

**REPORT**

**on the**

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

**LITCHARD INFANTS SCHOOL  
GARFIELD AVENUE  
BRIDGEND  
CF31 1QB**

School Number: 672/2299

Date of Inspection: 3-6 February 2003

**By**

**Mrs M E Evans**  
Registered Inspector W202/78828

Under Estyn contract number: T/100/02P

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

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

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

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

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

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

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

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

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## 1. CONTEXT

### **The school and its priorities**

Litchard Infants School is a local authority maintained school which serves the community of Litchard in Bridgend. The school is a 4-7 infants' school. Pupils are admitted to the reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The numbers of pupils on roll over the last three years have remained constant. There are currently 184 pupils in the school. Approximately 98 per cent of pupils are from English speaking homes and the remainder are from ethnic minority groups, all of whom speak English fluently. There are no pupils from Welsh speaking homes and Welsh is taught as a second language. The school aims to provide an attractive, orderly environment in which all pupils are happy, secure and confident to learn to their full potential.

The school considers half its catchment area to be neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. A quarter of pupils are drawn from economically disadvantaged areas and another quarter are from relatively prosperous homes; 22 per cent of the pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals. The nature of the intake comprises of both sizeable advantaged and disadvantaged groups. There are 41 pupils (22 per cent) on the school's Special Education Needs (SEN) register and one pupil who has a statement of SEN. Baseline assessments are undertaken on entry to the reception classes and results indicate a below average attainment for many pupils.

The school was last inspected in 1997 and produced a post-inspection action plan to improve curriculum provision and pupils' standards of achievement. Some of the targets in the current School Development Plan (SDP) have been met. The focus for the year will be to:

- raise pupils' standards of achievement in literacy, numeracy, information and communications technology skills (ICT) and music;
- raise standards in key skills, particularly speaking and listening;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- evaluate the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress;
- improve the external environment;
- review the roles of staff and governors and their continuing professional development.

The school's analysis of its National Curriculum (NC) Assessment results and comparative data is the basis for target setting to improve standards, especially in English.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### The main findings of the report

Litchard Infants School is a good school with some very good features. The high commitment of staff to improve curricular provision in order to raise standards, and the pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes to their work, contribute to the success of the school. The headteacher provides efficient, caring leadership and is ably supported by the deputy and staff, who work well as an effective team.

### Educational standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

- Pupils' standards of achievement were very good in 19 per cent of the 48 lessons observed, good in 73 per cent and satisfactory in eight per cent.
- The educational standards achieved by children under five are good. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Language, literacy and communication skills	Good
Personal and social development	Very Good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Good

- Pupils' standards of achievement in the NC subjects and religious education in KS1 are as follows:

English	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Welsh second language	Good
Design and technology	Good
Information technology	Good
History	Good
Geography	Very Good
Art	Good
Music	Good
Physical education	Good
Religious education	Good

- Standards are good overall in English and pupils are benefiting from the structured literacy sessions. They achieve good standards in speaking skills which they use effectively and confidently in their work. Their listening skills are very good and they

listen attentively and with interest to adults and other pupils. They achieve good standards in reading and satisfactory standards in writing skills.

- Standards are good in mathematics. Pupils make good progress in developing competence in number and understanding of mathematical concepts. In science, standards are good and pupils make good progress in using investigative skills.
- The school's 2002 NC assessment results do not reflect the standards achieved during the inspection in the core subjects, due to the high percentage of pupils with SEN who were assessed in the 2002 cohort when 45 per cent of pupils were receiving language and learning support. The school has predicted that pupils will achieve higher levels of performance in the targets set for 2003.
- Pupils' standards and progress in key skills across the curriculum are good. Standards achieved in literacy skills are good overall. Pupils achieve good standards in speaking and very good standards in listening skills which they use to good effect in all areas of the curriculum. The use of reading and numeracy skills in different subjects is good and satisfactory in writing. Pupils' use of a range of ICT skills for different purposes is good.

### **Ethos of the school**

- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils achieve high standards in their social development and understand the values and morals promoted by the school which reflect the positive and caring ethos.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are very good and have a positive impact on standards achieved. The school has very good arrangements for promoting good behaviour and rewarding achievements.
- Levels of attendance are good. Punctuality at the start of the school day and individual lessons is good.

### **Quality of education**

- The quality of teaching was very good in 19 per cent of lessons observed, good in 73 per cent and satisfactory in eight per cent. Lesson planning identifies clear learning objectives and key skills, which are focused on the specific skills, knowledge and understanding which the pupils are to acquire. The oral introductions to lessons often consolidate previous learning and plenary sessions are used well to reinforce learning.
- Overall the quality of assessment is good. The school has very good arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress. The accuracy and consistency of the procedures for assessing pupils are good. The quality of reports to parents is satisfactory; comments do not focus sufficiently on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and areas for improvement.
- Curriculum provision is good and is totally inclusive. The quality of the curriculum for children under five is good and promotes the Desirable Outcomes in all areas of learning. The schemes of work in each subject are effective in providing for progression and continuity in pupils' learning. The quality of whole school planning for the development

of key skills is very good. The quality of provision for promoting Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is very good. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including football, French and a recorder club.

- The school provides a very good standard of educational support and personal guidance for pupils. There are very good procedures for promoting racial equality and the well-being, health and safety of pupils.
- The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good and complies with the new SEN Code of Practice. Pupils make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans (IEPs) and achieve good standards, commensurate with their abilities.
- Partnerships between the school and parents, the community, schools and other institutions are very good. Parents are very well informed about the activities of the school and, together with the community, play an important part in promoting high standards. The school's partnership with industry is very good.

## **Management**

- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is good. There are effective procedures for evaluating pupils' standards of achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. The school carefully monitors the progress made towards achieving targets.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good and ensures a clear sense of purpose and direction to the school's work. There are clear aims and policies, including a commitment to equality of opportunity for all, which promote a caring ethos and high standards.
- The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. Governors are informed of the work of the school through the headteacher's regular reports and through the committee structure. There are no formal curriculum links for governors with the school in order to monitor provision and standards of achievement.
- The school manages its resources efficiently and budget planning reinforces the aims of the school, ensuring good value for money. The school's monitoring and self-evaluation procedures are effective in identifying areas for development and training needs of staff. Targets for improvement are set and are incorporated into the SDP which is a useful working document for prioritising areas for improvement, over a three year period.
- The overall provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good and has a beneficial impact on pupils' standards of achievement. There are an appropriate number of teachers who are suitably qualified and highly experienced.
- The school has adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. The quality of the accommodation is good which is enhanced by good quality displays, some of which are interactive and support children's learning. Good use is made of all available space to provide an attractive working environment for pupils. The provision and quality of resources are good and staff and pupils make effective use of all available books, materials and equipment. The outside play area for children under-five is underused due to problems of access and lack of supervision.

- Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress and has met the targets set in the action plan, which addresses the key issues from the previous inspection report. These include:-
  - improved standards in music, English reading and writing;
  - improved assessment, recording and reporting procedures;
  - reduction in class sizes;
  - monitoring provision and setting specific targets for improvement;
  - further development of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig;
  - the completion of all schemes of work.

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

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

Pupils' standards of achievement were very good in 19 per cent of lessons observed, good in 73 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining eight per cent.

- Standards of achievement of children under five are good overall and they make good progress in all the areas of learning. They achieve very good standards in personal and social development. By the age of five, the majority of children meet, and some exceed, the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- In KS1, standards are good overall in English and pupils achieve good standards in speaking skills which they use effectively and confidently in their work. Their listening skills are very good and they listen attentively to adults and other pupils. They achieve good standards in reading and benefit from the home/school reading system whereby parents support their children's reading. Standards in writing are satisfactory and pupils make good progress in improving these skills.
- Standards are good in mathematics and pupils make good progress in developing their competence in number and understanding of concepts. In science, standards are good and pupils make good use of their investigative skills during practical sessions, in order to improve their understanding of scientific concepts.
- In the 2002 NC assessment results the 76 per cent of pupils attained at least level 2 in the core subjects, which is below the national average score of 81 per cent. In English, 78 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 or above, which is below the national average (83 per cent), with 16 per cent achieving level 3, which is below the national average (21 per cent). In mathematics, 90 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 or above which was close to the national average (89 per cent), with 22 per cent achieving level 3, which is below the national average (29 per cent). Teacher assessment in science indicated that pupils' achievements were in line with the national average, with 88 per cent achieving level 2 and above and, of those, 16 per cent achieved level 3 which is below the national average of 21 per cent. This cohort of pupils contained a very high percentage of pupils with SEN; 45 per cent of the cohort were receiving language and learning support.

- When compared with other schools nationally, where 17-24 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, the results are between the lower and median quartile. Girls performed slightly better than boys.
- In the foundation subjects and religious education, standards of achievement are good in all subjects, except geography where standards are very good. Pupils make good progress in improving their skills, knowledge and understanding in these subjects.
- All pupils make good progress towards the targets for improvement set by the school in relation to national criteria. The targets are based on the effective assessment of pupils' achievements as well as the results of baseline and NC assessments. Those pupils with SEN make good progress, relative to their ability, towards the targets set in their IEPs.

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

Pupils' standards and progress in key skills across the curriculum are good overall. Standards achieved in literacy skills across the subjects are good in speaking and reading, very good in listening and satisfactory in writing. The use of numeracy skills in different subjects is good, and pupils' use of a range of ICT for different purposes is good.

- Children under five make good use of key skills in activities within the areas of learning. The provision of creative play activities is effective in promoting language skills especially in reading and emergent writing skills. They consolidate their knowledge of mathematics through counting, ordering and matching activities as well as through scientific investigations. They use computer equipment confidently in order to enhance their learning.
- In KS1, pupils use their speaking skills well in both English and Welsh. They speak clearly and audibly when responding to questions, describing events and taking part in discussion. Their listening skills are very good; they listen carefully and with concentration, responding appropriately to what they have heard.
- Pupils are encouraged to read a variety of books and enjoy taking part in class and group reading of Big Books. They make good use of the school library to increase their reading skills and to find information. Pupils make good use of reference books in lessons to find information about various subjects. By the end of the key stage, many are beginning to read accurately, expressively and with an understanding of a variety of texts in different subjects.
- Pupils make good progress in improving their written work in a variety of forms, including reports, stories, poems and letters. Their extended writing in subjects across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- Pupils' overall standards in numeracy across the curriculum are good. They make appropriate use of their numerical skills and measure and calculate accurately in science and design and technology. They make good use of data handling skills, particularly in geography and science. They confidently handle numbers in mental, oral and written tasks.

- Overall standards in ICT are good. Pupils use ICT equipment and software confidently to support their learning and develop basic computer skills systematically through the school. They make good use of ICT to record and present their writing and to produce graphs in subjects such as geography. Good use is made of CD-ROMs to support their learning. Pupils have very good mouse control and produce effective drawings for design and technology projects and create attractive art work.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress in improving basic language skills in line with the targets set in their IEPs. They enjoy taking part in the quality activities provided which cross a variety of curriculum areas. They make good use of ICT to support their learning.

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

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good and good for pupils' spiritual development.

- Pupils respond very favourably to the provision, which makes a vital contribution to the school being a happy, caring community that they enjoy attending. The school aims to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils and is successful in carrying this out during its daily activities. All pupils, regardless of gender, race or ability, are treated equally and behave towards each other in an appropriate manner.
- The quality of relationships between all in the school is good. Adults are good role models for the pupils who learn to show respect to all.
- Parents are pleased with the values that are promoted within the school. They praise the school for the contribution it makes in fostering a caring, sharing attitude in their children.
- Pupils are well behaved at all times. They know the difference between right and wrong and understand that unacceptable behaviour has its consequences. They show respect for the property of others and for the environment.
- Daily acts of worship make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The soothing music during assemblies, good quality singing and opportunities for prayer make a significant contribution to the ethos of the school.
- Throughout the school, pupils work happily alongside each other and collaborate in pairs or small groups as required. During lessons, most of the pupils work well independently. Pupils undertake responsibilities in a mature fashion, but opportunities for this are limited.
- The school ensures that pupils learn about others less fortunate than themselves, and they respond generously by raising funds for a variety of causes, including Barnardo's, the Christian Lewis foundation and supporting a child in India. The curriculum successfully promotes the language, culture and heritage of Wales. For example, they learn about life

in Wales and famous people of the past, a range of music and of their own and other localities. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their cultural understanding through visits to places of local interest and from visitors, such as a harpist, a clog dancer and a maker of Welsh love-spoons.

- The school has an appropriate racial equality policy and pupils are encouraged to have respect for the beliefs and traditions of others. Through a variety of subjects, pupils have many opportunities to learn of cultures other than their own. For example, they hear stories, learn songs from around the world and learn of customs at appropriate times of the year, such as Chinese New Year.

## **4.2 Behaviour and attitudes**

The overall quality of pupils' behaviour is very good and their attitudes to learning are good.

- The school has a clear code of conduct and pupils rapidly learn what is expected of them, and respond positively.
- Pupils are polite, respectful of their teachers, each other and visitors; they are eager to help in the classroom and demonstrate good manners, for example, holding doors for others to pass through.
- In lessons the great majority pay good or very good attention to the teachers, work diligently and sustain concentration well.
- A small number of pupils are prone to losing concentration on extended tasks. Effective classroom management prevents these minor disturbances from affecting the learning of others.
- There is an explicit and effective policy for encouraging good behaviour. It is supportive in nature and promotes concern and respect for others.
- Very good policies on bullying and equal opportunities effectively eliminate any forms of discrimination.

## **4.3 Attendance**

Pupils' levels of attendance are good. Punctuality throughout the day is good.

- Attendance figures averaged 93 per cent during the term prior to the inspection.
- The great majority of pupils are happy and eager to come to school and are only absent because of illness or authorised family holidays.
- 
- The school, with the useful assistance of an educational welfare officer when required, diligently follows up absentees and is successful in encouraging and maintaining good levels of attendance.

- Punctuality to school is good. A very small number of pupils are late arriving at school; some of these are for accepted socio-medical reasons.
- Punctuality to lessons after break and lunchtime is good.
- Registrations are promptly taken, reasons for absence are correctly identified with appropriate distinction made between authorised and unauthorised absence. Procedures fully comply with statutory requirements.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

The quality of teaching was very good in 19 per cent of lessons observed, good in 73 per cent and satisfactory in eight per cent.

- The quality of teaching of children under five is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for Children’s Learning and plan appropriate experiences within the six areas of learning.
- In KS1, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They make good use of professional training to improve their expertise.
- The oral introductions to lessons often consolidate previous learning and encourage pupils to participate in discussion. Lesson planning is very good and identifies clear learning objectives which are focused on the skills, knowledge and concepts which the pupils are to acquire.
- In lessons, work is well matched to the needs of all pupils with appropriately differentiated tasks set for them as individuals, pairs or groups. All pupils are provided with good support, especially those with SEN who are well supported by nursery nurses and voluntary classroom assistants.
- Lessons are well organised and teachers manage their pupils well and have good relationships with them. A good range of teaching techniques and organisational strategies are used effectively for different activities and purposes. However, the over-use of worksheets for recording purposes often inhibits the development of writing skills and independent thought. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used well to consolidate skills and knowledge, to assess understanding and to evaluate progress.

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

The overall quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good. At the last inspection, this aspect was judged to be unsatisfactory. The staff have worked hard to improve its practice.

- The school has developed a very good system for the assessment and recording of pupils' achievements. The day-to-day recording system is manageable and includes comprehensive records of the core subjects and detailed coverage and achievement lists for all foundation subjects and religious education. Individual record of achievement books are updated each half term with examples of pupils' work, and these are presented to the children when they leave the school. Despite the time-consuming nature of this procedure, all teachers agree that it is a beneficial practice.
- Children in the reception classes undertake a baseline assessment shortly after starting school. The results are used to identify areas of need that will be targeted.
- Pupils with SEN are assessed thoroughly and detailed records are kept of their progress. The quality of IEPs for pupils with SEN is good and targets set are appropriate.
- Good use is made of bench marking, local and national data to analyse pupil progress and trends. Performance data for the core subjects is analysed and used to set targets for improvement.
- All staff work towards a common understanding of the NC levels through the moderation of a sample of pupils' work. The annotated examples are put into subject portfolios. Core subject portfolios have been completed while the foundation portfolios are in the process of being compiled.
- Teachers of the same year groups plan together. They make good use of their assessments to guide the content of lessons.
- Arrangements for consultation meetings with parents are good. Opportunities to speak formally with teachers are offered termly, and access to staff at other times is good. Teachers are always prepared to speak to parents if there are matters of concern.
- Statutory requirements of reporting to parents are met. The quality of information provided in the annual reports to parents is of a satisfactory standard. Many of the reports describe the work that pupils have covered and their attitudes towards the work, but do not state clearly the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Some reports have targets for further improvement, but this practice is not consistent across the school.

## **5.3 Curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum provided by the school is good.

- The curriculum for children under five is appropriate to their needs and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The schemes of work in the six areas of learning are effective in ensuring progression and continuity for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in each area. An appropriate range

of experiences and practical activities are provided, ensuring that children gain confidence to learn. The limited outdoor area and access to large play equipment inhibits some aspects of their physical development.

- In KS1, the curriculum is broad, relevant and appropriately balanced. It complies with statutory requirements, including the teaching of religious education and a daily act of collective worship. Its organisation is good with sufficient time allocated to all subjects. Curriculum provision for all pupils, including those with SEN, is good.
- There are appropriate policies and schemes of work for all subjects. The latter are effective in providing for continuity and progression in the NC programmes of study across the key stage. Curriculum planning is detailed and is clearly focused on learning objectives and the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The planning of key skills across the curriculum is very good and is clearly focused on promoting pupils' use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and on problem solving skills in subjects such as science and design and technology.
- The school makes good use of home/school tasks to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. It is effective in enlisting the support of parents, especially in monitoring and supporting their children's progress in reading.
- Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is very successfully promoted across the curriculum. Visitors to school, such as a clog dancer and a harpist, together with opportunities for pupils to undertake educational visits in the local area, extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of Wales and its heritage.
- Pupils' educational development is further enhanced by extra-curricular provision, such as football, French and recorder club.
- The school makes good provision for personal and social education and includes health and hygiene education and sex education through pupils' study of living things in science.
- Curriculum provision is very effective in ensuring that all activities are socially inclusive and that there is equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.

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

The quality of support, guidance and pupils' welfare is very good.

- There is a wide range of well thought out policies relating to all aspects of pupils' welfare. Parents are happy with the support and guidance that their children receive.
- There are positive relationships between pupils and staff. Staff know the pupils well and respond appropriately to their educational and personal needs.
- The school provides a welcoming, caring and a very attractive environment. Pupils come to school cheerfully and feel safe and happy. Comprehensive policies are in place to ensure that oppressive behaviour, including bullying is eliminated.

- There is a strong feeling of equality for all pupils. Pupils demonstrating problems are identified early and help is sought from relevant agencies. Detailed policies ensure that everybody within the school is treated on an equal basis. All pupils, including those with physical disabilities, have equal access to every aspect of school life.
- The school has very effective procedures relating to Child Protection issues. The head teacher is the designated responsible member of staff. She receives very good support and advice from the Child Protection Officer.
- Every precaution is taken to ensure the health and safety of all on the premises. Regular risk assessments are made and any concerns are acted upon immediately. There is a staff member with responsibility for health and safety.
- Good links have been established with a number of local agencies. The school has regular visits from social services, the educational psychologist, physiotherapists and a speech and language support officer who visits a specific child but is willing to give general advice.
- The very good system for the assessment and recording of pupils' achievements ensures that pupils receive work that is appropriate for their specific needs.

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

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their IEPs and achieve good standards commensurate with their level of ability.

- The policy for SEN is comprehensive and complies with the requirements of the new Code of Practice. It gives clear guidance to all those involved in SEN procedures. A named governor for SEN provides good support to the special education needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and successfully monitors the implementation of the policy and pupils' progress.
- The SENCO, in consultation with the teachers, is responsible for overseeing all SEN provision according to the Code of Practice and ensures effective liaison between class teachers and outside support staff, including the SEN support teacher.
- There are 41 pupils on the school's SEN register: five are on the School Action stage and 36 are on School Action Plus. There are two pupils with motor skills impairment; one pupil receives eight hours support a week and the other pupil has a statement of SEN who receives full-time one-to-one support from a care assistant. All pupils receive appropriate support and make good progress, especially in language skills. Pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties benefit from extra voluntary adult support and the implementation of behaviour management strategies. There are no extra assistants employed to support the large proportion of pupils with SEN, especially in the Y2 classes.
- Systems for identifying and assessing the needs of pupils with SEN are good, especially in the early years where baseline assessments provide information for early intervention. The quality of IEPs is good and realistic targets are set for pupils to achieve; they make

good progress in line with targets set. At Early Years Action and School Action stages of the graduated approach, the SENCO prepares targets in the IEPs, in consultation with the class teachers. Pupils' progress is reviewed termly and the IEPs are modified as required. Parents are informed of developments and encouraged to be involved in supporting their children. Detailed records are kept of pupils' progress.

- Pupils receive good support from the language support teacher who teaches groups on a withdrawal basis for two and a half hours a week.
- There are appropriate annual review procedures for pupils who have statements and parents are involved at each stage.
- All pupils with SEN, including those with disabilities, are provided with equal access to the curriculum through well differentiated tasks, which ensure that pupils work at the appropriate level of ability. Liaison between the SENCO, class teachers, SEN language support teacher and outside agencies are effective. There are close links with the junior school and the local special school.

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

Partnerships with parents and community, schools and other institutions are very good. They make a significant contribution to pupils' educational and personal development.

- Parents feel very well informed about the school through the comprehensive and clearly written prospectus, the useful and regular newsletters and the easy access they have to staff for discussion.
- The quality and extent of parents' contribution to school life is very good. Many parents, and other members of the family and wider community, help in school, either directly in the classroom or in the library or, for example, by helping compile pupils' records of achievement.
- The Friends of Litchard Infants School is an active group of parents who successfully raise funds for the school and help organise events such as the annual fetes.
- Class visits to the local community help develop social and cultural awareness, and also support work in geography, history, art and religious education.
- Significant work for charity is carried out by pupils, and their support of children's charities, including some in the developing world, provide an awareness of those less fortunate than themselves.
- School concerts and carol services are enjoyed by the community.

- Regular meetings and exchanges of information between school staff and those from play-groups and the junior school ensure easy transition for pupils. Linked classroom activities help ensure continuity and progression in learning.
- The school benefits from access to the junior school's resources, for example, for sport and for social and public events.
- There are very effective partnership arrangements with initial teacher training institutions which are beneficial to pupils' standards of achievement.
- The school also benefits from the classroom support and input provided by short placements of work experience students from local secondary schools.

## **5.7 Partnership with industry**

The school has a very good partnership with industry, which gives pupils an understanding of the world of work and provides a meaningful stimulation for curriculum studies.

- The school has an effective and comprehensive policy for work related education. This usefully links classroom activities with opportunities to directly experience the workplace and meet the people from it.
- Pupils learn eagerly about the variety of jobs, and of the personal qualities appropriate to them, through stories in lessons, and by useful comparisons made of different periods in history.
- Classroom learning is enhanced by visits to museums, sites of interest and to businesses, either locally, such as a pet shop, and a demonstration construction site, or further afield, for example, to the lifeboat station in Mumbles.
- Links with local businesses have led to useful sponsorship for school activities.
- Visitors from the local fire and police services talk about health and safety matters, and the RSPCA illustrates another form of public service.
- The awareness of the need for good literacy and numeracy skills that these links provide is a useful stimulus to learning.
- The school has very good links with an Education Business Partnership, through which new opportunities can be explored and brokered.
- Staff placements in industry, to broaden knowledge and learn new skills, are encouraged. A recent placement facilitated the development of classroom science projects and stimulated the school's participation in the BAYS Science Project.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

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

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

- The school has a self-review system, which is effective in evaluating performance and quality in order to plan future developments. Key areas for improvement are identified from performance indicators and are built into the SDP, giving a clear focus for self-evaluation towards school improvement.
- The headteacher, governors and staff are committed to improving standards. They make good use of assessment data, monitoring procedures and the action plan from the previous inspection to evaluate standards and plan for improvement. A detailed analysis is made of pupils' assessment results, including the results of baseline and NC assessments.
- All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process as part of the school's self-assessment system, closely linked to the school's performance management policy. This is effective in raising the quality of professional expertise and identifying priorities for improving standards of teaching and learning. Staff development needs are closely linked to school improvement priorities.
- The main targets over the last three years have been to improve pupils' achievements in literacy, numeracy, ICT and music. The targets are realistic and appropriate and have been incorporated into the SDP as a result of the self-evaluation process.
- The SDP is appropriate in moving the school forwards. Each action plan has clear targets, success criteria, planned expenditure, responsibilities and time schedules. The headteacher's reports to governors contain detailed evaluations of progress towards achieving the targets. In addition, subject leaders have SDPs for each subject which are effective in identifying areas for development and which feed into the school SDP. Staff and governors, in order to improve the quality of provision and to raise the standard of pupils' achievements, review the plans regularly.
- The school evaluates the progress made towards achieving the targets through monitoring pupils' work, teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection and the school has met the targets in the action plan to improve curriculum provision and the quality of teaching.
- Monitoring procedures are effective in identifying areas for improvement. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning. Curriculum leaders also monitor the provision and standards in each subject and are developing useful portfolios of pupils' work as evidence of progress.

## **6.2 Leadership and efficiency**

The quality of leadership and management of the school is very good and ensures a clear sense of purpose and direction to the work of the school.

- The school's aims and values, including social inclusion and a commitment to equality of opportunity for all, promote a caring ethos and high standards which are successfully promoted by staff and governors. The school achieves its aims of providing a supportive and happy community in which all pupils feel valued and encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and support for the staff in improving the educational provision and standards of achievement. All staff are responsible for an aspect of the curriculum and are effective in providing leadership in those areas and in monitoring provision and standards. Resources are managed efficiently, standards are carefully monitored and regular audits are made to identify areas for development and staff training needs. There are SDPs for each subject which provide useful information in prioritising areas for development in the school SDP.
- The governing body is supportive of the school and effectively fulfils its statutory obligations. The governors are well informed through regular reports from the headteacher and understand their roles and responsibilities. There is a well organised committee structure for managing aspects such as finance. There are no formal links with subjects in order for each governor to monitor the quality of education and pupils' standards of achievement. Governors make regular visits to the school and some help in the classrooms.
- The school succeeds in maintaining and improving standards of achievement and the quality of educational provision by setting targets in the SDP and through the process of self-evaluation. The main targets are to raise pupils' standards of achievement in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- The governing body, through its finance committee, ensures that budget-setting relates efficiently to the school's educational priorities in the SDP over a three year period.
- The school has a delegated budget, which is well administered. The LEA finance department provides effective advice and support. The finance committee monitors spending and sets the budget which is ratified by the whole governing body. At present, there is a small deficit budget due to a slight dip in numbers on roll for the previous financial year and the cost of expensive staff. However, the budget will be re-adjusted with the predicted changes in staffing and increased intake of pupils.
- The school has had a recent financial audit and has addressed the recommendations made in the report. The school manages its resources efficiently and ensures good value for money.
- There is a clerical assistant, who manages the financial administration efficiently and, working with the headteacher, undertakes administration tasks to ensure the efficient day-to-day running of the school.

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

The overall provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good and has a beneficial effect on pupils' standards of achievement.

- There are an appropriate number of suitably qualified and highly experienced teachers to match the demands of the curriculum and meet the needs of the pupils attending the school. The governing body has given priority to maintaining the number of teachers to ensure class sizes would not become too large. All staff members have detailed job descriptions, with curriculum roles and responsibilities clearly defined.
- The school employs one nursery nurse who supports the teachers in the reception classes and two support assistants to help specific pupils. An IT manager is employed for 15 hours a week and provides very good support for pupils to learn ICT skills. Volunteers from within the community give extra, good quality support on a regular basis, but the school's budget limits the employment of any further support staff to help the large proportion of pupils with SEN.
- New teachers receive support through a mentor and appropriate support from staff members, but there is no documentation in place relating to the induction of new personnel.
- The system in place for continuing professional development is good. Training is linked to the SDP and the Staff Development Plan. Whole school training for music and Welsh and meetings to disseminate good practice, are held after school and have been especially beneficial in raising pupils' standards of achievement.
- The school has adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. It is situated in a large pleasant site that is shared with the junior school. The grassed areas are used in the summer and the wooded area is used for the furtherance of pupils' understanding of the natural world.
- The building is in a good state of repair. It was rebuilt eight years ago when fire destroyed the original building. It is of semi-open plan design that, together with a demountable building that houses a Y2 class, provides sufficient space for the numbers currently on roll. The space is used effectively for the delivery of the required curriculum.
- Colourful wall and table displays in classrooms and common areas are of a very high standard and make a valuable contribution in the provision of an attractive and welcoming environment. The displays are informative, celebrate pupils' achievements and some are interactive to encourage the pupils to look more carefully at the subject matter.
- Children under five do not participate in regular vigorous outdoor physical activity. The fenced outdoor section allocated for this age group is situated at the end of the school building and cannot be seen from the classrooms. It is underdeveloped and also underused due to difficulties in accessing and supervising the area.
- There is a spacious hard-surface area. Drainage in the playground is inadequate and plans are in hand for the situation to be remedied shortly.

- The quantity and quality of resources for teaching and learning are good overall, although there are some shortages for the teaching of history and design and technology. Good use is made of all available resources.

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

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

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

The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Standards of achievement are good overall in all the areas of learning. They are very good in personal and social development. By the age of five, the majority of children in the reception class meet, and some exceed the Desirable Outcomes.

#### **Good features**

#### **Language, literacy and communications skills**

- Children are confidently developing their language skills. They take part in conversations, contribute well to group discussions and communicate their own ideas and beliefs. Their listening skills are very good and they listen attentively to others and take account of what they say. They take turns to speak clearly and audibly and use an increasing range of vocabulary. They develop their reading skills well; they have a good knowledge of phonics and can read words and sentences in Big Books. They make good attempts at writing, especially in the creative play areas and some successfully read what they have written. Children are familiar with Welsh language patterns and respond well to oral activities.

#### **Personal and social development**

- Children's behaviour is very good and they have positive attitudes to their work. They show confidence and establish effective relationships with other children and adults. They take turns to speak and are willing to share and co-operate well during practical activities. They are able to undress for physical education lessons and make good attempts to dress themselves. They respond well to the school's provision for moral and social development and have a developing awareness of Welsh culture through the incidental use of Welsh and through a good range of Welsh resources.

#### **Mathematical development**

- Children successfully use mathematics as an integral part of many activities, such as playing in the pet shop, the home play areas, building with bricks and sand and water play. They increase their knowledge and understanding of number during oral work. They can count to 10 in English and in Welsh, some to 20 and beyond. They make different sets of objects and accurately identify the numbers in the sets; they know which sets add up to 10. They recognise numbers on a number line and place them in the correct order. They use mathematical language appropriately and use apparatus successfully to aid

calculations. They realise the purpose of money and recognise the value of coins. They can name two, and some three dimensional shapes correctly and begin to use non-standard measures confidently.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

- Children develop a good knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. Through their investigation of melting ice, they understand the concept of changes in materials. They investigate vegetables and accurately describe their colour, texture and shape. They understand the sequence of time through correctly ordering photographs from a baby to an adult. They can recognise similarities and differences in pictures of babies and adults and correctly sort items into two sets. They have a good understanding of the seasons and make close observations of daily weather patterns. They develop manipulative skills well, using scissors, glue and a range of tools and materials for different activities. They design and make stick puppets for a puppet theatre and an effective range of hats. They use computers confidently, including a program for drawing and designing pictures.

### **Physical development**

- Children increase their confidence and co-ordination when moving and using apparatus. They understand and explain clearly the necessity for warm-up activities. They perform different movements with good awareness of space and others around them. They have very good body control and awareness and demonstrate how they can balance on different body parts. During outdoor play activities children confidently manoeuvre a range of wheeled vehicles and successfully follow the arrows on a pathway. Their fine motor skills are well developed through handling appropriate tools, objects, construction pieces and malleable materials, safely and with increasing control.

### **Creative development**

- Children use paint and brushes confidently to produce a variety of artwork. They draw effective self-portraits using pencil and pastels. They experiment with printing techniques using shapes, leaves and cross sections of vegetables to make attractive printed patterns. They use a variety of media and textures to make effective class friezes. Following a walk in the school grounds they investigate a range of natural materials to create attractive woven collages using dried grasses, leaves, seeds and flower heads. They enjoy handling and investigating clay and produce some effective shapes and figures, and competently use a range of tools to make markings.
- In music, they enjoy singing a variety of songs and hymns and nursery rhymes in English and in Welsh. They enjoy exploring sounds and instruments to create their own music. They accurately match sounds to corresponding pictures and successfully use body sounds and instruments to represent the objects. They play instruments in time with their singing and follow directions appropriately.

## **Shortcomings**

- Children's work in three dimensions and sculpture is underdeveloped.
- Children's progress in developing their physical skills is adversely affected by the underuse made of the outdoor play area.

## **English**

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

### **Good features**

- Good standards are achieved in speaking skills. Pupils speak clearly and confidently in lessons, using an appropriate range of vocabulary. They enjoy taking part in role-play activities and they speak confidently and coherently.
- Towards the end of the key stage, pupils are improving their ability to contribute to discussion and show confidence to express their opinions. During plenary sessions, pupils confidently evaluate their work and offer clear suggestions for improvement.
- Pupils' listening skills are very good and they respond very well to questions and instructions. They listen attentively and with concentration to others during oral sessions and ask relevant questions. Good use is made of listening centres to support their skills.
- Standards in reading are good and pupils use a range of methods and strategies, including phonics to read new words. They make good progress towards improving their fluency and accuracy, supported by class reading of Big Books and shared reading activities. Pupils are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents. There is a useful home/school reading system whereby parents support their children's reading.
- By the end of the key stage, some pupils are reading fluently from a range of texts. They are able to discuss the contents of their books, re-tell the main events of stories and predict how stories will end. Pupils make good use of CD-ROMs and reference books to consolidate skills and find information about various subjects.
- The standard of pupils' writing is satisfactory. There are good examples of stories, poems, letters and reports. Good use is made of literacy strategies to learn new vocabulary, identify word patterns, sentence patterns and punctuation in text, which pupils use in their own writing. They are familiar with the structure of a story and are gaining confidence to write their own stories with accuracy and appropriate punctuation.
- Pupils make good progress in improving their handwriting skills and sentence structure in their development towards independent writing, which is generally well presented. They make appropriate use of word books for spellings.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress in developing their language and literacy skills in line with the targets set in their IEPs.

## **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' use of extended writing across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- Pupils' skills in planning, drafting and improving their writing are underdeveloped.

## **Mathematics**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

### **Good features**

- In Y1, pupils confidently count in twos to 10, and in 10s to 100. In Y2, pupils can read two digit numbers and understand odd and even numbers. They count in twos, fives and tens and have mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10. They quickly order numbers up to 100 and many are able to read numbers beyond this.
- Younger pupils count confidently and add or subtract numbers to 10 or beyond. They use this knowledge successfully to work with money, adding two amounts together and identifying which articles cost the most or the least. Many older pupils are able to add, subtract, double and halve numbers confidently.
- Pupils are accurate in their use of language associated with two and three-dimensional shapes. Younger pupils name familiar shapes and older pupils build upon this with less familiar shapes, such as pentagon, hexagon and octagon. They explain the properties of a variety of shapes, correctly using terms such as face, side, angle and right angle. Through the programming of a floor turtle, pupils consolidate their understanding of angles and turns.
- Pupils in Y2 demonstrate a good understanding of the principle of reflective symmetry. They identify lines of symmetry, using the terms horizontal, vertical and diagonal to explain the positions.
- In measuring, pupils use a range of non-standard measures, such as their feet and hands, before learning about standard measures. They estimate length, mass and capacity using standard measures and use centimetres to measure accurately the distances travelled by cars during a scientific investigation.
- Accurate use of grid references help pupils to classify by two criteria. They use correct vocabulary when referring to the columns and rows and are able to work out what should be in a particular grid and gain information from a completed matrix.
- Pupils make good use of computer programs to consolidate classroom work, for example, comparing and ordering numbers to 20 or 100 according to ability and handling and displaying data.

## **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings

## **Science**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils make good progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding of science. They undertake a good range of practical activities and focused investigations with enthusiasm and enjoyment.
- By the end of the key stage, a good proportion of pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of fair testing. They make sensible predictions, measure length and time and some offer sound reasons for their thinking. Younger pupils make related observations and record in a variety of suitable ways, such as drawing, writing and simple tables. Older pupils develop their recording skills well, including the use of lists, tables and Venn and Carroll diagrams to show their findings.
- When learning about life processes and living things, younger pupils learn what animals and plants need to keep healthy, while Y2 pupils have a good understanding of the unhealthy nature of fatty and sugary foods.
- Pupils are developing a suitable awareness of the diversity of life through the study of nocturnal animals and those that hibernate. They consider the habitats of animals during their visit to the seashore and sort into sets those creatures that live in salt or fresh water and of things that have lived or are extinct.
- In their study of materials and their properties, younger pupils successfully test and sort articles according to their magnetic qualities, some predicting what the outcome will be. A few explain that they think all metal articles will be magnetic and are demonstrably surprised to discover that this is not true. Older pupils have a good knowledge of materials that occur naturally and those that are man made, and how the properties of materials are related to their uses.
- Pupils' understanding of physical forces is enhanced by practical investigations. Older pupils predict which will travel the furthest when pushing cars down ramps of different gradients then measure the distances covered in centimetres. Younger pupils identify which force is employed in carrying out everyday activities and this is built upon when, for example, a visitor from X L Wales, challenges pupils in Y2 to construct a model from a construction set and make it move without touching it.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Welsh second language**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

## **Good features**

- Pupils respond well to incidental spoken Welsh at specific times during the day. They greet each other in Welsh and respond well to commands. They confidently discuss the weather, and how they feel, and enjoy taking part in question and answer sessions. They know the words of poems and songs, which they recite and sing with good pronunciation. They enjoy singing and performing a selection of songs and action rhymes in Welsh.
- Pupils are familiar with a range of vocabulary; they know colours, can count and name different foods, body parts, toys and everyday objects. Older pupils know the vocabulary associated with the weather. Pupils respond well to questions about themselves and make good attempts to answer in complete sentences, using known language patterns. They take an active and enthusiastic part in role play activities as they become more familiar with sentence patterns.
- Pupils enjoy stories in Welsh Big Books and make good attempts to read the texts, such as ‘Tedi Twt.’ They listen carefully to questions and instructions, focusing on known sentence patterns and respond appropriately, showing an understanding of vocabulary. They use their knowledge of sentence patterns and vocabulary appropriately to write their own sentences.
- Y2 pupils clearly express likes and dislikes and write accurate sentences in response to questions. They draw pictures of food and label them correctly.
- All pupils show a positive attitude to learning Welsh and teachers make it an enjoyable experience. Pupils’ awareness of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is very good and it promotes a sense of pride and belonging in the community.
- Pupils make good use of computer programs and videos to consolidate knowledge and record their use of Welsh.

## **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

## **Good features**

- Pupils make good progress in their skills and understanding of technology techniques. They make cards with moving mechanisms and constructions, such as jointed puppets, then talk with understanding about their work. Older pupils join components in a variety of ways and talk about ways that they like or dislike in their work.
- Good progress is made in pupils’ understanding of the designing, making and review process. Younger pupils draw plans for their intended model and start to consider what they will need, while older pupils list what materials and tools they will use. When they

have completed their work, pupils write about the likes and dislikes of their work through 'some thoughts about my work.'

- During a visit from the Invention and Discovery Roadshow (XL Wales), pupils make good use of their knowledge of forces when they are challenged to use a construction kit to design and make a roundabout that moves freely and to make a model that can be moved without touching it.
- Good use is made of ICT in design and technology, for example, pupils choose and print characters and backgrounds for puppet theatres and draw designs for vehicles using an art package.
- The use of textiles is encouraged through the making of cylindrical pencil cases and bookmarks, using different coloured stitching to make effective chosen patterns.
- Pupils work closely together when problem solving, for example, when designing a bridge that meets given criteria, pupils work well in a group with one acting as team leader.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' ability to make decisions and apply their skills and knowledge in new situations is underdeveloped.

### **Information technology**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

#### **Good features**

- Pupils make good use of ICT skills to support their learning. Most pupils have secure skills, knowledge and understanding and are able to work independently.
- Pupils develop their ICT skills systematically through the school and operate computers confidently and proficiently. They use the mouse with good control to access objects and symbols on screen. They use the keyboard with similar accuracy to move between lines of text and other features of display.
- Pupils have good skills in a range of computer programs. They demonstrate good word-processing skills when composing text and poetry, and edit work in progress. They save, retrieve and print work independently.
- They use computer programs effectively to practise numeracy skills and other aspects of mathematics such as handling and displaying data.
- When investigating weather, pupils create maps, bar graphs and charts to show changes in weather patterns.

- CD Roms are used effectively to support literacy and numeracy skills and to find information about various subjects. Good use is made of art and design programs to create patterns and pictures. Pupils successfully use the tools kit when designing vehicles for technology tasks.
- Pupils use control technology skills well when directing a turtle on screen or when programming a floor robot to follow a course by setting directions, distances and angles.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' use of an e-mail facility to develop communication skills or the Internet as a research tool to find information about different topics is underdeveloped.

## **History**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of changes over time. They have a sound knowledge of, for example, how transport, homes and shops have changed.
- Pupils make good progress in their chronological understanding by sequencing their school day and making timelines of their lives from birth to school, and timelines of dolls and cars through the twentieth century.
- Younger pupils sequence and write about the lives of famous people, such as Guy Fawkes and Grace Darling. The stories of Queen Victoria, St David and Robert Stephenson are studied by older pupils.
- Pupils are learning to use terms associated with the passing of time. When learning about the story of Susan Rees, a pit girl, pupils looked carefully at the illustrations in the book and related artefacts, and gave a considered reply when asked when they thought this happened, deciding upon 'a *very* long time ago.'
- The use of artefacts makes a good contribution to pupils' interest in the past. They handle them with care and make effective observational drawings. Attractive displays of artefacts encourage pupils to make comparisons with the present and to arrange objects, for example, teddy bears, in chronological order.
- Pupils make observational drawings of artefacts from Victorian times and have started to ask questions about them, such as 'how old is it?' 'where was it used?'
- Good use is made of visits to The Museum of Welsh Life at St Fagan's. The pupils play with old toys, experience washday in 'Beti Bwt's' kitchen and compare life then with that in the modern home and kitchen, including the role of servants and their relationship with the mistress of the house. They record their experiences and understanding through pictures, ICT and writing.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' ability to make their own decisions about selecting and organising information concerning the past is underdeveloped.

## **Geography**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are very good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils have a very good understanding and knowledge of place, direction and their locality. They list natural and human features on their walk in the locality and record these carefully using drawings, maps symbols and labels. They recognise places in photographs and clearly explain their uses.
- Pupils identify Wales on a map of the British Isles and accurately show Bridgend on a map of Wales. They draw simple maps that show a good sense of scale and position of their train journey from Wildmill to Maesteg and describe the geographical features they pass on the way.
- Y2 pupils are familiar with a globe and clearly explain the features of planet earth, identifying its physical features including seas and land. They correctly identify Africa on the globe and a map of the world; they know that Botswana is a long way south of Wales.
- Y1 pupils identify a range of physical and human features of a park. They make good attempts to draw plans of a park and correctly name the different features. They show very good knowledge and understanding of similar and contrasting geographical features between their locality with that of Mumbles.
- Y2 pupils study the village of Newton and successfully compare the geographical features with those of Litchard. They draw accurate plans and maps of the village using co-ordinates to show the location of various features. They investigate litter on the beach and make a strand line litter survey to demonstrate the effects of pollution.
- By the end of the key stage pupils' map making skills show very good progress. They produce work that has regard for scale and use keys to help users interpret information. They use alphanumeric co-ordinates, which they interpret accurately and record appropriately.
- Pupils have good awareness of the wider world. They can recognise cold and hot countries from photographs and books. Through their study of Botswana, pupils clearly describe similarities and differences between features of their own country with those in Africa, such as climate, homes, availability of water, food, toys and the importance of animals.
- Good use is made of ICT to create weather maps, charts and graphs, the plotting of routes on plans, programming a turtle to follow directions and the use CD-ROMs to find information.

## **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Art**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils confidently experiment with different art techniques, which involve the elements of line, tone, texture, shape and colour to produce some attractive art and craft work.
- All pupils explore paint and confidently use different brushes to paint effective patterns, portraits and paintings of daffodils. They investigate printing techniques and make effective prints using cross sections of vegetables; they successfully cut out patterns on polystyrene tiles with which to print a repeated pattern on paper and fabric.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their observational drawing skills and produce good quality drawings of flowers, plants, shells, teddy bears and portraits, using a variety of pencils and pastels. During their studies of places in the locality they make close observation drawings of buildings and street furniture.
- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists from different times and cultures. Y1 pupils study the work of Cezanne, in particular the autumn painting, and mix their own colours to produce their own attractive paintings of an autumn scene.
- Y2 pupils study the work of Welsh artists and compare the techniques used in their work and their effects. They make close observations of the collage work of Cefyn Burgess, whose work is inspired by drawings of chapels. Pupils make effective drawings and collage pictures of their own to illustrate 'a special place.'
- Pupils confidently evaluate their work. They make good use of plenary sessions to discuss their own work and the work of others and offer thoughtful suggestions for improvement.
- All pupils make good use of a drawing and graphic design computer system to create designs and art work.

## **Shortcomings**

- Pupils have limited skills of working in three dimensions, including clay.

## **Music**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

## Good features

- Pupils have a well balanced range of skills in composing, performing and appraising music.
- They sing a good range of songs, hymns and rhymes with enthusiasm in English and in Welsh. They sing in tune with clear diction and appropriate attention to the quality of sounds. Pupils successfully sing in two parts and some confidently sing solo parts.
- Pupils follow singing and clapping patterns and repeat them correctly, adapting to different rhythms. They can clap and play a range of instruments in time with the music, keeping a steady beat. They know the difference between high/low sounds and loud/quiet sounds and correctly follow directions to produce the right sound.
- Y1 pupils listen carefully to taped music and move in time with the music. They accurately repeat clapping patterns and concentrate well to create clapping beats in a group. They make good attempts to create their own patterns to demonstrate strong/weak beats and clearly explain the difference.
- Y2 pupils enjoy musical role-play using a variety of voices and instruments for characters in a story. They make good attempts to suggest vocal and body sounds for different sounds to represent parts of a train journey. They perform a sound story well, making different sounds to represent different parts of the journey and responding appropriately to the teacher's directions.
- Y2 pupils experiment and compose rhythm patterns and record their compositions on tape.
- Pupils have good listening and appraisal skills. They appreciate the music played in assemblies. They particularly enjoy listening to live performances, such as a visiting harpist and the 'Welsh Brass Trio.'
- Pupils' musical performances successfully enhance assemblies, church services and school productions. The extra-curricular recorder sessions further develops pupils' musical skills.

## **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Physical education**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils listen carefully and follow instructions to make good progress within lessons.
- Pupils in both year groups are aware of the effects that physical exercise has upon their bodies. They feel the change in the rate of their heartbeat and are aware of the need to warm up and cool down when exercising.
- Younger pupils demonstrate a good awareness of space. They move around the hall in a variety of ways with changes in direction and speed without bumping into others, and find a space when asked to stand still.
- Older pupils choose the direction they wish to travel and move swiftly into spaces to stop quickly on command. They demonstrate increasing confidence in the control of their bodies and practise to improve balancing on different body parts.
- Pupils demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively when following a plan that shows them where to place items of apparatus. They carry the pieces with due attention to safety and place them carefully in the correct position.
- When working on the apparatus, older pupils work well without direct supervision. They are focused, working confidently with control and imagination as they transfer floor routines onto the apparatus.
- Pupils are starting to recognise what makes a good movement in gymnastics. For example, they explain that a high jump, stretched limbs and soft landing are features of a good quality jump when observing their peers.
- During a session of traditional Welsh dance, pupils practice to improve their repeated patterns of movements. They dance and skip with enjoyment and quickly learn new routines.

## **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Religious education**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good. The school follows the Bridgend Agreed Syllabus.

### **Good features**

- During collective worship and at appropriate times during the school day, pupils join in musical prayers and songs, singing tunefully and with meaning. They respond appropriately to prayers and, on occasion, write their own simple prayers of celebration.
- Pupils are developing appropriate knowledge and understanding about aspects of religious belief, practice and lifestyle. They are familiar with the main festivals of Christianity and of stories from the Old and New Testaments.
- They are starting to understand that different religious beliefs have significance for believers. Pupils learn of some of the practices of Judaism, for example, setting the table for Shabbat, and learn that other faiths use light in their celebrations, such as the festivals of Hanukah and Diwali.
- In the development of awareness of life experiences, younger pupils are able to talk about aspects of their own lives that are important to them. They develop a sense of what is right and wrong from messages in stories from the Bible and from stories with a moral message.
- Older pupils identify, talk about and explain why places and individuals in their families and other people are important to them. They draw, write and make collage pictures of places they have visited which they regard as special, such as the church, their visit to Mumbles and links with South Africa.
- Pupils are beginning to record their work in a variety of ways. For example, a whole school display depicting the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes has three dimensional figures, trees and boats made by younger pupils, while the story has been recorded by older pupils using a word processor.
- By singing in concerts for the community and sharing their harvest produce, pupils learn to make others happy through sharing their talents and showing kindness and generosity.

### **Shortcomings**

- Older pupils do not record their thoughts, feelings and ideas sufficiently.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress since the last inspection**

The school was inspected in 1997 and produced an action plan to address the key issues; all have been implemented.

#### **Key Issue 1**

#### **‘Improve standards in music and the identified shortcomings in English reading and writing.’**

- The post inspection action plan 1997 emphasised the need for more focused curriculum planning to ensure that work meets pupils’ needs and abilities. The headteacher and deputy regularly monitored the quality of teaching and learning. Targets were set for the improvement of pupils attaining level 3 in reading and writing. In music, the scheme of work was reviewed and revised to ensure progression through the key stage. Resources were purchased and the role of the curriculum leader was developed to provide support for staff.
- In music, a programme of quality training was undertaken by staff which increased teachers’ confidence to develop the teaching of music. The policy and scheme of work have been revised to ensure continuity and progression in the NC programmes of study. New resources have been purchased which are efficiently organised and managed. The curriculum leader has monitored teaching and provides support and advice to colleagues.
- The English policy and scheme of work have been revised to ensure continuity and progression in the NC programmes of study. Pupils’ research skills are being developed through the use of the library and multimedia software. Emergent writing is encouraged in the early years and pupils in KS1 are encouraged to write independently for a variety of purposes and audiences. The role of the curriculum leader has been developed to include the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The current inspection found standards of achievement to be good in music and English reading and satisfactory in writing. A key issue from the report is to improve standards of writing across the curriculum.

#### **Key Issue 2**

#### **‘Improve assessment, recording and reporting procedures.’**

- External support and advice was sought to revise the policy, to develop assessment skills in the classroom, to use information for future planning and to devise a manageable system of recording.
- A full review of the policy has been undertaken. The marking of pupils’ work is more focused on improving standards. Pupil profiles show a progression in achievements through the levelled samples of pupils work. Portfolios of samples of pupils’ work have been developed in the core subjects and are in the process of being developed in the foundation subjects.

- The current inspection found that the quality of assessment and recording is good but that reports to parents need to be reviewed and revised to ensure that comments are sufficiently focused on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.

### **Key Issue 3**

#### **'Consider strategies for reducing class size in order to improve the quality of learning.'**

- The staffing budget was discussed with the LEA and it was not possible to fund extra staff. More efficient use was made of voluntary helpers and the headteacher provided support where appropriate, especially for pupils with SEN.
- It has been possible to maintain classes of 30 pupils or less in mixed age classes. The National Assembly Government Class Size Initiative maintained an extra teacher for a year. The governing body monitors the staffing budget and appointed a new teacher to improve the pupil-teacher ratio in the reception classes and to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in the early years.
- The current inspection found that class sizes are appropriate.

### **Key Issue 4**

#### **'Monitor provision more closely and set more specific targets for school improvement.'**

- Systems were implemented to monitor the quality of teaching and standards of achievement. Appropriate schemes of work were implemented and targets were set to improve pupils' performance in NC assessments and in other subjects.
- Curriculum planning is evaluated regularly and is monitored by subject leaders. The role of the curriculum leader has been developed by implementing a staff development programme, carrying out data analysis and setting targets for improvement. Monitoring systems are in place to identify areas for improvement which are incorporated in the SDP.
- The current inspection found that there are effective monitoring procedures in place and that specific targets for improvement are set in the SDP.

### **Key Issue 5**

#### **'Further develop the Cwricwlwm Cymreig.'**

- A policy for the development of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig has been produced which reflects the commitment of staff to support its development and implementation. Provision for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is provided through assemblies, visits to places of interest, the celebration of cultural events and activities across the curriculum, particularly St. David's Day.
- The current inspection found that the quality of provision for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is very good.

## **Key Issue 6**

### **‘Complete all schemes of work.’**

- All schemes of work have been completed. They have been reviewed and revised in line with Curriculum 2000, national literacy and numeracy projects.
- The current inspection found that all schemes of work have been completed and are effective in providing for progression and continuity in pupils’ learning.

## **8.2 Key issues for action**

In order to build on the good standards achieved by the pupils and to improve aspects of provision, the school need to:-

- improve standards of achievement in English writing across the curriculum;\*
- improve the provision for outdoor play for children under five in order to promote their physical development;
- review and revise reports to parents by ensuring that comments are sufficiently focused on pupils’ skills, knowledge and understanding and areas which need to be improved;
- further develop the roles of governors in order to monitor curriculum provision and standards.\*

\* The school has identified these areas for development in the SDP.

### *Acknowledgement*

*The registered inspector and team wish to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy before and during the inspection.*

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Litchard Infants School
School type	Infant
Age -range of pupils	4-7
Address of school	Garfield Avenue Litchard Bridgend
Post-Code	CF31 1QB
Telephone Number	01656 653896

Headteacher	Miss M Lewis
Date of appointment	September 1994
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Cllr. M Ing
Registered Inspector	Mrs M E Evans
Dates of inspection	3-6 February 2003

### 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	0	69	59	56					184

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	8	0	8

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil:teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23:1
Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Term 1	93	92		93
Term 2	91	93		92
Term 3	90	93		92

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	22
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

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

### END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y2: 56					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	7	16	62	16	
		National	0	4	13	62	21	
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	9	14	59	19	
		National	0	4	13	54	29	
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	10	16	64	10	
		National	0	5	13	70	12	
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	74	16	
		National	0	3	11	63	23	
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	5	5	67	22	
		National	0	2	9	60	29	
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	9	72	16	
		National	0	2	10	67	21	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	76	In Wales:	81

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

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

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who spent a total of nine inspector days at the school.

Before the inspection:

- meetings were held with the headteacher and staff, the governing body and with the parents; 10 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting;
- questionnaires were distributed to all parents and the 63 completed questionnaires were analysed; the inspection team took note of the results, including a further four additional submissions;
- a scrutiny was made of school documentation.

During the inspection:

- evidence of lessons observed was based on approximately 28 hours of inspecting 48 lessons across the age groups;
- other observations included assemblies, registration and extra-curricular activities;
- discussions were held with the headteacher, class teachers, support staff and non-teaching staff about their roles and responsibilities;
- discussions were held with pupils about aspects of their work and life in school; inspectors listened to a representative sample of pupils read;
- a scrutiny was made of a sample of pupils' work from each year group as well as work in the classrooms and on display around the school.

After the inspection:

- meetings were held with the headteacher, the staff and the governing body to provide oral feedback on the inspection findings.

## E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs M E Evans Registered Inspector	Under-fives English Welsh second language ICT Geography Art Music	Main Findings Standards of achievement Standards in key skills Teaching Curriculum SEN Quality of self-evaluation Leadership and efficiency Progress since the last inspection Key issues for action
Mrs C Llewellyn Team Inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology History Physical education Religious education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural Development Assessment, recording and reporting Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Staffing, accommodation and resources
Dr M Snow Lay Inspector		Attendance Behaviour and attitudes Partnership with parents and the community Partnership with industry