

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

**YSGOL MAIR RC  
(VOLUNTARY AIDED)  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ST MARGARET'S DRIVE  
RHYL  
DENBIGHSHIRE  
LL18 2HY**

**School Number: 663/ 3315**

**Date of Inspection: 28 – 31 January 2003**

**By**

**Mr D. M. Cray**

**Registered Inspector WO 92/16768**

**Date: 1 April 2003**

**Under Estyn contract number T/133/02P**



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

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

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

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

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## 1. CONTEXT

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

Ysgol Mair is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided primary school, located in the town of Rhyl, Denbighshire, serving the parishes of Rhyl, Prestatyn, Towyn and Abergele. The catchment covers a large area, much of which is recognised as being economically disadvantaged. Currently there are 411 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age on the school register and they are admitted to school part-time at the beginning of the term following their third birthday and full-time, the term after which they are four. Around 30% of the pupils come from non-Catholic homes. Pupil numbers have fallen somewhat in recent years.

Some 23% of pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals and 95 pupils (23%), nine of whom are statemented, are designated as having special educational needs (SEN). Several ethnic groups are represented in the school's population. There are no pupils in attendance who come from homes where Welsh is the first language. Overall, the school considers its pupils to represent the full range of ability.

The school was last inspected in the Summer Term of 1997. Since then there has been a significant turnover in the teaching staff and a new headteacher has been in post for a little over a year.

The school's mission statement aims to nurture both pupils and staff to achieve their full potential as part of a secure and caring Christian community.

The School Development Plan (SDP) contains a number of curricular and management priorities. Whole-school targets are set in accordance with the requirements.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### **The main findings of the report**

- Ysgol Mair is a well led, improving school. Good progress is being made.
- The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs. Standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

	<b>Nursery</b>	<b>Reception</b>
Language, literacy and communication skills	Very Good	Very Good
Personal and Social Development	Very Good	Very Good
Mathematical Development	Very Good	Very Good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Good	Very Good
Physical Development	Good	Good
Creative Development	Very Good	Very Good

- In Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) are as follows:

	<b>KS1</b>	<b>KS2</b>
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Welsh (second language)	Good	Satisfactory
Design and technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Art	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Music	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Physical education	Good	Good
Religious education	Not inspected	Not inspected

- In KS1 in 2002, according to the teachers' assessments, 81% of pupils attained Level 2 (L2) or above in the core subjects at the end of the key stage. In 2001 the figure was 72% (Wales 81%; Denbighshire 82.1%) and in 2000 it was 77% (Wales 80%; Denbighshire 83.4%).
- In KS2 in 2002, 62% of pupils at the school attained L4 or above, as determined by task/test results in the core subjects. In 2001 it was 60.3% (Wales 68%; Denbighshire 63.8%) and in 2000 the figure was 53.5% (Wales 63%; Denbighshire 60.1%).
- Both nursery and reception children make good progress in the application of their developing skills in early literacy, early numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) across the six areas of learning. Pupils in KS1 and KS2 are also making good progress in the development of their key skills across the curriculum.
- The governing body, in consultation with the Diocesan Director of Education, elected to make its own arrangements for the inspection of the pupils' spiritual development. The pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is a warm and caring Christian community. It makes a special effort to foster courtesy in pupils and to celebrate their achievements both in activities within school and those that are undertaken outside school. Welsh culture and traditions are promoted well and pupils have a good understanding of their own cultural heritage as well as others. The school effectively promotes racial equality and cultural diversity.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are in the main, good. The vast majority of pupils display a good standard of general behaviour and apply themselves to their studies with commitment and enjoyment. This has a positive effect as the school seeks to improve its standards. Exclusions have now declined in response to the consistent

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strategies adopted to maintain good behaviour. During the inspection, no incidents of bullying or otherwise aggressive behaviour were noted. Other evidence indicates that the school takes a positive approach in dealing with any such incidents. The sound leadership of the headteacher and the strategies employed to maintain good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning, make a very significant contribution to reducing the potential for disaffection.

- Attendance levels are satisfactory. The attendance of children of non-statutory age reflects the satisfactory levels of the school in general. The school has adopted a range of policies and procedures, which administer and monitor the levels of attendance and punctuality most effectively. Whilst the school is putting in a great deal of effort to improve attendance levels, not all parents are sufficiently responsive.
- The quality of teaching was found to be satisfactory or better in 92% of lessons inspected. It was very good in 23% of lessons; good in 41%; satisfactory in 28% and unsatisfactory in 8% of them.
- The quality of the curriculum is good. The school provides a broad, relevant and balanced curriculum that successfully sustains the interest of pupils across the ability and age ranges. The provision meets the requirements of the NC and the Desirable Outcomes. There is however, a need to improve assessment arrangements and record keeping systems.
- The quality of the support and guidance provided for pupils is good. Provision for pupils with SEN is good and they make good progress towards the targets set in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- The partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions are good. The school is valued and the parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting were, with a few exceptions, positive.
- The quality of the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory. The self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection provides an analytical summary of the progress the school has made on a wide range of issues. Good progress has been made in realising the SDP's current programme of priorities. Some work has been undertaken in relation to monitoring the planning of the curriculum, standards and the quality of teaching, but as yet the arrangements lack a sufficiently coordinated approach to provide the composite picture that is necessary. It is the headteacher who has undertaken most the work relating to monitoring within the classes and the role of curriculum leaders is underdeveloped.
- Whole-school targets are set for KS2 in the core subjects over a period of three years as required. In general these are low for a school that has shown significant improvement in pupil attainment in recent years. The target setting process is currently not sufficiently refined and insufficient use is made of national benchmarking data to challenge the school further when setting its targets. The school does not currently give enough consideration to gender-based performance trends.
- The leadership and efficiency of the school is good. The headteacher has been in post for one year only. He is dedicated, industrious and leads by example. He provides clear leadership and has successfully established an ethos of co-operation and interdependence among staff members. In turn, they are very supportive and value his support and vision for the school. The school functions effectively on a day-to-day basis.

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- The budgetary position is closely scrutinised and the financial resources are very tight. The school provides good value for money.
  - Recent good progress has been made in addressing the issues highlighted for action in the last inspection report.

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

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

- Pupils' standards of achievement were found to be very good in 15% of lessons observed by the inspectors; they were good in 53%; satisfactory in 30% and unsatisfactory in 2% of them.
- The standards achieved by the under-fives in the six areas of learning of the Desirable Outcomes are mostly very good in the nursery and reception classes.
- In KS1, pupils' standards of achievement in the core areas of English and mathematics are good, with satisfactory standards being achieved in science. Standards are good in Welsh as a second language, information technology, history and physical education. Standards are satisfactory in design and technology, geography, art and music.
- In KS2, pupils' standards of achievement are good in English and mathematics and are satisfactory in science. Good standards are achieved in information technology, history and physical education. Standards are satisfactory in Welsh as a second language, design and technology, geography, art and music.
- Standards in religious education were inspected under separate arrangements made with the Diocese of Wrexham.
- In KS1 in 2002, according to the teachers' assessments, 81% of pupils attained L2 or above in the core subjects at the end of the key stage. In 2001 the figure was 72% (Wales 81%; Denbighshire 82.1%) and in 2000 it was 77% (Wales 80%; Denbighshire 83.4%).
- In KS2 in 2002, 62% of pupils at the school attained L4 or above, as determined by task/test results in the core subjects. In 2001 it was 60.3% (Wales 68%; Denbighshire 63.8%) and in 2000 the figure was 53.5% (Wales 63%; Denbighshire 60.1%).
- Good progress has been made in improving pupils' attainment since the last inspection.
- In KS1, the school's results in the NC assessments for 2002 are slightly lower than the national averages (2001) in English, mathematics and science. In KS2, the results for 2002 are slightly higher than the national averages (2001) in each of the core subjects.
- Over recent years, the school's performance in KS1 and in KS2 has been in the bottom 50% of comparable schools in Wales, but above the lowest performing 25%.

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- Over a period of three years, there have been no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls in KS2, but in KS1, girls have consistently performed better than boys.
  - Overall, there is a fairly close match between the assessments made by teachers and test results in KS2.

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

- Both nursery and reception children make good progress in the application of their developing skills in early literacy, early numeracy and ICT across the six areas of learning.
- Generally, pupils' oral skills are good. When responding to questions and making comments, the vast majority express themselves clearly and confidently. All in all, they listen well to their teachers and carry out their instructions accordingly. In both key stages, pupils read a range of texts across the curriculum to a good standard. They adapt their style of writing to suit a range of different contexts and good progress can be observed from year to year.
- In KS1 and in KS2, the pupils apply their numeracy skills well in a wide range of contexts across the curriculum. They record data in a variety of forms and in a number of areas, including science. Standards are good.
- The standards achieved in the use of ICT across the curriculum in both key stages are good. The majority of pupils have good computer skills and make confident use of software to support their learning in subjects across the curriculum.

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

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

The governing body, in consultation with the Diocesan Director of Education, elected to make its own arrangements for the inspection of the pupils' spiritual development.

The pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.

- Pupils' moral development is well fostered both in the curriculum and in the general life of the school. It is a warm and caring Christian community. Staff members promote positive values and pupils are developing a good awareness of right and wrong.
- The school makes a special effort to foster courtesy in pupils and to celebrate their achievements both in activities within school and those that are undertaken outside school. Most pupils take responsibility in a sensible manner. New pupils are helped to settle down with ease.
- Pupils participate in campaigns to raise money for a number of good causes and supporting international charitable aid such as the gift aid sent recently to Romania.

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- Residential visits, inter-school competitions and other extra-curricular activities make a good contribution to the pupils' social development.
  - The school promotes Welsh culture and traditions well and pupils have a good understanding of their own cultural heritage as well as others. The school effectively promotes racial equality and cultural diversity.

## **4.2 Behaviour and attitudes**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good.

- The school has adopted a very good range of policies, procedures and practices, in relation to the behaviour and attitudes of its pupils.
- The vast majority of pupils display a good standard of general behaviour and apply themselves to their studies with commitment and enjoyment. This has a positive effect as the school seeks to improve its standards.
- Pupil exclusions have now declined in response to the consistent strategies adopted to maintain good behaviour and social inclusion. Where exclusions have taken place, these have only been undertaken after all other alternatives were explored and they have been administered correctly.
- The pupils were found to be polite and respectful towards their teachers, support staff and visitors to the school. They are usually kind and supportive of each other, valuing the resources and the property of the school. Many older pupils behave with increasing maturity. This was found to be particularly so in Year 6 (Y6).
- During the inspection, no incidents of bullying or otherwise aggressive behaviour were noted. Other evidence indicates that the school takes a positive approach in dealing with any such incidents.
- The sound leadership of the headteacher and the strategies employed to maintain good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning, make a very significant contribution to reducing the potential for disaffection.

## **4.3 Attendance**

Attendance levels are satisfactory.

- Registers, which are kept very neat and tidy, are administered fully in accordance with the requirements of the National Assembly for Wales (NAW).
- The school has adopted a range of policies and procedures, which administer and monitor the levels of attendance and punctuality most effectively. All absences are properly recorded and investigated thoroughly, and when the occasion demands, the services of the school's education social worker are sought. The school's documentation relating to attendance is very evident.
- The attendance of children of non-statutory age reflects the satisfactory levels of the school in general.
- The school strictly administers the procedures relating to unauthorised absences. Requests for long holidays are refused and absences recorded as unauthorised. Where

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necessary, the school submits a copy of a letter prepared by the Local Education Authority's (LEA) Director of Education to parents indicating concern at the levels of attendance. Whilst the school is putting in a great deal of effort to improve attendance levels, not all parents are sufficiently responsive.

- Whilst there are instances of unpunctuality, these, in general, do not impair unduly on the activities of the school. A late attendance register is maintained; patterns are investigated and letters are sent to parents where necessary.
- The school's commitment to improving levels of attendance is reflected within the detail of its SDP.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

The quality of teaching was found to be satisfactory or better in 92% of lessons inspected. It was very good in 23% of lessons; good in 41%; satisfactory in 28% and unsatisfactory in 8% of them.

#### **Good features**

- The quality of teaching for the under-fives was found to be good or better in all of lessons observed and is securely based on a sound knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.
- Teachers have a good relationship with the pupils and know them and their backgrounds well.
- Where teaching is at its best, teachers give clear, lively presentations and ensure good interaction with the pupils. There is a good balance between pupils working as a class, in small groups, pairs and individually. Lessons are well planned, with appropriate attention being given to continuity and progression. Teachers in the main have high expectations and set challenging tasks. Good support enables the pupils to complete their work and their efforts are praised and encouraged.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the majority of the subjects they teach. Where teachers have a particular expertise, the teaching is of a consistently good quality.
- Staff co-operate well together. They regularly have formal and informal team and whole-school discussions to plan the curriculum and to share ideas. This close co-operation ensures good provision and equal opportunities for all pupils.
- Teachers organize activities and manage tasks efficiently, making good use of time and support staff are utilized well to support the pupils' learning. All teachers provide a stimulating environment in their classrooms that is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

#### **Shortcomings**

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- The lessons where the teaching was found to be satisfactory lacked pace and were often too prescriptive. Unsatisfactory lessons lacked clarity of aims and were not sufficiently demanding of pupils.

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

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is satisfactory.

- The arrangements for assessment and recording are still in their developmental stage.
- Informative baseline assessments are undertaken of the under-fives within a set period of them starting their schooling.
- Opportunities for pupils' assessment are identified in the planning documentation, but are not always used consistently.
- Target setting for individual pupils is becoming more prominent, but is not yet uniformly used across the school.
- A school portfolio is kept of graded work in the core subjects. This arrangement helps to ensure consistency in the allocated NC levels.
- Whilst pupils are aware of the school's expectations, self-evaluation does not feature prominently in the efforts to raise standards.
- Pupils' written work is marked regularly, but does not always offer pupils help in the next stage of their learning.
- All pupils have a record of achievement file. These contain useful information, including samples of their work and records. This file is presented to the individual pupils at a special ceremony at the end of Y6.
- The arrangements for assessing pupils with SEN are good and the information is well used by staff to set targets in pupils' IEPs.
- The reports for the under-fives are of good quality and reflect the requirements of the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.
- The KS1 and KS2 annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements. Parents appreciate the opportunity to discuss their children's report and progress at a formal parents' evening and at other specified times during the year.

## **5.3 Curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is good. The school provides a broad, relevant and balanced curriculum that successfully sustains the interest of pupils across the ability and age ranges. The provision meets the requirements of the NC and the Desirable Outcomes.

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- The quality of planning of the curriculum for the under-fives is good. Emphasis is placed on purposeful and varied activities in each of the six areas that promote the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.
  - In KS1 and KS2 the planning process is methodical and comprehensive, ensuring that pupils have a progression of relevant experiences. The school follows some national schemes to guide the curricular work, but areas are modified to meet the Cwricwlwm Cymreig requirements and school focused activities when appropriate.
  - Curriculum planning is undertaken on a termly and weekly basis. A limited use is made of themes and most work is subject-based. Programmes of study, activities, key skills, resources, ICT opportunities, assessment and classroom observations are noted in the planning documents.
  - The school has made a conscious effort to plan the development of the key skills. These are referred to in the subject schemes of work and in individual teachers' planning documents.
  - In KS2, the school makes use of specialist teaching in some year groups. Where this occurs, it has a positive effect on the teaching and learning.
  - The school has a homework policy and teachers keep to the arrangements. Language and mathematical tasks are set to enhance curricular activities.
  - The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities including a breakfast club. Visitors are invited to the school and educational visits that capture the interest of pupils are arranged. The school has achieved a great deal of success with their creative dance team at the Urdd National Eisteddfod.
  - Equal opportunities are provided for all pupils within the school curriculum and within school activities in general. Support is given to SEN pupils as well as individuals for whom English is an additional language in order to allow them to participate fully in all activities.
  - The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is given a prominent place in the school's provision and a conscientious effort is made to raise pupils' understanding of the Welsh language. An increasing use is made of the Welsh dimension within history and geography. Other subjects such as art and music are as yet not as well developed.
  - There are no pupils at the present time for whom the National Curriculum is modified or disapplied.

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

The quality of the support and guidance provided for pupils is good.

- Pupils are happy in the school and are ready to turn to their teachers and to the ancillary staff for support. All members of staff care for the safety and welfare of the pupils and are always ready to offer them help.

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- The school has a policy on child protection and the teachers are aware of how it should be implemented.
  - Without exception, all pupils have equal access to all the school's activities.
  - The provision for the pupils' Personal and Social Education (PSE) is appropriate and is led by the school's own policy.
  - The school has clear policies on sex education and on health education. The school successfully encourages pupils to be tolerant of other cultures and people.
  - During break times, the pupils are well supervised. Their safety is paramount when they are involved in activities that take them out of school. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy and procedures are clear.
  - There is a designated member of staff responsible for first aid.

### **5.5 Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

The quality of provision is good and pupils make good progress towards the targets set in their IEPs. Their standards of achievement are good in relation to their ability.

- The school's policy on SEN has recently been reviewed and one of its most noteworthy features is its clarity about not discriminating against any pupils' disability.
- Currently, 95 pupils are identified as requiring support. Nine of these are statemented. They are fully integrated into the mainstream classes and receive a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has a strong commitment to the inclusion of its pupils.
- Pupils are placed on the school's SEN register in compliance with the Code of Practice (CoP). The register is updated periodically.
- Baseline assessments help to identify needs at an early stage and diagnostic testing is used effectively in order to identify specific learning difficulties. Careful attention is given to monitoring progress throughout the school and appropriate records are kept.
- The SEN co-ordinator (SENCO), who also has a full time class teaching commitment, provides a clear and positive lead to the school. The administrative work associated with the role is significant and there are very few opportunities for this work to be undertaken within the school day.
- Recently, a SEN support teacher has been employed to work at the school for the equivalent of one and a half days each week, teaching small groups of pupils with special needs on a withdrawal basis. This is an appropriate arrangement; however, there is insufficient funding allocated to buy in support to the level that is required to ensure that pupils are given regular specialist attention.
- Two non-teaching assistants provide support each morning in the KS1 classes where there are pupils on the School Action or School Action Plus stages of the CoP. This is a beneficial arrangement.

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- In-class non-teaching support is also provided for statemented pupils and this is effective. The assistants know the pupils well and contribute significantly to their inclusion into the life and work of the school.
  - IEPs produced by class teachers, with the support and guidance of the SENCO, are of good quality. Targets are in the main quite specific and are well related to pupils' needs. These are reviewed twice annually and parents are accorded every opportunity to be fully involved in the process.
  - Tasks are generally differentiated according to pupils' needs and their progress in the key skills is commensurate with their ability.
  - The governor with responsibility for SEN matters is well informed and is in regular contact with the school.
  - Links with the majority of parents are good as are those with the outside agencies that provide support.

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

The partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions are good.

- The school is valued by parents and their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting were, with a few exceptions, positive.
- A number of parents, relatives and friends of the school, assist in classes, during after-school clubs and on educational visits. The after-school clubs are very popular, are administered and supervised efficiently, providing a valuable service to the pupils and their parents.
- Parents are kept well informed about school events. Reports and parents' evenings are arranged to discuss pupils' progress and staff members are readily available. The induction arrangements for the parents of nursery-aged children are a very good feature. The parents and teachers' association raises a considerable amount of funds for the school and is also a focal point for social events and general support.
- A home-school agreement has been introduced following good consultation with the pupils and their parents.
- The school enjoys a very fruitful and supportive relationship with the clergy and the Diocese of Wrexham. It also extends itself into the local community by holding functions such as the school summer fayre, concerts and other celebratory events to which members of the community are invited. The school has a good relationship with the local town council which has recently made a generous financial donation. Pupils contribute to local music and folk dancing festivals and are also generous in their donations to a number of charities.
- The school has a good partnership with other primary schools in the area, with regular meetings between the headteachers as well as participating in sporting events between pupils. There are sound arrangements in place for the transfer of curricular and personal information to the secondary schools that receive the pupils when they complete their primary phase schooling.

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- A good partnership also exists with the officers and support staff of Denbighshire LEA. Other agencies, such as the Police and Fire Brigade, also have good links with the school.
  - The school provides work experience for pupils from the Blessed Edward Jones High School, which is adjacent, as well as on occasions to students from Llandrillo College. Student teachers from the University College of Wales, Bangor, have also had teaching placements at the school.

## **5.7 Partnership with industry**

The school's partnership with industry is satisfactory.

- Whilst the school does not have a policy for this partnership, it is aware of its importance and has succeeded in integrating a number of visits, such as to the Connah's Quay power station and to local supermarkets, into curriculum related projects.
- Other initiatives include the encouragement of the pupils to save with a credit union that is based on the school premises, the services of which are also available to parents. People of various occupations have also spoken to the pupils concerning their work and this has contributed to their awareness of the world of work.
- Some time ago, the school was successful in securing the award of "Investors in People" and has recently been re-assessed for the continuation of the award. This was successful and has heightened the awareness of the staff concerned as to other management processes and systems, as well as evaluating their own.

# **6. MANAGEMENT**

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

The quality of the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory.

- The self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection provides an analytical summary of the progress the school has made on a wide range of issues.
- The SDP is of good quality and is based on a very comprehensive analysis of the school's position that leads on to a number of current and long-term priorities. The programme is a demanding one, but following detailed discussions in staff, senior management team and governors' meetings, it has widespread ownership and members of staff have responded very well to the challenges set. The priorities outlined are clear, but there are some instances where these would benefit from more quantifiable targets to better assist in the measurement of performance.
- Good progress has been made in realising the SDP's current programme of priorities.
- A self-evaluation policy has recently been approved by the governing body and a self-critical culture is now operating within the school. Some work has been undertaken in

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relation to monitoring the planning of the curriculum, standards and the quality of teaching, but as yet the arrangements lack a sufficiently coordinated approach to provide the composite picture that is necessary. Outcomes are also not always identified with sufficient clarity.

- It is the headteacher who has undertaken most of the work relating to the monitoring of standards within the classes and in this respect the role of curriculum leaders is underdeveloped.
- Whole-school targets are set for KS2 in the core subjects over a period of three years as required. In general these are low for a school that has shown significant improvement in pupil attainment in recent years. The target setting process is currently not sufficiently refined and insufficient use is made of national benchmarking data to challenge the school further when setting its targets.
- The school does not currently give enough consideration to gender-based performance trends.

## **6.2 Leadership and efficiency**

The leadership and efficiency of the school is good.

- The headteacher has been in post for one year only. He is dedicated, industrious and leads by example. He provides clear leadership and has successfully established an ethos of co-operation and interdependence among staff members. In turn, they are very supportive and value his support and vision for the school.
- The school functions effectively on a day-to-day basis.
- The management structure of the school is effective and is an important element in ensuring whole-school improvement. Lines of communication are clear. The school is now at a stage where it would be appropriate to implement its intention to strengthen the composition of the School Management Team (SMT).
- Meetings of the four teams, the SMT and full staff meetings are held on a regular basis according to an agreed agenda. Detailed minutes are kept and staff members have every opportunity to influence the decision-making processes.
- Much effort has recently been put into the preparation of school management and curricular policies. These provide good quality guidance. The task of preparing these, together with the school's schemes of work over a relatively short period of time, has been burdensome and it would be appropriate that in future, any review and updating that is required of these documents be undertaken against a carefully planned programme. There are no policy statements on education for sustainable development and substance misuse.
- Members of staff are aware of their responsibilities as outlined in their recently prepared job descriptions. Curriculum co-ordinators undertake their planning role well, but as indicated earlier in this report, their monitoring role is not as highly developed.
- The governing body reflects a good cross-section of experience and expertise. Governors are very supportive and each has been delegated responsibility as link person for one of the subject areas. The Chairperson of governors visits the school and also holds weekly meetings with the headteacher. This is good practice and will assist in ensuring that the

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governing body not only has a firm understanding of where the school is heading, but will also be more effective in its role as acting as a critical friend.

- A number of sub-committees meet as required and report back to the full governing body. It is neither reasonable nor appropriate that the headteacher undertakes the work of clerking meetings of the governing body.
- The budgetary position is closely scrutinised and the financial resources are very tight. There is little money available to cover any unforeseen circumstances. The school provides good value for money.
- The school conforms to requirements in respect of teaching time. The information contained in the school's prospectus and in the annual report of the governing body also satisfies requirements, but it would be appropriate to provide more detail on the arrangements relating to when children are allowed to start their schooling.

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

Resources are managed efficiently.

- Staffing is adequate and the teachers' qualifications are appropriate for the ages they teach. Learning assistants perform their duties conscientiously and reinforce the teaching.
- Responsibilities for all subject areas have been allocated to curriculum co-ordinators and a beginning has been made on developing their roles to monitor and evaluate the provision and standards of their respective areas.
- In KS2, there is some use of teachers' specialisms in the teaching of music, physical education and Welsh. Pupils are grouped according to ability in Language and mathematics. These arrangements have a positive effect on standards.
- The school has a good professional development policy and teachers have attended a good range of training courses, visiting centres of excellence in other localities to improve their expertise. The commitment of non Welsh-speaking teachers to training courses in Welsh is commendable.
- Resources for learning are adequate overall. The ICT room is well equipped, but attention needs to be given to it being made available to a wider range of pupils.
- Displays throughout the classes and the corridors are of good quality and contribute to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, as well as celebrating the successes of the school.
- The general condition of the building is good and is maintained in good order both inside and out. All parts of the school building are easily accessible for the disabled. There are some loose tiles in places on the school's roof.
- The playground is of a good size for the numbers of pupils, with both hard and green areas for the pupils' use. The security and safety of pupils is a high priority at the beginning and end of the school day and during breaks and lunchtimes.

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- The school campus is generally secure, but one of the school's gates located in a quiet position is not locked and is left open at times.
  - Standards of cleanliness, both inside and outside the building, are very good.

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

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

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

The educational provision for the under-fives taken overall is appropriate and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning. The standards achieved by the nursery children and by the reception children are mostly very good.

Both the reception and nursery children are taught together in small groups that target the different areas of the curriculum. Children in both age groups benefit from a wide range of activities structured according to the six areas of learning and are well matched to their stage of development.

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

The children's language, literacy and communication skills are very good at the nursery and reception stages.

#### **Good features**

##### **Nursery children (3-4 years)**

- The children listen attentively to their teachers, the classroom assistants and their peers. They are very happy to participate in group discussions and their use of vocabulary is developing with increasing fluency. Their understanding of language is supplemented by the effective use of suitable resources prepared by the teaching staff.
- The vast majority of pupils are able to recognise letters, repeat the content of a story and communicate their needs. They recognise that words and pictures have meaning; begin to understand some of the functions of writing and participate with increasing confidence in role-play.

##### **Reception children (4-5 years)**

- The children listen well and respond quickly to the teachers' instructions and guidance. They enjoy listening to stories and can repeat the main elements accurately. They remember simple poems, rhymes and songs. They understand that written symbols have sounds and meaning. They use pencils, crayons and paint to mark for different purposes, with increased accuracy.

#### **Shortcomings**

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- There are no significant shortcomings

## **Personal and social development.**

The children's personal and social development is very good at the nursery and reception stages.

### **Good features**

#### **Nursery children**

- The children have settled very well in both their home and activity groups and have formed a close relationship with other children and adults. They behave appropriately and play and co-operate happily with their friends. They concentrate well for short periods of time and begin to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene.

#### **Reception children**

- The children are able to work both independently and as members of a group. They are able to concentrate on given tasks for a longer period of time and enthusiastically take part in new learning experiences. They are able to choose activities independently and are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Mathematical development**

The children's mathematical development is very good in both age groups.

### **Good features**

#### **Nursery children**

- The nursery children are able to count from 1-10 and can complete simple correlation tasks up to five. They use mathematical language in relevant situations, recognize and create simple patterns and are beginning to sort, compare and count familiar objects.

#### **Reception children**

- Children develop their early mathematical skills through a range of activities including number rhymes, songs, stories and counting games. They can use simple mathematical language relating to size, position and shape, in relevant contexts. They can recognize and recreate basic patterns and sort, match and organize confidently. They are confident in their use of numbers up to ten and above. They understand the role of money and use it within their role-play.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

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

The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good in the nursery and very good in the reception class.

### **Good features**

#### **Nursery children**

- The children are beginning to understand the order of time, talk about themselves and their families, discuss the weather and experiment with materials. They are beginning to use the computer to play simple games. They are also beginning to understand what other people do through their role-play on Noddy and his friends.

#### **Reception children**

- The children make effective use of a variety of experiences to help widen their understanding of the world around them. They are able to predict and evaluate how a yo-yo works and to make simple paper aeroplanes. They use simple mapping skills successfully to support a story and participate well in their role-play on the story of Noddy.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings

## **Physical development**

Both the nursery and reception aged children's physical development is good.

### **Good features**

#### **Nursery children**

- The children are able to participate in simple whole-class activities and are developing an understanding of space. They are beginning to use climbing and riding equipment during their playtime periods. They are able to use a wide variety of small play equipment with increasing control and confidence. They use pencils, crayons, paintbrushes and a variety of building equipment carefully.

#### **Reception children**

- The children use a variety of small equipment with increasing control and confidence. They develop pushing and pulling skills as they steer a number of moving toys. They are aware of how to play carefully with the large play equipment during limited playtime opportunities.

### **Shortcomings**

- Both the nursery and reception children are only given a limited opportunity to develop their physical skills on large play equipment.

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## **Creative development**

The children's creative development is very good in both the nursery and reception classes.

### **Good features**

#### **Nursery children**

- The children take great pleasure in participating in all the creative opportunities set out for them. They use a variety of materials with support and guidance. They respond to and enjoy 'making music' and are able to explain what they are doing. They participate well in role-play activities based on Bob the Builder.

#### **Reception children**

- The children are able to use a variety of materials with increasing independence. They talk about their work and are able to evaluate finished work by talking about what they like best about their creations. They respond and enjoy the rhythm of music and enjoy singing songs and rhymes in a variety of contexts. Bob the Builder inspires a great deal of creative activity in the role-play corner and the children handle a variety of materials with increasing awareness and accuracy.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **English**

Standards achieved in oracy, reading and writing are good in both KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils listen well to the teachers' presentations and to each other. They respond appropriately when answering questions and some individuals offer extended responses. They speak clearly and use appropriate vocabulary.
- Pupils' reading is good across the ability range. On the whole, they read fluently and meaningfully at a level that reflects their ability. Less able pupils respond well to a structured programme of support.
- Writing standards are good with pupils using a variety of linguistic forms and expressing simple ideas in elementary language. Some individuals write in extended forms and with a good degree of accuracy. They use a range of sentence patterns and appropriate vocabulary.
- In KS2, the pupils' oral skills are developing well. They listen well to teachers' presentations and during group discussions. Most pupils respond to the contribution of others and express and justify their opinions. They present dialogues and short playlets with confidence.
- The standard of pupils' reading is good throughout the key stage and across the ability range. The most able pupils read fluently and with expression. They can discuss their favourite authors and the development of characterisation in a novel. They gather information from print-based and electronic sources and use it well in their work.

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- Pupils of lower ability read books that match their ability levels with a good degree of confidence. They can decode unfamiliar words and have positive attitudes to reading.
  - The standards of KS2 pupils' writing are consistently good. They write across a wide range of forms that include stories, letters, diaries, dialogues, poems and reports. They redraft pieces of work using their word processing skills. There is progression in the standard of their writing from year to year.
  - They have an increasing knowledge and understanding of the rudiments of grammar.
  - Most pupils show good control of handwriting and they present their work well.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils make only a limited use of personal and extended writing outside the language scheme used.

### **Mathematics**

Standards are good in KS1 and in KS2.

#### **Good features**

- Early in KS1, pupils have a good awareness of mathematical terminology and recognize and use correctly the symbols for addition and subtraction.
- They use simple rules when working with zero and count in 10s to 100 and other sequences with a good degree of confidence. They have a developing awareness of place value.
- They learn to subtract numbers correctly with the aid of their own number lines and multilink apparatus.
- Older pupils in the key stage work accurately with numbers to 100 and beyond. They have a good understanding of money and simple fractions.
- They recognize and can name correctly a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. They understand the meaning of irregular in a mathematical context and come to appreciate that shapes might look different but still have the same name. They accurately record some of the properties of the shapes given to them and enjoy, in turn, leading the class in oral sessions involving shapes and their properties.
- Their work on the measures is developing well and to a good standard.
- Pupils collect various data and record their findings correctly in simple graphical format.
- In KS2, younger pupils generally make good progress in their understanding of number. They come to use different strategies to add and can round off numbers accurately.
- Pupils in this key stage come to use the four operations successfully and have a firm grasp of place value.
- Older pupils are able to work well with fractions. They recognize patterns in numerators and denominators and can add on the appropriate fraction to make the next whole number quite skillfully.
- They are able to correctly calculate area and perimeters.

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- They have a good level of understanding of percentages and can apply this to real life situations. They realise that decimal, fractional and percentage forms can be of equivalent value.
  - Practical activities have been instrumental in securing a firm understanding of reflective and rotational symmetry. Complex symmetrical patterns can be completed with accuracy.
  - Pupils use their understanding of co-ordinates to locate positions accurately.
  - They have a sound understanding of capacity and can read various scales accurately.
  - They collect, represent and can interpret data to a good standard.

### **Shortcomings**

- A significant minority of KS2 pupils do not take sufficient pride and care in the presentation of their work.

### **Science**

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

#### **Good features**

- The majority of pupils in both key stages show positive attitudes towards their work in science. They have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the topics they have studied.
- In KS1, younger pupils come to be able to group various musical instruments according to the sounds they make.
- Older pupils in this key stage come to know that there are different types of foods and recognize the importance of a balanced diet. They have a good understanding of the relevant scientific terminology.
- They can name common types of materials and group them according to whether they are natural or man made.
- They know that pushing and pulling are different examples of forces that can change the shape of an object.
- They appreciate that there are different sources of light and that light is needed to see things.
- Younger pupils in KS2 enjoy presentations from visitors; they listen attentively and respond well to the questions asked of them.
- In their investigations into materials, pupils come to understand that some materials are better insulators than others.
- Older KS2 pupils have undertaken an investigation into how much air is in various types of soils. With the support of their teacher, most can work their way through the investigation in a systematic way.
- By the end of KS2, pupils are developing their understanding that mixing materials can cause a change and that some changes can be reversed.
- They also know how to systematically separate materials using appropriate apparatus.

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- They have a sound understanding of the solar system.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1, pupils' previous work indicates that they require too much assistance in recording their work.
- Pupils in KS2 do not make sufficient use of their own skills when planning an investigation and their ability to record observations independently is limited.
- Some pupils are not sufficiently focussed on their work when undertaking investigations. Consequently, they are not always careful enough about their observations.

## **Welsh (second language)**

The standards achieved by pupils in Welsh as a second language are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

Oral standards are good in both key stages. Reading standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2. Standards of writing are satisfactory in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- In general, with the support of their teachers, the majority of pupils can speak, read and write in Welsh to the standard expected of their ages. The activities to promote the use of everyday language in the school are examples of good practice.
- Pupils in KS1 listen well. They have acquired a suitable vocabulary, can ask elementary questions and answer them confidently. They are able to hold simple conversations with each other and with adults, including asking questions.
- They can read simple stories correctly, using voice intonation to convey meaning.
- The pupils in KS2 have successfully built on oral skills learnt in previous years and can converse sensibly on a range of subjects within familiar contexts. They listen well. Their vocabulary and range of language patterns are increasing and they use both with confidence.
- They can independently read simple text correctly and with meaning, while the highest-achieving pupils at the top of the key stage read works published for learners clearly, fluently and with meaning.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1, pupils do not write in complete sentences on a regular enough basis.
- In general, KS2 pupils do not voluntarily choose to read Welsh books.
- At the top of KS2, pupils depend too much on replacing words and phrases from existing pieces of work, without sufficient effort to write work independently.

## **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in both key stages.

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### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 are able to offer ideas and show satisfactory designing skills. Some can talk quite meaningfully about their work.
- They work well together in groups as they set about their work with a range of materials.
- They have researched various types of fruit and know how to systematically prepare a fruit salad. They appreciate the importance of hygiene when handling foodstuffs.
- In KS2, pupils' skills are developing by working with a variety of materials and by taking advantage of curricular links in subjects such as science, history, geography and art.
- They are able to discuss their ideas about designing and making torches with a good degree of understanding.
- They place appropriate emphasis on the appearance of the finished product.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' skills are not developing consistently enough across both the key stages.
- They are not sufficiently experienced in using ICT in their work.
- Older pupils' do not undertake enough research into their topics and are not sufficiently thorough in their evaluations.

## **Information technology**

Standards in information technology are good in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, the pupils are able to use a wide range of software, including word processing, art programmes, data handling, creation of graphs and CD-ROMs to support specific learning in a number of subject areas.
- They are able to use a number of word processing features to edit and improve their work and learn early how to print, save, and load their own work.
- In KS2, most of the pupils use information technology equipment confidently and are able to make appropriate use of the resources available on the school network.
- They use a wide range of software to support their learning in a number of subject areas, for example, spreadsheets in geography, data handling to support history, English and Welsh.
- Pupils access the Internet confidently, under guidance, to search for resources to support their learning across the curriculum.

### **Shortcomings**

- In general, the pupils do not make sufficient use of modelling software such as LOGO and simulation programmes.

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## History

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

### Good features

- As part of their studies, pupils in both key stages undertake visits to places of historical interest and this significantly aids their understanding of history.
- Pupils in KS1 are developing a sound understanding of chronology. They make regular and effective use of time lines.
- They use terms such as *old* and *long time ago* to correctly describe the passage of time; they are also aware of how life has changed over a period of time.
- They know that Laura Ashley was famous for her contribution to fashion around the world and created work for people in mid-Wales.
- Pupils listen carefully and with obvious enjoyment to a presentation by a guest speaker. They ask pertinent questions and are appropriately stimulated by the artefacts brought in to be examined.
- Pupils' use of primary and secondary source evidence in KS2 is good and is particularly evident in the work undertaken on the Victorians and World War Two. They recognize similarities and differences and appreciate that sources contain differing opinions and points of view.
- They are able to correctly interpret what they have seen in old photographs to gain an understanding of past historical characters such as Lord Shaftesbury and Doctor Barnardo. They are able to discuss with authority the contribution such individuals have made to history and society in general.
- Their studies give them a clear focus to enhance their organisational and communication skills through structured work, extended writing, artwork and the collection of artefacts for display.

### Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## Geography

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

### Good features

- In KS1, pupils have come to be able identify the location of their own home by learning their address.
- They can produce a pictorial map and can draw plans of their classroom to a satisfactory standard.
- A good number can provide basic directions.

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- In their study of a contrasting locality in a less economically developed country, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of everyday life of a family in Tocuaro, Mexico.
  - In KS2, pupils' can identify simple map symbols correctly and have a sound understanding of the points of the compass.
  - They can work quite accurately with four figure grid references and have a satisfactory understanding of the significance of contour lines.
  - Younger KS2 pupils are aware of some of the similarities and differences between Rhyl and Conwy.
  - Older KS2 pupils are aware of some of the physical and economic factors that lie behind the differences between their own area and the Caribbean island of St Lucia.

### **Shortcomings**

- In both key stages, insufficient fieldwork is undertaken by pupils to gather first hand information and enhance their skills.
- In general, pupils do not deal with geographical topics in sufficient depth.
- The work of pupils in KS2 does not reflect a sufficient awareness of issues relating to sustainable development.

### **Art**

Standards in art are satisfactory in KS1 and KS2

#### **Good features**

- In general, the pupils in both key stages learn and use a range of techniques, media and materials to make images and artefacts, experimenting with the visual language of art and craft.
- In KS1, the pupils' use of art techniques is generally good. They benefit from a range of experiences and produce work of a good standard in a range of media, including ICT, to produce images and patterns.
- In KS2, the pupils show an understanding of art from different cultures and work diligently to emulate the cultural features in their own work, experimenting with line, tone and colour.
- Some pupils show knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists from within and outside Wales. They use the Internet as an information source on such artists and produce pictures of good quality when emulating their work, using a range of techniques to achieve this.
- They draw and experiment in sketchbooks and work well to improve their range of techniques. They study line and tone and experiment with a range of ideas to enhance their own work.
- The pupils' work and experiences have been enriched by their involvement with externally based projects and the partnership with an artist in residence.

#### **Shortcomings**

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- The pupils' work in printing and pottery is not sufficiently developed.
  - In KS1, and in some classes in KS2, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists is not sufficiently developed.
  - In KS2, the pupils' ability to evaluate their own work, and the work of other artists, is not sufficiently developed.

## **Music**

Standards achieved are satisfactory in both KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- KS1 pupils are able to sing a range of songs with increasing accuracy and are able to recall a variety of simple songs and musical patterns with enthusiasm and enjoyment.
- They can investigate a range of sounds that can be made with their feet, hands and by blowing across the mouth of a bottle in an attempt to understand how a flute works. They can create and then perform a simple sequence.
- Pupils in KS2 listen attentively to music by a variety of composers. The majority are able to discriminate between vocal and instrumental sounds and use the correct terminology in their responses.
- During assembly, pupils are able to sing with increasing control and accuracy showing an understanding of mood, pitch and rhythm. This is also evident during their class work where they show an awareness of correct breathing technique, control and discipline.
- They have an appropriate level of knowledge about some famous composers.
- Pupils are beginning to compose sequences through dance, rhythm and whole class activities.

### **Shortcomings**

- In both key stages, the pupils' ability in the use of tuned instruments has not yet been sufficiently developed.
- Pupils have not yet developed the ability to record their compositions by using notation or suitable symbols.

## **Physical education**

It was not possible to observe any athletics, games or outdoor activities during the inspection. Evidence was seen to substantiate the width and variety covered by the School's scheme of work. KS2 pupils attend a residential course at an outdoor pursuits centre and participate in a good range of activities.

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

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### **Good features**

- Pupils listen well and work hard in their lessons and this is an important factor in the good progress they make.
- Pupils in both key stages have a good understanding of the way their bodies respond to exercise and the need to warm up for activities.
- KS1 pupils use space well as they move around the hall by walking, running and hopping in warm up sessions.
- They have sound control over their bodies and they succeed in participating in a variety of movements that require a change of direction, pace and shape creation at different levels.
- In gymnastics, pupils perform with confidence and use apparatus in a safe manner.
- In KS2, following a stimulus, pupils respond with imagination to the challenge of creating dance sequences.
- They show a good awareness of the space around them and observe the performances of one another, evaluating them effectively.
- Pupils make very good progress in developing their gymnastic skills and transfer skilfully their floor work to equipment such as benches. They make very good use of their evaluating skills and find ways of enhancing their performance. As in the earlier key stage, equipment and apparatus is handled safely.
- Boys and girls have equal access to the physical education curriculum and there are no marked differences in their standards of achievement.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Religious education**

The governing body, in consultation with the Diocesan Director of Education, elected to make its own arrangements for the inspection of religious education.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

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

Following the inspection held in the Summer Term of 1997, the following were identified as key issues for action:

- improve standards of achievement in history, geography and music and in aspects of Welsh and design and technology in both key stages, and in science in KS2;

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- set firm targets to improve pupils' achievement in subjects where standards are presently no more than satisfactory;
  - define a manageable set of priorities which is directly linked to raising the quality and standards of work in a school development plan;
  - improve curriculum planning to ensure that the NC requirements are fully met;
  - develop improved and consistent whole-school procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress, including the use of IEPs for SEN pupils, building on the good practice in the nursery class;
  - implement a planned programme of professional development for staff:
    - to improve subject knowledge in science, music, art, history and geography,
    - to ensure more effective methods of classroom management,
    - to strengthen ways of developing pupils' cultural awareness;
  - establish consistent good standards of behaviour in lessons and around the school;
  - ensure that there is regular monitoring of the quality and standards of work and that there are firm arrangements for evaluating success;
  - attend to non-compliance with statutory requirements in respect of attendance, publication on NC test results information and provision of a prospectus.

Since the last inspection, the school has seen a significant improvement in its standards. None of the subject areas were found by the inspectors to have standards that are unsatisfactory in either of the key stages. Standards in English, mathematics, information technology, history and physical education have all improved from satisfactory to good in both key stages, together with Welsh as a second language in KS1. Standards in science remain satisfactory.

The school has a comprehensive SDP that is linked directly to raising the quality of provision and standards.

The quality of curriculum planning is good and the NC requirements are being met.

Assessment and recording of pupils' progress is a developing feature, but still needs to be improved. IEPs are in place for all pupils.

The professional development of staff is a noteworthy feature of the school and teachers in the main have a sound understanding of subject knowledge. Much effort has and is being put into the management of behaviour both in classes and around the school. The headteacher has been instrumental in ensuring that the behaviour of the vast majority of the school's pupils is good and there are effective strategies in place to support the school's efforts. Pupils have a good awareness and understanding of other cultures and their own heritage.

The monitoring of standards is developing and there is significant good practice being undertaken. There is a need now however, for a more coordinated approach to this aspect of the work.

The school complies with all the statutory requirements.

## **8.2 Key issues for action**

There is a need to:

- continue with the school's efforts to improve standards by attending to the shortcomings noted under the subject headings of this report;
- improve the school's assessment arrangements and record keeping systems;
- provide a more co-ordinated approach to the monitoring of standards and further develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators;
- set more challenging targets for the core subject areas and give greater consideration to gender based differences in performance, especially in KS1;
- improve school attendance levels by eliminating unnecessary absences;
- continue with the good practice in maintaining good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Ysgol Mair RC Primary School
School type	Voluntary Aided
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	St Margaret's Drive Rhyl Denbighshire.
Post-Code	LL18 2HY
Telephone Number	(01745) 350762
Headteacher	Mr S Plunkett
Date of appointment	January 2002
Chair of Governors / Appropriate Authority	Mrs G Greenland.
Registered Inspector	Mr D M Cray
Dates of inspection	28 – 31 January 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	16	54	50	50	52	50	63	61	396

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	14	4	16.3

<i>Staffing information</i>
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Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	26.7:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	5.15:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27.2
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1:1

**Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection**

Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
1 Spring	90.2%	90.8%	92.8%	91.9%
2 Summer	90.1%	91.1%	92.6%	91.9%
3 Autumn	89.1%	93.1%	92.6%	92.25%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	23%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	10

**C. Results of National Curriculum assessments.**

**END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2002**

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2002		Number of pupils in Y2: 54						
		Percentage of pupils at each level						
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School		6	13	79	2	
		National		4	13	62	21	
Reading	Teacher Assessment	School		4	15	66	15	
		National		4	13	54	29	
Writing	Teacher Assessment	School		6	17	74	2	
		National		5	13	70	12	
Oracy	Teacher Assessment	School		4	15	79	2	
		National		3	11	63	23	
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School			15	71	13	
		National		2	9	60	29	
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School			15	83		
		National		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: | 81% | In Wales: | 81%

D Excepted or disapplied under Sections 364 or 365 of the Education Act 1996.  
W Working towards level 1

**END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2002.**

<b>National Curriculum Assessments KS 2 Results: 2002</b>	Number of pupils in Y6:66
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Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher Assessment	School								30	62	8	
		National					1	1	6	19	48	25	
	Test/Task	School								17	50	33	
		National		2	1	1			5	14	47	30	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School								24	64	12	
		National						1	4	20	47	28	
	Task/Test	School								33	55	12	
		National		2	1	1			4	18	42	32	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School								12	79	9	
		National	1						3	15	52	29	
	Task/Test	School								12	67	21	
		National		2		1			2	13	51	31	

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

by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	64%	In the school:	62%
In Wales:	68%	In Wales:	68%

- D Excepted or disappplied under Sections 364 or 365 of the Education Act 1996.  
A Pupils who have failed to register a level due to absence.  
N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence.  
B Pupils not entered for the tests because they are working outside the set levels of the tests.  
W Pupils who are working towards level 1.

## D. The evidence base of the inspection

- The team of five inspectors inspected work in all classes. Between them they spent eighteen full days at the school;
- pre-inspection meetings were held with governors, staff and parents;
- a range of documentation produced by the school was examined, including examples of work by the pupils across the curriculum in the early years and the two key stages;
- ninety eight lessons or sessions were observed;
- pupils were listened to reading and were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum;
- school registers were inspected;
- discussions were held with the headteacher and school staff relating to curricular and management matters;
- minutes of governors' and staff meetings were examined as well as documents relating to the school's financial matters;
- pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school, and during breaks;
- thirteen parents were present at the pre-inspection meeting and 99( 30%) questionnaires were returned;

- a post-inspection meeting was held with the staff and governing body.

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

<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Aspect Responsibilities</b>	<b>Subject Responsibilities</b>
Mr D M Cray	RgI	1; 2; 3.1; 3.2; 5.5; 6.1; 6.2; 8.1; 8.2	Mathematics; science; geography.
Mrs O M Davies	Team	5.3; 5.4.	The early years; English; music.
Mr T Tomos	Team	5.1; 6.3.	Welsh (second language); information technology; art
Mr D K Davies	Team	4.1; 5.2.	Design and technology; history; physical education.
Mr W Owen	Lay	4.2; 4.3; 5.6; 5.7.	

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