate growth through planting bulbs. Children use technology appropriately to support their learning. Some can use the mouse confidently to 'drag' in specific programmes and they delight in printing their completed work.

Children's creative development is satisfactory.

- Children paint, draw and print with increasing control. They make choices and work independently to overcome problems when completing simple collages. Children are familiar with rhymes and action songs: most recall words well and sing with enthusiasm.

Children's physical development is satisfactory

- Children are beginning to manipulate the pieces of jigsaws and construction materials effectively. When supported by adults, they persevere to complete tasks. They select, paste and apply finishing techniques with increasing dexterity. All children have access to outdoor play: most use equipment sensibly and develop increasing balance, control and co-ordination in their movements.

Shortcomings

- Children have insufficient opportunities to develop their new vocabulary and early writing skills in play and other practical situations.
- Few children choose to share books in the reading area or to seek information for themselves.
- During children's exploratory and structured play activities, staff sometimes miss opportunities to encourage children to think for themselves, predict what might happen and to talk about their observations and findings.

Children in the reception

Good features

Children's personal and social development is good.

- Children work and play together co-operatively. They concentrate well and persevere when involved in their group activities. Children behave sensibly and are kind and considerate of one another: they enjoy sharing celebrations with the older children.

Children's language, literacy and communication development is satisfactory.

- Children listen intently to their teachers during whole-class activities: they are eager to share ideas and to talk about their experiences in relation to the text being shared. Children are making steady progress in letter formation and letter sounds: some make good attempts to write simple words for the class. Children handle books appropriately and make positive efforts to discuss the content with adults.

Children's mathematical development is satisfactory.

- Children are developing an appropriate understanding of the early mathematical language to describe position and measurement. They can order a range of objects by length and are beginning to understand that containers of water can be heavier or lighter. Children can recognise and name a variety of 2D shapes and some 3D objects: they refer correctly to 'cylinders' for example when making models. Children count with increasing confidence and their number recognition is developing well: some are beginning to add or subtract small numbers of objects.

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

- Children can identify and describe the main weather conditions. They are able to recognise features in their school environment and can use a simple map to plan a route. In one class, children observe carefully when studying materials: they understand that some things are solid and others liquid. Children handle small tools and equipment sensibly. When assisted by adults they apply skills such as pasting, holding and covering with increasing confidence. Most children use the computer appropriately to support their learning.

Children's creative development is satisfactory.

- Children clearly enjoy their music making: their listening skills are well developed in this context. They can identify and handle percussion instruments sensibly and interpret taped music appropriately. Most can keep a steady beat and stop and start appropriately. The majority of children recall the words of songs well and they sing with enthusiasm.

Children's physical development is satisfactory.

- Physical education sessions in the hall are approached with enthusiasm: routines are well established and children respond well. Many children are well co-ordinated and are developing a satisfactory sense of balance. They use space sensibly and concentrate well to build sequences of movement in dance.

Shortcomings

- Children have insufficient opportunities to develop their early writing and mathematical skills in a range of classroom contexts. There is some over reliance on prescribed activities: these often restrict children's opportunity to develop their own ideas and are not always well matched to their stage of development.
- Adult intervention into children's self-chosen activities such as model making or imaginative play does not fully explore opportunities to extend and enrich children's learning. When undertaking planned investigations, children's problem solving and decision making skills are inadequately developed.
- Unless accompanied by an adult, few children choose to browse or appreciate books as an independent activity: the book area is currently underused.
- Children in reception have no regular access to an early years outside play area.

English

Standards in speaking and listening are good in both key stages. In KS1 and KS2, standards in reading and writing are satisfactory overall.

Good features

- Throughout both key stages, pupils make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively to their teachers and are respectful of the views and ideas of their peers. In KS1, pupils respond with enthusiasm to teachers' questions during whole class discussion. Their recall of relevant detail from texts they have shared is good and they interpret instructions sensibly.
- Pupils in KS2 concentrate well and many demonstrate sustained listening skills during whole class discussion and 'reporting back' sessions. Pupils are beginning to adapt their speech to a widening range of demands. During discussion they share thoughts, consolidate ideas, offer explanations, employ relevant vocabulary and extend their oral contributions in response to questions by their teachers: consistently good standards are achieved.
- In KS1, the shared reading experiences of younger pupils contribute positively to their confidence in identifying key words, phrases and the significant aspects of a story. Pupils readily take on the role of narrators or specific characters, and, with the help of their teacher, are able to interpret dialogue meaningfully. They see themselves as 'readers' and can recall and sequence events well
- Older pupils in KS1 continue to make satisfactory progress in their reading: they approach non-fiction material with interest. More confident pupils are aware of punctuation and the need for expression and they demonstrate good recall of content: some self correct as they read and are able to empathise with characters

and discuss aspects of the text they have enjoyed.

- In both key stages pupils make satisfactory progress in their independent writing skills. In KS1, pupils understand the significance of sentence structure and are beginning to include punctuation in a meaningful way. Pupils in Y1 incorporate new vocabulary when writing story endings. Y2 pupils make satisfactory progress in their ability to create written messages and lists and to extract information from class texts.
- In KS2, pupils become increasingly aware of how to vary their language for particular purposes and readers. Poetry writing in Y3 and Y4 is of good quality: pupils compose, explain, discuss and present their work well and make constructive suggestions for improvement. In Y5, pupils select vocabulary appropriately when creating character sketches: more confident writers produce some imaginative work.
- The presentation of written work and of handwriting is progressing satisfactorily in both key stages. Younger pupils, however, vary in their ability to transfer and apply their developing cursive style when writing in other contexts.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, some pupils do not make enough progress in their independent writing skills: although opportunities are provided for them to write for a variety of purposes further work is needed to develop both the quantity and quality of pupils' writing by the end of the key stage.
- In KS2, pupils make insufficient progress in their ability to transfer, consolidate and develop the satisfactory and sometimes good standards they achieve in literacy work, to a range of work in other subject areas.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to apply their developing reading skills in the context of tasks involving independent learning, research or investigative work. More able readers are not given a suitable level of challenge.
- The use of ICT in the writing process is under developed throughout the school.

Mathematics

Standards of achievement in mathematics are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages pupils are making progress in their understanding of number and in the development of mathematical skills, knowledge and concepts. Most pupils are developing accuracy in methods of calculation and use appropriate terminology when discussing their work.
- In KS1, pupils are developing an understanding of place value and can add and

subtract using one and two digit numbers. Y1 pupils count in sequence and explore patterns in addition and subtraction. More able pupils know addition facts to twenty and count in twos. Y2 pupils are able to sequence numbers to fifty, to multiply numbers and recognise odd and even numbers.

- Pupils in KS2 extend their understanding of number with more able pupils, at the end of the key stage, recognising the equivalence between decimal, fractional, and percentage forms. Y3 pupils have a secure of understanding of place value and can add and subtract using two digit numbers. In Y6 pupils extend their knowledge of number to decimals and negative numbers.
- In both key stages most pupils can describe the properties of two dimensional (2D) and three dimensional (3D) shapes.
- In KS1, pupils use appropriate mathematical language to describe shapes and are beginning to classify them according to mathematical criteria. In Y2 pupils draw simple 2D shapes and describe differences between them. More able pupils use standard and non-standard units of length to compare and order objects.
- In KS2 pupils measure accurately and calculate the areas and perimeters of 2D shapes. Y6 pupils describe the properties of 3D shapes and recognise reflective symmetry of 2D shapes. They use right angles and fractions of a turn to measure rotation.

Shortcomings

- In both key stages, a significant number of pupils are often slow in recalling number facts and lack confidence and accuracy in mental number work.
- Pupils are not always able to apply mathematics in context when involved in problem solving tasks.
- In both key stages, pupils do not undertake sufficiently challenging investigative tasks.
- In both key stages, computers are not used sufficiently as a tool for representing and exploring data.

Science

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 show good observational skills in their ability to group materials on the basis of simple properties. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to use appropriate scientific language when discussing the transparency of a range of materials.

- By the end of the key stage pupils know that electrical circuits do not work if there is a break. They have a good understanding of the potential dangers of electrical appliances in the home.
- Pupils in Y3, have a good understanding of vibration and sound. They can test for vibrations and have a good knowledge of the structure of the inner ear and how sound waves are heard.
- Pupils in Y5 understand that there are forces of attraction and repulsion between magnets and forces of attraction between magnets and some materials. More able pupils can turn ideas into a form that can be investigated and can establish a hypothesis. They have good understanding of the need for fair tests. They can vary one factor correctly while keeping the others the same. They understand the importance of repeat observations in establishing a good scientific approach to an investigation.
- By the end of the key stage pupils show a good understanding of simple electrical circuits through a series of experiments, including the making of and measuring the effect of simple resistors.

Shortcomings

- Throughout both key stages, pupils' independent investigational skills lack systematic development. Pupils in KS1 have few opportunities to make predictions or suggestion about 'how to find out.' Pupils in KS2 have too few opportunities to turn their ideas into investigations.
- In KS2, the conclusions of investigations are not linked as frequently as they might be to a through analysis and interpretation of findings. Many pupils are not able to utilise previous knowledge to acquire a deeper understanding or consider how to display their results appropriately to enable patterns to be ascertained.
- The school has a pattern of pupils of different year groups and abilities studying the same topic at the same time. Progression in the tasks undertaken is not always clearly defined or well matched to pupils' existing knowledge and skills.
- Pupils in both key stages insufficiently communicate scientific information in a variety of ways, for example, information technology to select and present, search and access information.

Welsh second language

Standards of achievement in Welsh as a second language are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages pupils use a range of words and phrases confidently. Their

pronunciation is improving and they increase the range of their vocabulary.

- In KS1 pupils respond to instructions and use simple words and phrases confidently when speaking with teachers. They are learning a range of words and phrases in a variety of contexts. Y1 pupils answer questions about themselves with more able pupils extending their responses.
- Pupils in KS2 are developing fluency and confidence when speaking. At the end of the key stage, more able pupils are able in Y6 use extended sentences and correct tenses when describing the weather.
- Reading skills are developing appropriately in both key stages. In KS1, Y1 pupils read words and phrases from flashcards while pupils in Y3 read their own work and other printed texts confidently. At the end of KS2, Y6 pupils read dialogue with accuracy and expression.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their writing skills. In KS1 pupils label drawings and copy simple sentences based on a given pattern. In KS2, a minority of pupils make appropriate progress in utilising language patterns in their written work.
- Incidental Welsh is used appropriately by teachers in both key stages and supports language development.
- Pupils' awareness of the culture and heritage of Wales is enhanced through visitors to the school, visits to places of historical interest and participation in celebrations.

Shortcomings

- In both key stages pupils do not use the language sufficiently for a range of purposes and in a variety of contexts.
- Written tasks are often repetitive and do not require pupils to write in response to a variety of stimuli and purposes
- Insufficient use is made of information technology in both key stages to support language development.

Design and technology

Although no lessons were observed in the school, evidence indicates that standards are satisfactory.

Good Features

- Pupils in early KS1 enjoy designing and making simple products out of reclaimed materials as part of their work in literacy. They can talk about their products and

how they can improve them.

- KS1 pupils can discuss the design for a pencil case, describe the materials they use and evaluate the usefulness of the finished product.
- Younger KS1 pupils reinforce the theme of healthy eating by participating in a project on jacket potatoes. They can discuss the ingredient, the cooking process and the effectiveness of the finished product. They record all stages in the process meticulously and effectively.
- Younger KS2 pupils engage in the design, making and evaluation process to produce land yachts, ball bearing games and LED Christmas cards. They describe the materials they use and how they make and modify their products.
- Older KS2 pupils record the procedure for designing and making products well and they thoughtfully evaluate their finished article. For example, they make a variety of learning aids for younger pupils, construct a balloon-powered buggy and make decorative borders and matching floor cushions for their classroom.

Shortcomings

- In both key stages pupils make insufficient use of information technology to develop, design and record their ideas.
- In KS1 pupils only have limited experiences of constructing simple mechanisms and joints that allow for movement; for example, using wheels and axles.
- In KS2 there is no evidence to suggest that pupils incorporate electrical circuits with simple switches into their designs.
- Pupils do not engage in activities, which test how structures can fail when loaded and how they can be reinforced to increase their strength.

Information technology

Standards of achievement are unsatisfactory in both key stages.

The school has an inadequate number of computers for the number of pupils on roll and constrained space in many classrooms especially in years 5 and 6. This significantly impacts on the standards that pupils achieve and the extent to which information and communications technology is meaningfully engaged in the delivery of the national curriculum.

Good features

- Pupils in Y1 are able to display information that has been stored in the form of a simple graph.

- Pupils in KS1 are able to make use of a drawing programme for producing pictures, supported by some text, and are able to print the result.
- In KS2, there are a few examples of pupils using data-handling software to display their results and CD-ROMs to obtain information. In Y6 pupils are able to format word processed work to simulate a newspaper style.

Shortcomings

- Overall, pupils have very limited opportunities to access suitable hardware and software to develop their skills of communicating and handling information and modelling.

History

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In Y1 pupils are developing a good awareness of the passing of time and recognise that everyday activities, such as washing clothes, were different in the past. They are able to find out about the past from a range of historical sources, including artefacts and photographs and posters and show their understanding through their writing.
- Through their visit to the Museum of Welsh life, pupils in Y2 know that school life was different for their parents and grandparents and are able to talk about some of these differences.
- In KS2, the youngest pupils have a good knowledge of the Roman period. They have a good knowledge of Roman roads and how and why they were constructed. Through their visits to local historical sites and museums and their writing, pupils show a good understanding of the different attitudes of Celts and Romans to each other.
- Pupils in Y4, through an analysis of various written contemporaneous sources are able to consider the nature of evidence and the differing views of Henry VIII. Detailed studies of a variety of Tudor homes enable pupils to show a secure understanding of aspects of Tudor life and contrast with their own.
- Pupils in Y5 and Y6, have, through their studies of evacuees during World War 2, a good sense of the social aspect of history and can show empathy with characters and events. They show a growing ability to identify the causes and consequences of historical events. Through well-structured dramatic reconstruction pupils are able to demonstrate a good understanding of the problems and traumas of evacuation.

Shortcomings

- In KS1, pupils do not know enough about important figures in the past, of why events happened, the role of individuals and what happened as a result.
- Pupils organise and communicate their findings in a limited number of ways, for example, insufficient use of ICT; selecting, recalling and organising information obtained from independent research including textual and documentary material and in presenting results with increasing independence, including visual presentations.
- Pupils' ability to choose and incorporate information from a variety of sources in an investigational framework, including census and local material, could be further developed. Textual material is underused as a means of increasing the depth of historical studies and sharpening pupils' analytical skills.

Geography

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils' geographical skills, their ability to observe and collect information, interpret aerial photographs and make and use maps at a variety of scales is developed progressively throughout the school. Pupils in Y2 are beginning to use two figure co-ordinates and by Y6, pupils are confident in the use of four figure co-ordinates when locating positions on a map.
- In KS1, through a visit and pairing with a local school, in study of a contrasting locality, Oystermouth, pupils are able to describe and compare places and features and recognise similarities and differences with their local area.
- Pupils in the early years of KS2, through their links with Libanus, Brecknock are able to further develop their skills of comparison and identify the main differences in economic activity.
- Pupils in Y4 are able to undertake a detailed shopping survey of the local area and summarise the main information and identify simple patterns. In Y6, pupils undertake an examination of a local industrial estate and are able to consider its contribution to the economy of the local area.

Shortcomings

- There is little progression throughout the school in pupils' understanding of how human activities have changed the environment, of ways in which the environment is managed and how potential conflict arises out of competing demands for land. Pupils have a very limited understanding of the concepts of global awareness and sustainability.

- Pupils' understanding of the geographical nature of their local area, what processes are contributing to its development and people's differing views of how the locality is changing is insufficiently developed.
- Pupils throughout the school have an insufficient knowledge and understanding of the character of Wales as a nation, of the geographical issues that predominate and the changes that are taking place in the physical and human environment.
- Pupils would benefit from a greater emphasis on the development of analytical skills when interpreting processes and patterns observed. Pupils are insufficiently challenged to ask and answer, for example, 'why is it like this' or 'why is it changing' in order to deepen their understanding of places.

Art

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good Features

- In early KS1 pupils learn how to mix and use colour to produce paintings of sunflowers and to decorate their models.
- Older KS1 pupils use Cézanne as a source of inspiration for drawing different fruits in a variety of mediums. They produce sketches of homes and houses and portraits, which show a developing understanding of line and tone.
- In one KS1 class, pupils combine primary and secondary colours to paint fish and to demonstrate symmetry. They use a variety of materials to explore different ways of printing patterns combining shapes and colour.
- Lower KS2 pupils use visits to St. Fagan's to enable them to draw, paint and construct models using different materials. Pupils use historical themes such as the Tudors to produce paintings after the style of Holbein.
- Older KS2 pupils use Picasso's ideas as a vehicle to develop their painting and collage work. In one class the displays of pupils' portraits provided an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their work and discuss how their ideas and skills can be improved.
- In their sketchbooks, KS2 pupils draw from first hand observation and from source materials to begin to produce an on-going record of their achievements.

Shortcomings

- Observational drawing is often limited in challenge and does not show a progression in the development of and practice of the skills of drawing.

- Pupils have a limited understanding of the specific techniques for using paint and colour and the application of these techniques as they move through the school.
- Pupils in KS2 have little experience of responding to Welsh artists.

Music

Standards in music are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages pupils sing with enthusiasm and in tune. They have a good sense of rhythm and appropriate attention is paid to breathing, dynamics, and pitch.
- In KS1, pupils improvise, compose, and arrange music using a variety of sound sources. They play repeated patterns on a variety of instruments keeping a steady beat and listening to others' performances.
- Y2 pupils discuss and appraise the quality of their performance using appropriate terms making distinctions between musical elements. In another activity pupils organise and select sounds in response to different stimuli. Pupils are able to follow the teacher as conductor when performing sounds. They respond appropriately varying the dynamics of their performance.
- In KS2, pupils explore and use a widening range of sound sources. They are able to create, select, and organise sounds to create a specific mood or atmosphere. Y4 pupils use body percussion, voices, and untuned percussion to create a four beat pattern based on a story. They discuss and evaluate their compositions appropriately.
- Pupils' performing skills are extended in a range of extra-curricular activities in instrumental tuition. Participation in concerts and visits to the school by musical groups effectively support the standards achieved.

Shortcomings

- In both key stages information technology is not used sufficiently to develop pupils' skills in composing.

Physical education

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good Features

- In both key stages pupils are aware of health and safety routines and they handle

apparatus carefully. Pupils recognise the important role that warm up and cool down activities play in physical exercise.

- KS1 pupils have good spatial awareness and when carrying out a sequence, they can plan and perform the basic gymnastic actions with co-ordination, control and variety.
- In dance lessons KS2 pupils respond imaginatively to a range of stimuli based on a musical theme. They can link and remember a limited amount of dance phrases and work in a group collaboratively to practise their ideas and phrases.
- In gymnastics, pupils are able to use large apparatus to devise sequences of movement at different levels using a range of skills. Pupils demonstrate an awareness of the need for good body control.
- Older KS2 pupils participate in swimming lessons and the school offers outdoor and adventurous activities at a residential centre near Gilwern.

Shortcomings

- Although pupils demonstrate their skills, there is limited scope for either self or peer evaluation in order for pupils to reflect upon their performance to help them progress.
- Where the pace of the lesson is not sufficiently planned, pupils waste time queuing for their turn or waiting for others to complete a movement.
- When pupils are given a set task in gymnastics there is often limited scope for them to be challenged to build on their skills and develop their own ideas.

Religious education

Standards in religious education are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the Christian calendar and of the significant festivals such as Christmas and Easter.
- In KS1, pupils talk confidently about special places and times and of family celebrations they have shared. They understand the significance of a Christening and can identify artefacts linked to the ceremony.
- Younger pupils in KS2 have a sound understanding of significant stories from the Bible and are able to recall some of these well. They are enabled, through good quality discussion and role-play, to successfully make the connections between the religious principles being considered and their own experience of the world.

- In Y5, pupils work well to consider aspects of neighbourliness and of caring and helping others. When discussing the parable of the Good Samaritan their oral responses are of good quality: they express ideas confidently, raise issues, pose questions and reflect on outcomes. Pupils achieve satisfactory and sometimes good standards when creating modern day versions of the story and when reporting back to the class.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other world faiths is insecure in both key stages. They have insufficient understanding of the similarities between faiths and the 'common root,' for example, of Christianity, Judaism and the Islamic faith.
- In both key stages, there is insufficient progression in the opportunities provided for pupils to record their personal responses to religious ideas and themes. This is particularly evident where classes in different year groups study the same theme.
- Limited use is made of ICT to support pupils' work in religious education: pupils have little opportunity to research information for themselves.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the last inspection

The last inspection report, of January 1998, identified six key issues for action. These have not been fully addressed. In general, progress has been unsatisfactory. However, since the appointment of the current headteacher these issues have been more fully addressed and progress has taken place.

In order to enhance the quality of education provided and raise educational standards attained, the school needed to:

1. Develop pupils' skills in and understanding of mental and investigative mathematics.

Little progress has been made in this aspect of mathematics. Pupils still have a limited range of approaches and strategies when looking for ways to overcome mathematical problems consequent upon having few opportunities to independently explore and investigate mathematical problems.

2. Develop a coherent early years programme that is planned on the basis of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning, and plan activities that provide an appropriate level of challenge.

Some progress has been made in this area. The school's curricular aims are now based on the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Some work needs to be done to evaluate planning and ensure an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils;

learning is often over directed and not drawn from the learning needs of the child.

3. Continue developing the role of the subject leader, particularly with respect to monitoring and evaluation pupils' standards of achievement.

The school has made little progress on this issue until quite recently. The new headteacher has implemented a structure of subject leaders to generate a whole school approach to the curriculum and standards, which had been lacking until recently. However, to date there has been a lack of monitoring by subject leaders. As a result, no evaluation has been carried out of standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and learning.

4. Examine short term planning procedures to ensure that learning objectives are clearly identified in all subjects and classes.

The school has made some progress on this issue. However, there is still a need to reassess curriculum planning to ensure that learning objectives identified in medium term planning are consistently translated into teachers short term planning.

5. Ensure that the good practice evident in some classes in using on-going assessment to plan work that is well matched to pupils' needs is disseminated throughout the school.

The school has made little progress in this area. Assessment information is not used enough or effectively to ensure that the planning of future work is suitably matched to pupils' abilities. It does not sufficiently promote higher standards through providing appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able.

6. Reduce the use of those worksheets that restrict pupils' responses.

The school has made some progress in this area. Worksheets are more carefully structured to ensure that pupils can respond using their own words. However, worksheets still play a major role in teaching and learning strategies devised by teachers throughout the school. This has resulted in a high degree of teacher dependence by pupils and there is a need to improve opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility and independence in their own learning.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

In order to enhance the quality of education provided and raise the educational standards attained, there is a need to:

- Implement those key issues not fully addressed from the previous inspection report, in particular:
 1. develop the role of the subject leader, particularly with respect to monitoring and evaluating pupils' standards of achievement; *
 2. use on-going assessment to plan work which is appropriately matched to pupils' needs and abilities,

especially those pupils who are more able; *

- raise standards of achievement in information technology in both key stages, and address the shortcomings in those subjects identified as satisfactory;
- raise standards in the key skills of reading and information and communications technology in both key stages and address the shortcomings in those key skills identified as satisfactory;
- revise curriculum planning so that continuity and progression in pupils' learning are improved and to ensure planning and teaching effectively promote the key skills across the school; *
- devise and implement an action plan and strategy for racial equality and extend pupils' awareness of others faiths and cultures.

The headteacher and governing body are aware of the need to make progress on issues raised during the previous inspection.

* the school has identified this area for development in the SDP

The inspection team would like to express their thanks to the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents of Libanus Primary School for their courtesy and co-operation during the inspection.

APPENDIX

A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Libanus Primary
School type	Primary
Age -range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Libanus Road, Blackwood, CAERPHILLY
Post-Code	Np12 1EH
Telephone Number	01495 225736

Headteacher	Ms. Michelle Oddy
Date of appointment	September 2001
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mrs Margaret Veater MBE
Registered Inspector	Mr. Allan Fear
Dates of inspection	27-30 January 2003

B. School data as indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	25	49	53	53	49	51	59	47	386

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	14	3	15.5

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	25 :1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	12.5 :1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	na :1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	28
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1 :1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Spring 2002	95	91	94	93
Summer 2002	90	92	93	92
Autumn 2001	93	94	95	94

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

C. Results of national curriculum assessments and public examinations

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS
END OF KEY STAGE 1 : 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y2: 49						
Percentage of pupils at each level			D	A	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School			2	16	78	4	
		National			4	13	63	20	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School			0	23	63	14	0
		National			4	14	54	28	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School			2	16	78	4	0
		National			5	13	71	10	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School			2	14	80	4	0
		National			2	11	64	22	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School			2	12	82	4	0
		National			2	9	61	26	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School			0	8	92	0	0
		National			2	10	68	20	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh(first language) according to teacher assessment

In the school:	82	In Wales:	80
----------------	----	-----------	----

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

A pupils who were absent from the tasks

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS
END OF KEY STAGE 2 : 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y6: 50										
Percentage of pupils at each level			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	2	14	62	22	
		National	0	0	3		0	1	5	16	45	29	
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0			2	14	56	26	
		National	0	2	2	0			4	12	41	38	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	2	24	48	26	
		National	0	0	3		0	1	4	19	46	27	
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0			2	24	46	26	
		National	0	2	1	1			4	19	43	30	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	0	16	68	16	
		National	0	0	3		0	0	2	13	49	33	
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0			0	16	66	16	
		National	0	2	0	0			1	10	47	38	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)

by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	72	In the school:	66
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum

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

N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence

D. The evidence base of the inspection

Before the inspection, meetings were held with the staff, the governing body and the parents of pupils registered at the school. Parents were present at the pre-inspection parents' meeting. Documents supplied by the school were scrutinised and 107 questionnaires returned by parents were analysed. A team of four inspectors gave 16 inspector days to the inspection, in the course of which formal observations were made of 71 lessons or part lessons. In addition, 95 formal notes were made of aspects of pupils' work and provision. Discussions with pupils from all age groups and abilities were undertaken, both inside and outside the classroom. A representative sample of pupils' work from all classes and for the whole academic year was scrutinised. Teachers' plans and records were examined. Inspectors considered the site, fabric and resources of the school. Discussions were held with the Head and with teachers, particularly about their subject management roles. Still within the context of the inspection, reporting back meetings took place with the Head, the staff and the governing body.

E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

NAME	ASPECTS	SUBJECTS
Mr. A.D.Fear	1.0 The School and its Priorities; 2.0 Main Findings; 3.1 Standards achieved in the subjects and Areas of Learning; 5.1 Teaching; 6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement; 6.2 Leadership and Efficiency; 6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources; 8.1 Progress since the last inspection; 8.2 Key issues for action.	Science Information Technology History Geography
Mrs. P.Williams	3.2 Standards achieved in the Key Skills across the Curriculum; 5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting;	Early Years English Religious education
Mr. C. Brace	5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare; 5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs.	Design & Technology Art Physical education
Mr. D.Howells	4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development; 5.3 Curriculum;	Mathematics Welsh second language Music
Mr. C.Hewitt	4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes; 4.3 Attendance; 5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions; 5.7 Partnership with industry.	

