

**Inspection under Section 28 of the
Education Act 2005**

**Marlborough Infant School
Marlborough Road
Cardiff
CF23 5BU**

School Number: 6812036

Date of Inspection: 24/10/06

by

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Marlborough Infant School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Marlborough Infant School took place between 24/10/06 and 26/10/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Stephanie James undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Marlborough Infant School is a community school that serves an inner-city area of Cardiff. The majority of pupils live in the Roath and Penylan neighbourhoods and come from the full range of social and economic backgrounds. The school describes its intake as comprising the full range of ability and the area it serves as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Children are admitted to the nursery in the September after their third birthday and most of them transfer to the neighbouring junior school at the age of seven. Information from baseline assessments shows that children's attainment on entry to school is broadly average. Data on pupil mobility shows that approximately 12 per cent of pupils either left or joined the school during the last two years.

2. There are currently 220 pupils on roll, including 50 children who attend the nursery part-time. The majority of these children enter the reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Seventy-five per cent of pupils come from homes where the predominant language spoken is English. Approximately 25 per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and are learning English as an additional language. No pupil speaks Welsh as a first language. Approximately 10 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the average for Wales of around 20 per cent. Ten per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs (SEN), which is below the national average of approximately 20 per cent. Six pupils who live outside the immediate catchment area attend a specialist resource base in the school that caters for pupils with statements of SEN. There have been no major changes in the nature of the school since the last inspection in November 2000.

The school's priorities and targets

3. The school's vision statement is as follows:

"By the time they leave this school, we want our children to be literate, numerate and have a love of learning. We want them to be happy, confident individuals who respect others and are socially and emotionally well adjusted."

4. Priorities in the School Improvement Plan for the current academic year are to:

- Continue to develop to its full potential the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in all subject areas;
- Increase pupils' involvement in planning for improvement in their work or behaviour;
- Improve the learning and teaching of mathematics from Reception to year 2;
- Ensure more outdoor activities are incorporated in the science scheme of work;
- Raise the level of achievement of pupils with SEN through a more structured approach to teaching the skills they need to meet targets in their Individual Education Plans.

Summary

5. Marlborough Infant School is a caring school that successfully achieves its main aim of helping children to become literate and numerate, happy, confident individuals who respect others and are socially and emotionally well adjusted.

Table of grades awarded

Key question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	3
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	3
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	2
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	3
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	3
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

6. Standards of achievement in the lessons observed in the subjects and areas of learning chosen for inspection were:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	92%	4%	4%	0%

7. Pupils make steady progress as they move through the school and most achieve the levels expected for their age at the end of key stage 1, regardless of their linguistic or ethnic background. There is evidence of some under-achievement, however, amongst more able pupils.

8. The majority of pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) both in mainstream school and in the Specialist Resource Base (SRB) make good progress and achieve well in relation to their abilities. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well if they attend regularly.

9. In the early years, overall standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Areas of learning for the under-fives	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

10. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

11. Children under five make good progress and achieve good standards, with no important shortcomings, in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy and ICT (Information and Communications Technology) through their activities in all six areas of learning.

12. In key stage 1, overall standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Subject	Key Stage 1
Science	2
Information technology	4
Geography	2
Art	2
Music	2

13. In key stage 1, pupils' standards and progress in their use of the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy across the curriculum have good features and no important shortcomings. Their use of ICT and Welsh in their work across the curriculum has some good features, but shortcomings in important areas. The standard of presentation of pupils' work in all subjects is good.

14. At the end of key stage 1, National Curriculum (NC) assessment results for 2006 were broadly in line with the figures for Cardiff and Wales. Eighty per cent of all pupils achieved level 2 or above in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science in comparison with 81 per cent in Wales. The percentage of more able pupils achieving the higher level 3 was below the Wales and Cardiff figures.

15. Pupils' personal, social, moral and wider development is good, but pupils have too few opportunities to use their initiative and make their own choices.

16. Overall, pupils' behaviour throughout the school is good and they demonstrate care and consideration for others. Occasionally, pupils in key stage 1 find it difficult to maintain motivation and sometimes become distracted from their work. Children under five demonstrate good standards of behaviour. They work and play with enjoyment and enthusiasm.

17. Pupils are punctual and keen to attend school. However, the governing body is rightly concerned about the number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. This has an adverse impact on the continuity of pupils' formal education, on pupils' achievement and on overall rates of attendance for the school.

18. Pupils have a very good understanding and respect for diversity within the school and within the wider society. The school successfully prepares pupils to play an active role in their local community.

The quality of education and training

19. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	64%	33%	3%	0%

20. In all classes, the relationship between teachers and pupils is characterised by mutual respect. The majority of lessons are well paced, varied and successful in maintaining pupils' interest and attention. In a significant minority of lessons, however, the pace is too slow and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to work independently, creatively or to solve problems.

21. Teachers have good knowledge of most of the subjects they teach. They have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. Some teachers lack confidence in using ICT to enhance their lessons and in promoting the use of Welsh throughout the day.

22. Teachers plan very well together. Series of lessons have clear objectives and are well sequenced and structured. Teaching assistants are well briefed so that they can maximise their contribution to pupils' learning. The consistent quality of planning between classes means that equality of opportunity is ensured for all pupils.

23. In the mainstream school and in the SRB, teachers generally modify tasks effectively to enable pupils with SEN to participate fully in the lesson. Teachers do not so effectively meet the needs of more able and talented pupils by providing tasks that challenge and extend them.

24. The quality of assessment has good features and no important shortcomings. Consistent and comprehensive procedures ensure that pupils' progress is accurately assessed. Reports to parents are informative and give a detailed picture of progress, social skills and attitudes to learning. There are formal and informal opportunities for parents to visit and discuss their children's progress.

25. The school's curriculum successfully reflects the aims of the school and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development well. There are appropriate schemes of work for all subjects. Some of these schemes, and the planning for ICT and bilingualism across the curriculum, have not yet had time to become embedded and reflected in pupils' standards of achievement.

26. Educational visits, and the expertise of members of the local community, make a good contribution to pupils' learning in many curriculum areas.

27. The quality of care, support and guidance for all pupils is consistently good with no important shortcomings. All pupils are well cared for and appropriate support programmes are in place to ensure any specific needs are sensitively met. The quality of the provision for pupils with SEN is good. The school works well in partnership with parents and carers.

28. All staff work in pupils' best interests to safeguard their welfare. The head teacher's monitoring of attendance and punctuality is exemplary and the academic performance of pupils is also monitored carefully. The school successfully promotes healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle.

29. The school has clear policies and procedures for child protection and to promote health and safety. Every reasonable measure is taken to ensure staff and pupils work in a safe and secure environment.

30. The school really values the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and promotes good race relations extremely well. These are outstanding features of the school's provision.

Leadership and management

31. The school has a lengthy vision statement and a set of aims that are understood by staff and governors. A genuine sense of teamwork exists among the staff.

32. The head teacher is very caring and committed to the school and deals very efficiently with administrative issues. The acting deputy head teacher has only been in post since September 2006. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) joined the senior management team (SMT) at the same time. Their roles on the SMT are therefore not yet fully agreed or established. Subject leaders oversee standards and provision in all curriculum areas.

33. There are good arrangements in place to review and monitor the performance of members of the teaching staff and to identify training needs. Staff development has had a positive impact on individual teachers and members of the support staff.

34. Governors work effectively for the good of the school. The governing body is well informed, supportive and is increasingly active in school affairs.

35. Self-evaluation processes effectively identify relevant areas for development, such as the need to improve standards in bilingualism and use of ICT. However, the self-evaluation process is not yet sufficiently embedded to have had a significant impact on standards in those areas.

36. Governors and all members of staff are fully and actively involved in the self-evaluation process. Pupils annually complete questionnaires about their perceptions of the school and parents are also surveyed on their opinions.

37. Priorities for development focus on improving standards. The head teacher and governors ensure that all identified priorities are well resourced. Some goals for development over recent years have been achieved, but the outcomes of recent improvement plans have not yet had a significant impact on standards in information technology and use of ICT and Welsh across the curriculum.

38. The school's self-evaluation report is detailed and generally accurate in its assessment of the school's strengths and areas for development. Issues identified by

the school as requiring further attention are similar to those identified by the inspection team. Most priorities set in previous improvement plans have been met.

39. The school is well staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and support staff who are deployed well.

40. The spacious accommodation provides a good range of facilities for teaching and learning. The school recognises the need to develop further the quality of outdoor play areas.

41. The school has sufficient good quality resources for all subjects. A new computer suite has recently been installed but has not been established long enough to have a positive impact on standards in information technology.

42. The use of resources is regularly reviewed so that the school gives good value for money. Overall, the school has made good progress with some shortcomings since the last inspection.

Recommendations

- R1 Improve standards in information technology;
- R2 Develop and improve pupils' key skills of using Welsh and ICT in all subjects across the curriculum;
- R3 Provide a higher level of challenge for more able pupils so that they achieve their full potential;
- R4 Provide pupils with more opportunities to make choices, engage in problem-solving tasks and work independently;
- R5 Develop further the role of the senior management team.

Note The school has identified recommendations 1, 2 and 4 as areas for development either in its current School Improvement Plan or in the Self-Evaluation Report it produced prior to the inspection.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

43. The inspection team does not agree with the school's self-evaluation of grade 2 for this key question. Although standards are good in five of the six subjects inspected and in pupils' personal and social skills, there are shortcomings in the standards achieved in information technology and use of bilingualism and ICT across the curriculum.

44. Standards of achievement in the lessons observed in the subjects and areas of learning chosen for inspection were:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	92%	4%	4%	0%

45. Ninety-two per cent of standards in lessons observed were judged to be grade 2, which is well above the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2007 that 65 per cent of standards should be grade 2 or above. Standards in 96 per cent of lessons were grade 3 or above, which is a little below the Welsh Assembly Government's target that standards should be at least grade 3 or above in 98 per cent of lessons by 2007.

46. Information from baseline assessments shows that children's attainment on entry to school is broadly in line with, or a little higher than, national and Local Education Authority (LEA) averages. Pupils make steady progress as they move through the school and most achieve the levels expected for their age at the end of key stage 1, regardless of their linguistic or ethnic background. There is evidence of some under-achievement, however, amongst more able pupils.

47. The majority of pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the mainstream school make good progress and achieve well. They reach the expected level 2 at the end of key stage 1 as a result of the school's effective early intervention and support programme. Pupils with SEN in the Specialist Resource Base (SRB) make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and achieve well in relation to their abilities.

48. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well if they attend regularly. The majority of these pupils achieve levels comparable with their English-speaking peers in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science by the end of key stage 1. With some exceptions, they take a little more time to develop their writing skills to a similar level. Most of them handle subject specific language well, in context.

49. In the early years, overall standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Areas of learning for the under-fives	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

50. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

51. Children under five make good progress and achieve good standards, with no important shortcomings, in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy and ICT when engaged in activities in all six areas of learning.

52. In key stage 1, overall standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key Stage 1
Science	2
Information technology	4
Geography	2
Art	2
Music	2

53. In key stage 1, pupils' standards and progress in their use of the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy across the curriculum have good features and no important shortcomings. In their use of ICT there are some good features, but shortcomings in important areas. The standard of presentation of pupils' work in all subjects is good.

54. With the exception of one class, pupils make too little use of bilingual skills in Welsh. They show insufficient progression in their ability to communicate bilingually as they move through the school. In key stage 1, their progress in Welsh speaking, reading and writing is inconsistent. The school has recognised that Welsh/English bilingual competence is not achieved by most pupils and has identified this as an area for improvement.

55. In key stage 1, 2006 National Curriculum (NC) assessment results were broadly in line with national and Cardiff figures if pupils with statements of SEN are included. Eighty per cent of all pupils achieved level 2 or above in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science in comparison with 81 per cent in Wales. If the results of pupils with statements of SEN are excluded from the figures, the percentage of pupils attaining level 2 or above is 86 per cent, which is above the local and national averages. The percentage of more able pupils achieving the higher level 3 was 10 per cent below the Wales and Cardiff figures in English, 4 per cent

below in mathematics and 13 per cent below in science. Results in 2006 were not as good as those in 2005 because of the different balance between numbers of boys and girls in each year group.

56. When the 2006 results are compared with those of other schools that have a similar socio-economic profile (0 to 10 per cent of pupils being eligible for free school meals), pupils' results were below average in each of the three core subjects. However, factors such as 12 per cent pupil mobility and the number of pupils with statements of SEN or English as an additional language affect the school's results to some extent.

57. There are no significant differences in the patterns of performance of boys and girls with regard to those achieving level 2 at the end of key stage 1. In 2006, boys performed better than girls in English and mathematics but girls did better than boys in science. However, the changing balance between the numbers of boys and girls in each year group does affect the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 each year. In 2005, those achieving level 3 in English was 2 per cent above the national figure, 11 per cent above in mathematics and 4 per cent below in science. There were eleven more girls than boys in 2005 and five more boys than girls in 2006. This imbalance between the number of boys and girls in each year group explains the dip in the numbers gaining level 3 in this year's results when compared with 2005.

58. Overall trends in performance over the four years from 2003 to 2006 show that results at the end of key stage 1 have slightly declined in English, fluctuated in mathematics and increased slightly in science. However, the number of pupils with English as an additional language entering school directly into year 2 also increased during that time, affecting overall results to some extent.

59. In most subjects and areas of learning, pupils make expected progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills and applying them to new areas of learning.

60. Pupils usually understand the objectives of lessons and are generally aware of their individual strengths and weaknesses. The school has, however, correctly identified the need for pupils to be more involved in the target setting process in order for them to have a greater understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.

61. Most pupils make expected progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage of learning. However, some pupils, particularly the more able, could complete a greater amount of work in the time available and engage in more demanding tasks that challenge and extend them.

62. Pupils make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Their behaviour throughout the school is good and they demonstrate care and consideration for others. A clear code of conduct exists and pupils understand what is expected of them. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with teaching and support staff and are friendly and welcoming to visitors.

63. Good features outweigh some shortcomings in pupils' motivation, their attitudes towards learning and their capacity to work independently and this is frequently related to the quality of teaching. When lessons proceed at a brisk pace and pupils are suitably challenged, they show enthusiasm for learning, are well motivated and able to sustain concentration.

64. On some occasions, particularly when the pace of lessons is too slow, when they have to sit inactive for too long or when tasks are not well suited to their needs and abilities, pupils find it difficult to concentrate and maintain motivation. Therefore, they sometimes become distracted from their work.

65. Children under five demonstrate good standards of behaviour, are well motivated and approach their work and play with enjoyment and enthusiasm.

66. Attendance rates average 93 per cent and pupils are punctual and keen to attend school. Registration sessions and lessons start promptly and pupils settle quickly.

67. A significant number of pupils, some 12 per cent of the school roll, are absent due to extended heritage visits during the school year. The governing body is rightly concerned about the number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. This has an adverse impact on the continuity of pupils' formal education, on pupils' achievement and on overall rates of attendance for the school.

68. The school complies with attendance requirements set out in the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99, *Pupil Support and Social Inclusion*.

69. In a significant number of lessons, pupils take too few opportunities to develop the capacity to work independently, use their own initiative and make their own choices. On those occasions when pupils are given the opportunity to work independently, in pairs or in groups, they organise themselves well, work co-operatively together and ensure everyone in the group is included and contributes.

70. Pupils' social, moral and wider development is good. The positive ethos, the moral input of collective worship and the supportive relationships in the school help pupils develop a secure set of personal values to guide them.

71. Pupils have a very good understanding and respect for diversity within the school and within society. They feel strongly that everyone should be treated equally, fairly and without discrimination.

72. The school successfully prepares pupils to play an active role within their local community and good use is made of the locality as a learning resource. Pupils regularly serve the community by supporting a range of civic, cultural, environmental and charitable projects.

The quality of education and training

Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

73. The inspection team does not agree with the school's self-evaluation of grade 2 for this key question. Although the quality of teaching has no important shortcomings in about two thirds of lessons, there are some shortcomings in one third of sessions observed.

74. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	64%	33%	3%	0%

75. In the Early Years and year 1, the quality of teaching is generally good with no important shortcomings. The quality of teaching during teachers' planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time is consistently good with no important shortcomings. In year 2, the overall quality of teaching is less consistent.

76. In all classes, the relationship between teachers and pupils is characterised by mutual respect. Teachers treat pupils fairly and make clear their expectations of good behaviour. They employ a range of strategies and resources that are carefully prepared and well organised in order to motivate and interest pupils.

77. The majority of lessons are well paced, varied and successful in maintaining pupils' interest and attention. This is especially the case in practical investigations in subjects such as science. In these lessons, teachers often use 'open' questions that really get pupils thinking creatively and they challenge them to explain and justify their ideas.

78. In a significant minority of lessons, however, the pace is too slow and pupils have to sit for too long. They are not always given sufficient opportunities to work independently, creatively or to solve problems. Though always well presented, worksheets are used too frequently and sometimes constrain pupils who could rise to a greater challenge. The school has rightly identified the need to develop pupils' independent learning through problem-solving and creative activities as an area for development.

79. Teachers have good knowledge of most of the subjects they teach and are usually skilled at making the content understandable to young pupils. They have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language and successfully encourage them to express their ideas. It is a strength of the school that teachers enable these pupils to speak confidently and that their peers listen attentively to them.

80. Some teachers lack confidence in using ICT to enhance their lessons. They do not yet, for example, use the full potential of the interactive whiteboard to arouse

curiosity and reinforce pupils' understanding. Some of them also lack confidence in developing pupils' skills in using ICT. The school has identified this as a priority for development in its current School Improvement Plan (SIP).

81. The quality of teachers' weekly planning is good. Series of lessons have clear objectives and are well sequenced and structured. This is a result of the close collaboration in planning between teachers in parallel classes within each year group. Teachers share the learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of the majority of lessons so that they know what they are expected to do. Teaching assistants are well briefed so that they maximise their contribution to pupils' learning.

82. Equality of opportunity is ensured for all pupils in the mainstream school. Team planning within year groups secures access to the same curriculum content for pupils of a similar age. Effective support from the EMAS (Ethnic Minorities Achievement Service) teacher ensures that pupils learning English as an additional language benefit from the same opportunities as their peers.

83. Teachers do not plan so well for developing pupils' bilingual needs in Welsh, with the result that pupils' progress in using Welsh regularly in meaningful contexts is inconsistent. Most teachers miss opportunities to help pupils develop and apply their bilingual skills in lessons, assemblies and incidentally throughout the day. The school has identified the need to develop pupils' bilingual competence in its Self-Evaluation Report.

84. In the SRB, tasks are usually well-matched to the abilities of pupils with statements of SEN. These tasks help them work towards the achievement of targets in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Occasionally, however, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' understanding and extend their language development through discussion of activities in which they are involved, such as cookery.

85. Pupils with SEN, both in mainstream and in the SRB are helped very well by learning support assistants who work closely with class teachers and understand the objectives of each lesson.

86. Teachers generally modify tasks effectively to enable pupils with SEN to participate fully in the lesson. They do not, however, so effectively meet the needs of more able and talented pupils. There is often a lack of challenge or extension in the learning experiences provided for these pupils, for example, when they finish a task sooner than the majority of their peers.

87. The quality of assessment and its use in helping to raise standards across all subjects in the school has good features and no important shortcomings. The school has a comprehensive assessment policy that is followed by all teachers. Teachers use a range of published assessment materials and also their professional judgements to assess pupils' levels of achievement.

88. These consistent and comprehensive procedures ensure that pupils' progress is accurately assessed. Outcomes of assessment are recorded and tracked carefully from the time pupils start school. A range of data is used to set appropriate targets

for pupils' end of key stage attainment. Any difficulties are quickly spotted and properly focused intervention is prepared, particularly for language development.

89. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements. On entry to school, children in both the nursery and reception classes are assessed carefully. Furthermore, detailed daily ongoing assessments by teachers and teaching assistants are well used to underpin teachers' planning and to record and monitor children's progress over time.

90. Similar processes are evident throughout the school and have been strong features in supporting under-achieving pupils effectively. They also form the basis of records that are transferred to the junior school about individuals' levels of attainment. Although these transfer records are comprehensive, they do not make reference to the possibility of pupils achieving level 3 in the foundation subjects.

91. Different groups of pupils are clearly identified and tracked, including those with additional learning needs and those from different ethnic groups. The IEPs of pupils who have been identified as having SEN both in mainstream classes and in the SRB, have clearly defined targets, which are detailed and achievable. Identification of more able pupils and any subsequent, additional support is at an earlier stage of development.

92. Moderated portfolios of pupils' work are generally well developed. Most include pieces of work that are levelled accurately against NC criteria. Subject leaders use these purposefully as a means of establishing levels of achievement.

93. Pupils' work is marked regularly and positively following the school's marking policy. Teachers often annotate the work of pupils to show how well they coped with the task. Teachers set targets for pupils in English and mathematics. These targets are also shared with parents. The majority of pupils are aware of their targets. However, pupils do not yet have any input in deciding what their targets should be.

94. Generally, teachers share lesson objectives with pupils but they do not encourage pupils to assess how well they have met the set objectives at the end of sessions. However, at the end of each academic year, pupils evaluate the amount of progress they have made in their class using simple questionnaires.

95. Reports to parents are informative and give parents a detailed picture on progress, social skills and attitudes to learning. There are formal and informal opportunities for parents to visit and discuss their children's progress.

Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

96. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

97. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The curriculum is relevant to the children's ages and needs and they experience a full range of learning experiences over time.

98. The curriculum in key stage 1 complies with legal requirements. It takes due account of NC subjects, the agreed syllabus for religious education and the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development. The curriculum provided is broad, balanced and relevant.

99. There are suitably updated policy documents and schemes of work for all subjects. Some schemes and the planning for pupils' use of ICT and bilingualism across the curriculum have not yet had time to become embedded and reflected in pupils' standards of achievement. There is evidence of a lack of progression and continuity in the development of pupils' information technology skills.

100. The school makes good provision for the development of pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing and use of numeracy in their work in all subjects across the curriculum. Opportunities to develop these skills are effectively identified in schemes of work and in teachers' weekly planning. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the provision of opportunities for pupils' to develop their problem solving and creative skills. The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time in 2004.

101. Educational visits, and the expertise of members of the local community, make a good contribution to pupils' learning in many curriculum areas. Pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences in school, including poetry and science workshops and theatre and musical performances. Frequent visits by professional musicians are an outstanding feature of the school's provision. All pupils take walks in the local area to observe seasonal changes, geographical features, local businesses and buildings. Year 2 pupils' physical development is further promoted during the summer term by the provision of a multi-sport after-school club.

102. Whole school assemblies, of a broadly Christian nature, take place daily and meet the statutory requirements for an act of collective worship. Whilst assemblies foster a sense of community and help promote sound moral values, pupils are not always given sufficient time for prayer and quiet reflection.

103. The aims of the school encourage and promote positive values and attitudes. Values such as honesty, fair play, kindness and consideration for others are being fostered successfully and teachers work diligently to ensure pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils support a wide range of local and national charities and are sensitive to the needs of others.

104. Pupils' social development is good. The youngest children have settled quickly into their new environment and co-operate well with each other and with adults. Pupils of all ages willingly accept responsibilities; they carry out their duties as monitors sensibly and cheerfully and take delight in helping their teachers.

105. The school is very successful in celebrating cultural diversity and pupils have good opportunities to learn about the social and cultural traditions of other faiths and cultures.

106. The school's partnerships with parents, the local community and other schools are good. They successfully enhance pupils' learning experiences. Arrangements to ease the transition of pupils to the junior school are generally good. They help to alleviate the worries pupils might have about the transfer to the next stage of their education. Some pupils, however, still find the transition a little unsettling.

107. Parents are kept well informed by regular newsletters, curriculum topic information, a useful prospectus and annual report of the governing body and by regular opportunities to discuss their children's work and progress. A constructive home-school agreement is in place, which has been well received by parents. The vast majority of responses to the questionnaire sent to parents before the inspection were very positive and supportive of the school.

108. Parents and friends make a positive contribution to the life of the school. The Friends of Marlborough School (FOMS) organise many social and fundraising activities for both the infant and junior school. These further enhance links between the schools and the local community and provide the school with a valuable source of additional income.

109. The school has established successful partnerships with a wide range of higher education institutions and regularly welcomes student teachers and students undertaking childcare, nursing and vocational qualifications. Students from local secondary schools also undertake work-experience placements at the school.

110. The policy for personal and social education (PSE) closely follows national recommendations and provides pupils with a range of appropriate learning opportunities. External visitors make a good contribution to the delivery of the programme and topics such as sex education are handled in a sensitive manner.

111. The school's commitment to work-related education is good and pupils' learning has been enriched by a range of productive partnerships with local employers and relevant agencies, including the Education and Business Partnership (EBP). Teachers successfully address the vocational aspect of the PSE programme and a range of well-planned visits give pupils good insight into a variety of working environments.

112. The school welcomes parents into the school to speak to pupils about their occupations and professions. This gives pupils a good understanding about the range of work people do within their community.

113. Several teachers have undertaken relevant business and industry courses, which have contributed to professional development and enhanced curriculum provision for pupils.

114. Pupils are helped to develop a good awareness of their own and other cultures. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, the Welsh dimension to the curriculum, is planned effectively

in subjects such as history, geography, art and music. Visits to places of interest make a further, positive contribution to pupils' awareness of the culture and heritage of Wales.

115. The school has given insufficient attention to developing pupils' bilingual skills progressively throughout the school. However, this is an area highlighted for development in the current SIP.

116. The school successfully tackles social disadvantage and challenges gender stereotyping. Equality of opportunity and access for mainstream pupils is assured. Pupils in the SRB integrate with their peers for break times, concerts and assemblies. They have few opportunities, however, to work alongside their peers in mainstream classes.

117. The standards in, and provision for, education for sustainable development and global citizenship are good. The school makes positive efforts to act in a sustainable way. Pupils have a clear understanding of the need to care for the environment, to minimise waste and to reduce energy and water consumption. They are involved in re-cycling and composting schemes and in developing their school grounds and local environment. The commitment of the school to celebrating diversity and promoting racial equality is reflected in pupils' growing understanding of global citizenship.

118. Pupils have some opportunities to develop their entrepreneurial skills as they plan stalls and make games for the school's annual Charity Fair. Their involvement in decision-making within the school is limited. Pupils have completed questionnaires, stating their opinions of school but there is no forum, such as a school council, where pupils can contribute to the decision-making process.

119. The school is laying good foundations for lifelong learning. It ensures that pupils get to know their community well.

Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

120. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

121. The quality of care, support and guidance for all pupils is consistently good with no important shortcomings.

122. All pupils are well cared for, and appropriate support programmes are in place to ensure any specific needs are sensitively met. This is especially so for pupils in vulnerable and challenging circumstances. The school liaises closely with the LEA and draws on the expertise of a range of external support services when required.

123. The school works well in partnership with parents and carers, especially those of pupils with SEN. It encourages parents and carers to become involved in their children's education and takes account of their opinions.

124. All adults in the school provide good support for children when they enter for the first time. Children settle quickly and confidently into the nursery and if they enter the school at a later stage. Pupils work and play in a happy, supportive environment where they are secure and valued by staff. They readily turn to adults for help and are listened to and treated with kindness and consideration.

125. The effective PSE programme includes health education and contributes significantly to the quality of support and guidance offered to pupils.

126. Pupils' behaviour is monitored closely. The school's behaviour policy, code of conduct and rules are simple, relevant and understood by pupils. Pupils whose behaviour gives cause for concern are counselled, parents are involved and support is sought from the LEA when necessary. These arrangements work well and, with support, pupils' behaviour improves.

127. The monitoring of attendance and punctuality is exemplary. The head teacher has established very effective procedures to encourage good attendance, to ensure pupils' absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations when necessary. Effective liaison takes place with the Education Welfare Service when required.

128. The academic performance of pupils is monitored carefully, and pupils are beginning to take a more active role in the monitoring of their individual targets.

129. The school has clear policies and procedures to promote health and safety, including risk assessments, and every reasonable measure is taken to ensure staff and pupils work in a safe and secure environment. Pupils are well supervised during break times and clear procedures are in place to deal with any accidents and emergencies.

130. The school successfully promotes healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Even the youngest children understand that eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly is good for their health and well being.

131. The long lunch break of eighty-five minutes is not always conducive to pupils' well-being. Pupils who have finished their lunch have to sit and wait in the dining hall until all pupils have finished eating before they are allowed out to play. This sometimes causes restlessness and resentment on the part of pupils who are keen to be dismissed. During the lunch break, pupils have to share the playground with junior school pupils for about half an hour. The infant play area is relatively small and there is no play equipment or apparatus to stimulate pupils' play.

132. All staff work in pupils' best interests to safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm. The school has a clear policy and procedures to deal with child protection issues that take into account national guidelines. The head teacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection. She ensures all staff are fully aware of the correct procedures to be followed and that training is regularly up-dated.

133. The quality of the provision for pupils with additional or special learning needs is good. It fully meets the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales. The

school quickly identifies mainstream pupils whose progress gives cause for concern. There is an effective policy of early intervention to provide the extra support these pupils need. The school has also recently established a policy of communicating with parents as soon as any concern about their child's progress is raised.

134. Pupils with statements of SEN in the SRB have access to all NC subjects and broadly study the same topics as their peers, but at a level that is appropriate to their needs. They make good progress in a calm and stable environment.

135. All identified pupils, both in mainstream and in the SRB, have good quality IEPs, with clear targets. On the whole, planned activities are well designed to help pupils reach their targets. The SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) reviews these targets on a termly basis with class teachers and parents.

136. The SENCo liaises closely with Learning Support Assistants who help pupils on the SEN register in mainstream classes. Together, they assess and record pupils' progress effectively. Her role in gaining personal, first-hand knowledge of individual pupils and their needs in the mainstream school is, however, at an early stage of development.

137. The school's investment in additional staff successfully provides appropriate support for pupils whose behaviour might impede their progress or that of others.

138. There are good links with specialist agencies such as the Educational Psychologist and Speech and Language Therapist. The presence of the SRB means that there is greater access to their expertise, which benefits the whole school.

139. The school recognises and really values the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and ensures the support and guidance offered to pupils reflects this. It actively promotes gender equality and challenges stereotypes; teachers ensure boys and girls receive equal opportunities within the classroom.

140. The school takes all reasonable action to ensure disabled pupils are treated equally throughout the school. An accessibility audit has been undertaken and a plan put in place to demonstrate how staff will make improvements in access to the curriculum, physical access and the provision of information for disabled pupils. Recent improvements in physical access to the building ensure that the school is now fully accessible to wheelchair users.

141. The measures taken to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination, bullying and all other forms of harassment are effective. Such incidents are very rare and are dealt with swiftly and efficiently.

142. The promotion of good race relations, and the recognition and celebration of diversity throughout the school, are outstanding features. Clear, effective documentation underpins good practice and the head teacher monitors and evaluates the school's work very effectively in this area. Pupils are fully accepting of racial and cultural differences and the school functions very well as a harmonious and happy community.

Leadership and management

Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

143. The inspection team does not agree with the school's self-evaluation of grade 2 for this key question. Although there is a sense of purpose in the school, expectations are not sufficiently rigorous. As a result, some targets set in school development plans have not been fully achieved within the timescales envisaged.

144. The school has a lengthy vision statement and a set of aims that are generally understood by staff and governors. A genuine sense of teamwork exists among the staff, including more recent appointments to the school. There are shared values about learning, behaviour and relationships. Teachers and governors are becoming more self-critical about their work.

145. The head teacher is very caring and committed to the school and deals very efficiently with administrative issues. The range of policy documents is comprehensive; they are detailed, thorough and underpin the work of the school. The head teacher has correctly identified areas in which the school needs to improve. Equality of opportunity is clear in the school's policies and practice.

146. At the time of the inspection, the senior management team consisted of the head teacher, the acting deputy head teacher and the SENCo. The acting deputy head teacher has only been in post since September 2006. She was a member of the senior management team (SMT) during the last academic year. The SENCo joined the SMT at the beginning of this academic year. Their roles, therefore, are not yet fully agreed or established. The head teacher retains responsibility for the management, leadership and development of most aspects of school life.

147. Subject leaders oversee standards and provision in all curriculum areas. They generally carry out their responsibilities during the time they have available for planning and preparation of their work. They also have a dedicated hour per week for the leadership and management of their subjects.

148. The school takes good account of local and national initiatives but there are some shortcomings. Staff have started making changes in preparation for the forthcoming Foundation Phase and the school is involved in the LEA's 'CAN' project for numeracy. Arrangements for teachers to plan and prepare their work are appropriate and approved plans are in place for remodelling the workforce. Although the school has paid attention to improving pupils' standards in the use of ICT and bilingualism, actions taken have not yet achieved the desired results.

149. Good links have been established with the neighbouring junior school and many facilities are shared equitably. The school has been involved in several Cardiff initiatives such as the 'Cloth of Gold' project.

150. All pupils are given realistic targets for their attainment at the end of key stage 1 based on their individual capabilities. As a result, whole school targets are set.

Despite the fact that approximately 12 per cent of pupils move in and out of the school annually, targets are generally met. Other goals for development over recent years, such as improving the early years' outdoor area, have also been achieved. However, despite recent investments to improve provision for information technology, as yet, standards have not improved enough.

151. There are good arrangements in place to review and monitor the performance of members of the teaching staff and to identify training needs. Teaching assistants have regular opportunities to discuss their training needs and have an annual staff development review with the head teacher.

152. Staff development has had a positive impact on individual teachers and members of the support staff, for example, in areas such as Early Years. Training opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants are provided in a variety of ways. These include school-based training, staff meetings, visits to other schools to observe good practice and attendance at externally organised courses.

153. Governors work effectively for the good of the school. The governing body is well informed, supportive and becoming increasingly active in school affairs. It has a good understanding of some of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school.

154. The governing body meets legal and statutory duties. Well-focused committees have been set up to monitor provision. For example, members of the policy and curriculum committee peruse portfolios of examples of pupils' work compiled by subject leaders in order to gain an overview of standards and quality. However, they do not routinely undertake visits to classes to gain first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning.

155. Regular, comprehensive and detailed reports from the head teacher enable governors to be aware of the school's performance when compared with local and national levels.

156. Governors' involvement during the school's recent self-evaluation exercise has enabled them to become conversant with developmental planning. They are increasingly undertaking their role as 'critical friends' efficiently and effectively.

Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

157. The inspection team does not agree with the school's self-evaluation of grade 2 for this key question. Although evaluation procedures are comprehensive, they have not yet impacted sufficiently on planning for improvement.

158. The head teacher has a good overview of how the school's results compare with other schools in the LEA and Wales as a whole. Along with members of staff, she carefully monitors pupils' progress during their time in school.

159. Curriculum leaders evaluate provision in their subjects focussing on how well pupils achieve. They produce evaluation reports that identify strengths and shortcomings.

160. Self-evaluation processes effectively identify relevant areas for development, such as the need to improve standards in bilingualism and use of ICT across the curriculum. However, the self-evaluation process is not yet sufficiently embedded to have a significant impact on standards.

161. All subject leaders have a good overview of planning, resources and teaching in their particular areas of responsibility. They also have a good understanding of standards through the regular monitoring of pupils' work.

162. Governors show great interest in the self-evaluation process and regularly discuss standards and results in their meetings. All staff are fully and actively involved in the self-evaluation process.

163. Pupils annually complete questionnaires about their perceptions of the school. They also have informal opportunities to express their views about aspects of school life during class 'circle times'. However, because there is no school council or eco-committee, they do not have formal opportunities to make suggestions about school life.

164. Parents are also surveyed on their opinions about the school. They can make suggestions for improvement either via the questionnaires or more informally to the head teacher, such as a recent request for more shade in the playground.

165. Priorities for development in the SIP are agreed following careful audits and analysis of available information. They are shared with all members of staff and the governors. The plan focuses on improving standards but the outcomes of recent improvement plans have not yet had a significant impact on standards in information technology and the use of bilingualism and ICT across the curriculum.

166. The head teacher and governors ensure that all identified priorities are well resourced, such as the recent initiative to improve standards in reading.

167. The self-evaluation report produced for the inspection is comprehensive. It is detailed and generally accurate in its assessment of the school's strengths and areas for development. It matches the grades made by the inspection team in three out of the seven key questions. Where there are differences in grading, there is only a difference of one grade. Issues identified by the school as requiring further attention are similar to those identified by the inspection team.

168. Most priorities set in previous improvement plans have been met. Overall, the school has made good progress with some shortcomings since the last inspection. Not all the key issues identified at that time have been fully addressed. Standards are similar to those observed during the last inspection.

Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

169. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

170. The overall quality of staffing is good. The school is well staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced teachers who are deployed well.

171. The nursery nurse and teaching assistants in the early years and key stage 1 are a valuable resource and contribute very positively to the quality of pupils' learning experiences. They are deployed very effectively.

172. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide good support for pupils with SEN. They are well trained and their professional development is managed well. The school makes good use of a visiting teacher with the specialist skills of teaching English as an additional language to raise standards and provide equality of opportunity.

173. Staff undertake well-focused continuing professional development. This has had a positive influence on developments in the early years classes and the use of the outdoor environment.

174. The school secretary carries out daily routines and a range of other responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

175. The spacious accommodation provides a good range of facilities for teaching and learning, including a large hall, adequately sized classrooms in the main building, a library, computer suite and shared learning and practical areas. The design of the main building ensures that disabled pupils would have full access to all aspects of learning.

176. The school has one outside classroom, which has insufficient space to accommodate a full class of thirty pupils. However, it is currently used by only 26 pupils. The nursery and reception classrooms and the outdoor play areas for the nursery and reception children are used very effectively. Staff who work with these children have provided an attractive and stimulating area. The Adventure Trail for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is put to regular, purposeful use in dry weather.

177. The caretaker and cleaners maintain the cleanliness of the accommodation to a high standard and take pride in the appearance of the school. Carpeted classrooms help reduce noise levels. Colourful displays of the school's work in the corridors and classrooms contribute to the attractive environment created.

178. Lunchtime supervisory and canteen staff provide a valuable contribution to the efficient running of the school.

179. The outdoor playground, which is shared with the junior school, has a few marked playground games, but it is, on the whole, rather austere. The school

recognises the need to develop further the quality of outdoor play areas and extend the use of the school garden.

180. The school has sufficient good quality resources in all NC subjects. Overall, these are efficiently managed and used well. The resources are closely matched to the needs of the school's planning, the NC and agreed syllabus for religious education.

181. The new computer suite is not yet used very effectively. The four key stage 1 classes only have one designated thirty five minute session per week for information technology, which takes place in the afternoon. During the morning all classes are time-tabled on a three weekly rota to use it flexibly for group or class work. The new equipment has not functioned regularly and reliably, which has further reduced opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate their skills in using ICT.

182. The school is linked to the internet and there are at least two computers in each classroom. Both reception classes and the four key stage 1 classes have interactive whiteboards in their classrooms. During the inspection, very limited use was made of these classroom computers and whiteboards.

183. Staff are effectively deployed to make good use of their strengths and experiences in a range of subjects across the curriculum. Teaching and non-teaching staff regularly attend training courses to improve their skills. These courses are effectively linked to continuing professional development needs and priorities in the SIP.

184. The school has established a manageable system to enable all staff to be released for the statutory PPA time. This provision is having a positive effect on standards.

185. There is very effective use of the local environment, the community and educational sites to enrich pupils' learning. This is further enhanced by the contribution of visitors to the school.

186. The use of resources is regularly reviewed and overall the school gives good value for money. The significant investment in equipment and resources matches the school's targets in the SIP and is a good response to the findings of the previous inspection report.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Language, literacy and communication

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

187. In both the nursery and reception year groups, children listen attentively to each other and adults. They pay careful attention to what is said and follow adults' instructions properly.

188. Children's speaking skills develop well; they speak thoughtfully and clearly. They chat with adults confidently. In role-play areas, children readily engage in speaking activities using language that is appropriate to the various scenarios such as the shop. They quickly improve their speaking skills and use a developing range of vocabulary correctly in different contexts.

189. Under-fives enjoy handling books and listening to stories. They quickly appreciate the difference between print and pictures. Reception children develop a good awareness of the sounds that different letters make and they use these skills effectively when undertaking their reading activities. Early in the reception year, several children are already reading simple books. By the end of the year, nearly all the children read such books with understanding.

190. Children in the under-fives classes are confident when undertaking independent writing skills. The majority write their names correctly. Reception children write longer phrases and sentences making good attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. The meaning of their writing is generally clear.

Shortcomings

191. Children's use of Welsh words and phrases is under-developed in both nursery and reception classes.

Personal and social development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

192. All children are friendly and welcoming to visitors and readily talk to them about what they are doing. They work and play together well, are willing to share equipment and co-operate during activities such as role-play and when they use the computer. They have a good understanding of the need to take turns and wait patiently while

others take the lead. Even the youngest children show genuine care and concern for others when they are experiencing a problem.

193. Children quickly settle into school life and are happy, confident and independent in undertaking familiar class routines. They are attentive, interested and motivated and take responsibility for dressing and undressing themselves without fuss. They are keen to help with tidying the classroom at the end of activities.

Mathematical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

194. All children quickly identify different primary colours and common two-dimensional shapes. They sort and match objects correctly using various criteria and identify exceptions that do not fit into given sets. Nursery children sequence objects correctly and begin to appreciate differences in size. Reception children count up to ten objects correctly. They recognise written numerals to five and add on 'one more' quickly to given numbers. During their role-play activities, all children develop a good understanding of money. Reception year children appreciate the difference between heavier and lighter objects.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

195. In the under-fives classes, children develop a good understanding of the world around them through discussions, role-play and visitors to the school. They quickly develop an idea about the passage of time and are familiar with the order of routines of the school day. Visitors to the school help children develop an appropriate understanding of the different jobs people have and different life-styles. Children understand that all cultures celebrate special events in different ways, such as the celebration of Eid. They show a proper respect for the environment and living things and nursery children understand that plants need regular watering to survive.

Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

196. From the time they start school, children quickly come to recognise the importance of health and hygiene; they show due awareness of safety issues, particularly when they are playing in the outdoor environment. They quickly develop

the skills to manipulate equipment effectively such as when they use the computer mouse, jigsaws, scissors or crayons and pencils. They use the outdoor area well to refine and improve their skills of running, jumping, climbing and pedalling. By the reception year, children are aware of the space around them and show good levels of control when changing direction and speed.

Creative development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

197. Children progress well in their creative skills. They enthusiastically join in singing familiar songs and rhymes and move in time to music. All under-fives enjoy their artistic work. They colour and paint realistic images and, in the reception year, become aware of the work of famous artists such as Kandinsky. Their ability to take on the role of various characters is well developed in role-play and when they work on the 'story table' to create different scenarios.

Shortcomings

198. Children lack confidence and imagination developing their own artistic images and rely heavily on materials prepared by adults.

Science

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

199. In key stage 1, pupils of all abilities enjoy science. They develop good knowledge and understanding of the content of all three strands of the science curriculum; life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Their investigative skills are also developing well.

200. Pupils in year 1 develop a good understanding of similarities and differences between themselves and other pupils. They offer some imaginative ideas about how they might find the answer to questions such as, 'Are boys' hands bigger than girls' hands?' More able pupils make hypotheses about what the answer might be and give good reasons for their thinking.

201. In conducting their investigation into hand sizes, pupils use their observation and numeracy skills well to help them make simple comparisons about the number of multilink cubes each of them can hold. They talk about their findings with understanding, using appropriate comparative vocabulary such as 'more than' and 'less than'. They present their findings clearly on a simple chart.

202. Pupils with SEN in the SRB appreciate differences in materials and describe these differences appropriately using words such as 'hard, smooth, and soft'. They are aware of the effect of heat and cold on the body and can name parts of animals' bodies correctly. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress in developing appropriate scientific vocabulary.

203. By year 2, pupils are developing a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test. For example, in their investigation of the question, 'Does the tallest child jump the furthest?' they point out that everyone must jump from the same line. "It's cheating," said one child, if children jump from different starting points. They also recognise the need to measure accurately from the line to the point where their feet have landed and that they should measure to the same part of the foot in order for their test to be fair.

204. During their investigations, year 2 pupils sensibly interpret their emerging findings and reach valid conclusions. They use a good variety of ways to present their results in writing, drawings, tables and diagrams.

Shortcomings

205. Pupils do not use ICT sufficiently to handle and present scientific information.

Information technology

Key stage 1: Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas

Good features

206. In key stage 1, pupils have developed a number of basic skills such as executing commands and using the mouse and pointer, whilst using basic number and language programs.

207. Year 1 pupils use a word processing package effectively to write a short poem. Year 2 pupils use similar skills to write a riddle.

208. Year 1 pupils use a graphics package to randomly draw and create weather pictures. Year 2 pupils select and use various tools on the screen to create Christmas cards.

209. Year 1 pupils competently load a simple data handling package, click the correct number of times on the appropriate icon and create a pictogram. They save and print their work independently.

210. Most year 2 pupils competently use the same package to enter information they have previously collected. They use the keyboard to enter the data into two columns, and save and print their work.

211. Pupils with SEN in the SRB use a word processing package with teacher support. They change size, font and colour appropriately.

Shortcomings

212. Pupils infrequently use word processing packages and therefore make very limited progress from year 1 to year 2.

213. Pupils' use of graphics packages to paint and create design work is underdeveloped.

214. Pupils have a limited understanding of control technology because they do not have sufficient opportunities to program a robotic toy.

215. Pupils' skills in using a computer to model and investigate through simulations are underdeveloped.

216. Pupils do not make enough use of CD ROM's and the internet to enhance their research and investigative skills in class topics and their use of the interactive whiteboard is very limited.

Geography

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

217. During key stage 1, pupils of all abilities demonstrate a good and increasing understanding of their own local area and of the wider world. Pupils, including those learning English as an additional language, effectively share with their peers first-hand experiences of the world beyond the immediate locality. This enhances all pupils' geographical awareness.

218. In year 1, pupils are aware of some of the differences between the town and the country. They go for walks around the school building and accurately identify some of the geographical features in their immediate surroundings.

219. They use their observations effectively to answer geographical questions and to express their views about features that they like and those they dislike. For example, some pupils express the view that they like the amount of space in the playground but do not like its hard surface. They communicate their ideas well through discussion, drawing and writing.

220. In year 2, pupils know that different sorts of fruit grow in hot and cold climates. They also know that hot countries are around the equator. They show a good awareness of how different types of food might be transported from around the world. They know some of the foods that are associated with Wales.

221. Pupils in year 2 are interested in maps and atlases and use a simple pictorial map competently to plot a route to a particular address.

222. Expert visitors to the school have very effectively contributed to pupils' awareness of environmental issues. By the end of key stage 1, pupils have a very good understanding of how their actions affect the environment. They know the importance of recycling paper to save trees and why trees are vital to the quality of the air.

Shortcomings

223. Pupils do not use ICT sufficiently to communicate and assist their work in geography.

Art

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

224. Artwork across the school is vibrant and exciting and pupils' achievement is good, including those with SEN and English as an additional language. This is because they develop their artistic skills progressively, building continuously on knowledge already known.

225. The school has been proactive in harnessing the skills of artists, resulting in good quality artefacts being produced such as sculptures. Pupils are confident working in a range of different media such as clay, paint and textiles.

226. Pupils confidently experiment with colour, line and tone. They try out techniques such as smudging and shading, using different pencils and paints to find which gives the best effect. They record images from observation successfully and by year 2, pupils in one class in particular, include a lot of detail in their portrait work.

227. Pupils confidently use several different techniques in their artwork such as printing, rubbing, weaving, modelling and sculpting. They are aware of the effect different techniques will create.

228. By year 2, pupils mix different colours correctly to create new colours and are aware of how to produce different shades. They then effectively incorporate the required colour into their work, for example, when they produce models of different fruits.

229. Throughout the key stage, pupils develop an appropriate awareness of the work of artists such as Archimboldo. They also become familiar with the work of artists and designers from Wales, such as Kyffin Williams and Laura Ashley. They then produce good quality pieces themselves in the style of these artists, for example, winter scenes based on the work of Kyffin Williams.

Shortcomings

Pupils' skills in using computers in their art work are under-developed because they do not use computers often enough in a focussed manner.

Music

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

230. Standards in singing are good throughout the school. Pupils enjoy listening to a wide range of music, including the music of Wales.

231. Year 1 pupils listen attentively to their own and others' music. They discuss and decide on an appropriate instrument for particular sounds associated with a train. They take into account the speed of the train and the incline. They successfully create a graphic score from eight sound cards and perform the composition confidently.

232. Year 2 pupils listen with increasing attention and focus well on the musical elements. They sing unaccompanied phrases tunefully and effectively discriminate between long and short sounds. They choose appropriate percussion instruments to accompany the musical phrases. They know the names of an increasing number of composers.

233. Most pupils name and recognise a wide variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They are aware of the correct playing techniques.

234. Pupils with SEN in the SRB listen attentively to music by Stravinsky and create appropriate pictures to illustrate the sounds.

235. Scrutiny of a portfolio of work shows that pupils have had frequent opportunities to work alongside visiting musicians, which has had a positive impact on the standards they achieve. They have listened to, and are aware of, a variety of instruments from around the world.

Shortcomings

236. Pupils do not use ICT sufficiently to support the development of their musical knowledge, skills and understanding.

237. Year 2 pupils do not build consistently on their skills in collaborating and talking about their own musical ideas.

School's response to the inspection

The inspection findings recognise that, in most respects, we have maintained standards since our last inspection. We have improved standards in subjects such as geography and music. We are pleased that inspectors found that the school promotes good race relations and values the diversity of pupils' backgrounds. These are identified as outstanding features. In addition, the quality of care, support and

guidance for all pupils is recognised as consistently good. The genuine sense of teamwork within the staff is duly acknowledged, as is the consistent quality of planning between classes which means that equality of opportunity is assured for all pupils. Most importantly, the inspection report makes clear that we are achieving our aim to enable children to become literate and numerate, happy, confident individuals who respect others and are socially and emotionally well-adjusted.

An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations in the report, most of which we had identified through our own self-evaluation procedures. Improving standards in information technology and in the key skills of using Welsh and ICT in all subjects across the curriculum are aspects that we believe we can address. We shall endeavour to provide a higher level of challenge for more able pupils and to provide more opportunities for pupils to make choices, engage in problem-solving tasks and work independently. In addition, we shall seek to develop the role of the senior management team.

Where it is possible to do so, staff and governors will address the recommendations before the end of the school year. Raising pupils' standards of achievement in information technology and the use of ICT will continue to be a major priority for us. We will seek to overcome the technical difficulties that have beset the new computer suite. We will also provide opportunities for staff to improve their confidence and competence in using the suite so that they can support pupils more effectively.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to parents. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress we are making on the inspection recommendations.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Marlborough Infant School
School type	Nursery and Infant
Age-range of pupils	3 to 8*
Address of school	Marlborough Road Cardiff
Postcode	CF23 5BU
Telephone number	02920 498822

Head teacher	Mrs Diane Dickinson
Date of appointment	1996
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Cllr Patricia Burfoot
Registered inspector	Mrs Stephanie James
Dates of inspection	24 to 26 October 2006

- Two eight year old pupils attend the Specialist Resource Base

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)*	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	25	59	51	60	2	0	0	0	197

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	9	1	9.6

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	13:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	3:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	28
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Autumn 2005	88%	90%	94%
Spring 2006	90%	87%	91%
Summer 2006	88%	91%	94%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	10%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

*fte: full-time equivalent

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results of Pupils in the School (2006) and Nationally (2005) at the end of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2006			Number of pupils in Year 2				
			61				
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	2	10	79	10
		National	0	4	12	64	20
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	2	18	46	34
		National	0	4	14	56	26
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	2	10	84	5
		National	0	5	14	69	12
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	2	11	80	7
		National	0	2	11	64	23
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	15	66	20
		National	0	2	10	63	24
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	79	11
		National	0	2	9	65	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English by teacher assessment			
In the school	80	In Wales	81

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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Four inspectors spent a total of ten inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection. The nominee from the school was the head teacher.

These inspectors visited:

- thirty-three lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began;
- senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- fifty-seven responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection and
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work.

The inspection team held post-inspection meetings with the staff and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Stephanie James Registered Inspector	Context, Summary, Recommendations, Appendices Key questions 1 and 2, Contributions to other key questions Special Educational Needs, Science, Geography,
Margaret Morgan Team Inspector	Key questions 5 and 6, Contributions to other key questions Assessment, Early Years, Art
Helen Smith Team Inspector	Key question 7, Contributions to other key questions, Bilingualism, Information Technology, Music
Janet Warr Lay Inspector	Key questions 3 and 4, Contributions to other key questions Personal, social and learning skills.
Diane Dickinson Nominee (Headteacher)	Provision of Information

The contractor was: Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd
Oaks Lea, Higher Knolton, Overton, Wrexham. LL13 0LF

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, head teacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.