

**Inspection under Section 10 of the
Schools Inspections Act 1996**

**Monnow Junior School
Darent Close
Bettws
Newport
NP9 6SQ**

School Number: 6802048

Date of Inspection: 16/01/06

by

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78185**

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- * nursery schools and settings maintained or used by local education authorities (LEAs);
- * primary schools;
- * secondary schools;
- * special schools;
- * pupil referral units;
- * independent schools;
- * further education;
- * adult community-based learning;
- * youth support services;
- * LEAs;
- * teacher education and training;
- * work-based learning;
- * careers companies; and
- * the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre Plus.

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- * makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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Monnow Junior 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 Monnow Junior School took place between 16/01/06 and 18/01/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Merfyn Douglas Jones 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 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. Monnow Junior school is situated on the Bettws housing estate two miles north west of the city of Newport, South Wales. The school serves a residential area which is reported to be the second largest council estate in Europe and considered to be economically disadvantaged, and which has been designated a Community First Area.
2. Currently, there are 268 pupils between the ages of seven and eleven years on roll, including 27 pupils (maximum 30) in a special needs unit. Fifty per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the all- Wales average. Six pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority.
3. The school identifies 83 pupils (31%) as having some degree of special educational need (SEN). A statement of SEN has been made for 37 pupils and there are 19 pupils on 'school action' and 27 on 'school action plus' of the special needs register.
4. The school considers its intake to be a large proportion (50%) of less-able pupils. Pupils in the SEN unit are transported to the school from all over Newport. All pupils attending the school are from English speaking homes and the vast majority are of white ethnicity.
5. Including the headteacher, there are 13 full-time teachers and three part-time teachers. There are nine full-time and one part-time learning support assistants.
6. The headteacher was appointed in October 2003.
7. The school was last inspected in March, 2000.

The School's Mission Statement:

8. "Through kindness, respect and encouragement we can accomplish great things."

The School's Aims to:

- strive as a school community offering support, respect and security within an atmosphere which is friendly, healthy, secure and stimulating, where good relationships can develop and personal development can be fostered;
- create an environment where all members have equal opportunities and where cultural diversity is celebrated through our work;
- assist pupils in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to adult life and employment in a rapidly changing world;
- develop each child's full potential creatively, academically, socially, physically, spiritually and intellectually.

The school's priorities and targets

9. The school's main priorities and targets for 2005 -2006 are to improve:

- extended writing;
- speaking and listening;
- spelling;
- thinking skills;
- data handling;
- communication, research, assessment and planning in Information Technology.

Summary

10. Monnow School is an excellent school, where pupils' standards of achievement are extremely high and where leadership and management are outstanding. Progress since the last inspection is exceptional with all key issues being fully addressed.

Table of grades awarded

The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

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

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

11. Pupils' standards of achievement in the 45 lessons or part-lessons observed were judged to be as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 36% | 55% | 9% | 0% | 0% |

Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:

| Inspection Area | |
|------------------------|---------|
| English | Grade 2 |
| Welsh second language | Grade 2 |
| Science | Grade 1 |
| Information technology | Grade 2 |
| Art | Grade 2 |
| Religious education | Grade 2 |

12. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good and sometimes very good progress in relation to their age and abilities and achieve the targets set in their individual education programmes (IEPs). In the Special Needs Learning Centre (SNLC), pupils respond extremely well to high quality teaching and support.

13. Standards and progress in the key skills of listening, numeracy and using information and communications technology are outstanding. Pupils make very good use of these skills across the curriculum. In speaking, reading and writing, standards and progress are good.

14. Pupils' bilingual skills and competence are well developed and effectively integrated into the life of the school. Their knowledge and understanding of the heritage and culture of Wales are very good.

15. Analysis of benchmarking and value added data indicates that pupils make good and sometimes very good progress from entry to the end of the key stage. They are also fully aware of how well they are doing in their work and what they need to do to improve.

16. Over the last three years, end of key stage assessment results in both English and mathematics show significant improvement whilst maintaining the high standards in science. In 2005, assessment results were close to local and national averages even when the Special Needs Learning Centre (SNLC) pupils were included. The percentage of pupils attaining level 4 or above was well above the average in comparison with similar schools.

17. Pupils are making exceptional progress in their problem-solving and creative skills due to the high priority of promoting these throughout the school.

18. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding features of the school and contribute significantly to the standards pupils achieve and to the quality of life in the school. Overall, pupils make very good progress in developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills.

19. The school is highly successful in preparing pupils to take an active role in the life and work of the local community. Pupils have a very good awareness of equal opportunities issues and their personal, moral and social development is an outstanding feature of the school.

The quality of education and training

20. In the 45 lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 42% | 49% | 9% | 0% | 0% |

21. With 90% of the lessons observed having teaching graded as 2 or better, the quality of teaching is well above the Welsh Assembly Government's target. of 65% to be good or better. The high quality teaching is a major strength of the school. Throughout the school, teachers:

- stimulate and challenge pupils of all abilities extremely well;
- plan very effectively for the development of pupils' creative and problem-solving skills;
- effectively promote pupils' bilingual skills;
- use marking very effectively and consistently.

22. Procedures for assessment and recording pupils' progress are of very high quality. A rigorous tracking system enables staff to identify and target individuals, groups or subject areas where intervention is needed.

23. The annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements. However, there is some lack of clarity in the written comments. In a number of foundation subjects, they focus on work covered rather than on what the pupil knows or has achieved.

24. The curriculum fully meets all legal requirements. The school's agreed aims and mission statement form the foundation for a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils and the wider community very well.

25. The curriculum ensures that all pupils are appropriately challenged. Work for pupils with SEN is suitably differentiated and they receive the support they require. There are equal opportunities for both girls and boys in all activities and any pupils from other ethnic groups are included very well.

26. Pupils from the Special Needs Learning Centre (SNLC) are fully integrated into the life of the school and regularly join in mainstream activities, including PE. This results in mainstream pupils valuing and respecting diversity and the contributions of others.

27. The school's effective planning for *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* in all subjects ensures that pupils have a strong sense of their Welsh identity while also being part of a broader global community. Bilingualism is very successfully promoted across the school through the main curriculum.

28. Learning experiences are further enriched through planned trips, residential visits and a very good range of extra-curricular activities that include Green Club, creative dance, music, karate and a good range of sports taught by professionals.

29. The school is proactive in recycling and pupils are encouraged to consider issues of sustainability and global citizenship.

30. The school's partnerships with parents, other providers and interested parties are good and continue to develop well.
31. Good pastoral, administrative and curricular links have been developed with the receiving secondary school and with the infant school from which pupils transfer.
32. Teachers are highly successful in raising pupils' awareness of the world of work, and the vocational aspect of the PSE programme is very well addressed. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding.
33. Many opportunities are provided to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills.
34. The school is fully committed to lifelong learning and national priorities are well reflected in its life and work. The headteacher has established rigorous procedures to monitor pupils' punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance.
35. The school has very good procedures in place to ensure that new pupils settle into the routines and demands of school life. The inspection team recognises the many outstanding features in the care and support the school provides for all pupils, including those with special education needs (SEN) in main stream classes and in the SNLC.
36. The school has clear, well-documented policies and procedures, including risk assessment, for assuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. The headteacher, staff and governors monitor health and safety issues carefully and review arrangements on a regular basis.
37. The duty of care is fundamental to the school's ethos and consequently staff work in pupils' best interests to nurture their welfare and to protect them. The provision the school makes for pupils with SEN in mainstream and in the SNLC, which meets the requirements of the revised code of practice, is exemplary.

Leadership and management

38. The overall quality of leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff with management responsibilities, subject leaders and governors is excellent. This strong teamwork effectively supports pupils and enables them to make very good progress.
39. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. She has a clear vision for the school and has, with the help of her staff, transformed its ethos, raised the aspirations of its pupils and improved the quality of the education it provides, since her appointment.
40. The values and aims of the school, based on encouragement and respect, are evident in every aspect of the life in the school and the conduct of those who work there.

41. Staff receive very good training and development through the school's performance management system.
42. The GB is extremely capable and competent and very supportive of the school. It has a clear understanding of its role and discharges its responsibilities very effectively.
43. The headteacher, governors and staff are fully committed to improving standards and a very positive culture of self-evaluation has been developed.
44. Highly effective procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvements. The self-evaluation report is an outstanding feature and informs the school's improvement plan (SIP) with targets and priorities for improvement.
45. The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection. All the key issues have been fully addressed.
46. The school is very well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers, who are well deployed.
47. The standard of the accommodation is very good for the number of pupils on role. The school has a plentiful supply of good quality resources to meet the needs of the school curriculum.
48. The school provides very good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve further, the school needs to:

- R1 continue to raise standards;
- R2 ensure clarity in the annual written reports to parents;
- R3 maintain the very good ethos of the school;
- R4 continue with efforts to improve attendance and punctuality.

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 1: Good with outstanding features

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

50. Pupils' standards of achievement in the 45 lessons or part-lessons observed were judged to be as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 36% | 55% | 9% | 0% | 0% |

51. Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:

| Inspection Area | Grade |
|------------------------|---------|
| English | Grade 2 |
| Welsh second language | Grade 2 |
| Science | Grade 1 |
| Information technology | Grade 2 |
| Art | Grade 2 |
| Religious education | Grade 2 |

52. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good and sometimes very good progress in relation to their age and abilities and achieve the targets set in their individual education programmes (IEPs). In the Special Needs Learning Centre (SNLC), pupils respond extremely well to high quality teaching and support.

53. Standards and progress in the key skills of listening, numeracy and using information and communications technology are outstanding. Pupils make very good use of these skills across the curriculum. In speaking, reading and writing, standards and progress are good.

54. Pupils' bilingual skills and competence are well developed and effectively integrated into the life of the school. Their knowledge and understanding of the heritage and culture of Wales are very good.

55. It is very evident from discussions with pupils that they are fully aware, and appreciate, that all pupils are treated the same and given the same opportunities. They are also fully aware of how well they are doing in their work and what they need to do to improve, being involved in setting personal targets and in evaluating their own performance in subject areas.

56. Analysis of benchmarking and value added data indicates that pupils make good and sometimes very good progress from entry to the end of the key stage.

57. Over the last three years, end of key stage assessment results in both English and mathematics show significant improvement whilst maintaining the high standards in science. The core subject indicator (CSI) of pupils attaining level 4 or above in all three subjects, has also risen steadily.

58. In 2005, assessment results were close to local and national averages even when the SNLC pupils were included. The percentage of pupils attaining level 4 or above was well above the average in comparison with similar schools i.e. those with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.

59. Generally, girls outperform boys, but the school has identified this and has successfully narrowed the gap over the years with targeted initiatives. There is little difference between the performance of other identified groups such as 'looked after' children and ethnic minority groups.

60. Pupils are making exceptional progress in their problem-solving and creative skills due to the high priority of promoting these across the school.

61. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding features of the school and contribute significantly to the standards pupils achieve and to the quality of life in the school. The school is a happy, caring and orderly community where pupils demonstrate care, respect and courtesy towards all involved in the life and work of the school.

62. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning; they are interested in their work and are keen to do their best. They listen carefully to their teachers, settle quickly to task and sustain concentration. Pupils take pride in their achievements and know that teachers appreciate their efforts and work.

63. The school has successfully implemented a range of strategies to enhance pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially through circle time, and this has contributed significantly to the positive behaviour of pupils and the quality of life in the school.

64. Attendance rates average 91% and the vast majority of pupils are punctual and keen to attend school but, despite the school's considerable efforts, a minority of pupils consistently arrives late for the start of the school day. This often disrupts the class and these pupils miss important parts of the first lesson of the day.

65. Much of the absence is caused by a small group of pupils who have a high level of persistent absence, which has an adverse impact on the continuity of their education and the standards they achieve. The school is working closely with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to support the families concerned but progress has been limited in some cases.

66. The governing body (GB) is rightly concerned about the number, although small, of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. This has an adverse impact on the continuity of pupils' formal education and on overall rates of attendance for the school.

67. Registration is conducted efficiently and in accordance with statutory requirements. The school complies with attendance requirements set out in the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99, *Pupil Support and Social Inclusion*.

68. Pupils' ability to work independently, in pairs and as part of a group is very well developed. They organise group activities fairly, share responsibilities and ensure everyone contributes. Pupils' problem-solving and decision-making skills are very well developed and older pupils, in particular, recognise the importance of education and how their own attitudes and commitment contribute to learning.

69. Pupils' personal, moral and social development is an outstanding feature of the school. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils underpin this development, and pupils are confident in expressing their ideas and opinions because they know their contributions are valued and respected by staff. Pupils are tolerant and considerate of others. In discussion, they demonstrate a secure understanding of right from wrong and recognise the need to take responsibility for their actions.

70. Pupils have a very good awareness of equal opportunities issues and feel strongly that everyone should be treated fairly and without favouritism. They value the inclusive nature of their school and appreciate the way in which teaching and support staff treat all pupils with respect and kindness. Pupils display a growing respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within their locality and the wider world.

71. Overall, pupils make very good progress in developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills.

72. The school is highly successful in preparing pupils to take an active role in the life and work of the local community. Staff, governors and pupils are fully committed to the local community and the school participates in many aspects of community life. Exemplary use is made of the community as a learning resource and pupils regularly serve the community by supporting cultural, environmental and charitable projects.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

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

74. In the 45 lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 42% | 49% | 9% | 0% | 0% |

75. In 90% of the lessons observed teaching was graded as 2 or better, with 42% having outstanding features. This is well above the Welsh Assembly Government target for 2007, of 65% to be good or better. The high quality teaching is a major strength of the school with good teaching occurring in every year group.

76. The outstanding features of teaching include the:

- highly imaginative lesson content that fully engages all pupils;
- excellent relationships between staff and pupils;
- continuous use of praise and encouragement to raise pupils' self-esteem;
- detailed planning of purposeful lessons and activities that closely match pupils' needs; and
- teachers' high expectations, enthusiasm and subject knowledge.

77. Throughout the school, teachers stimulate and challenge pupils of all abilities extremely well. They set clear and appropriate time limits for them to complete tasks, which ensure that lessons progress at a good pace. Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) are used effectively and have a significant effect on pupils' progress.

78. Teachers' use of extra-curricular activities, educational visits, visitors and artefacts is a good feature and these stimulate pupils' interest and knowledge.

79. All teachers promote equality of opportunity and ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, irrespective of their ability and backgrounds.

80. The promotion of pupils' bilingual skills is good, with regular use of incidental Welsh during registration, assemblies, lessons and playtimes. Pupils are praised and rewarded for using Welsh phrases and vocabulary during the day.

81. Planning for the development of pupils' creative and problem-solving skills is highly effective and is a strength of the school. Teachers consistently use a very effective programme for promoting pupils' thinking and learning skills.

82. The assessment requirements of the NC are fully met and due regard is given to the SEN Code of Practice.

83. Procedures for assessment and recording pupils' progress are of very high quality. Pupils' records, including those in the SNLC, are detailed, manageable and include relevant information that informs the planning of future work. Information on pupils is shared well between class teachers and between schools.

84. Information gathering and monitoring processes are very well established in the core subjects and the school has begun to successfully extend this to non-core subjects. Assessment mechanisms and opportunities are clearly identified in teachers' planning.

85. The school regularly uses a range of assessment methods to inform staff about pupils' progress and to inform future practice. Data is thoroughly analysed to assess the likely progress and achievements of individuals, groups and cohorts. Every pupil is given a possible and probable levelled target to achieve.

86. A very rigorous tracking system enables staff to identify and target individuals, groups or subject areas where intervention is needed.

87. The standard of marking is very good and consistent throughout the school. Comments are encouraging and often give clear guidance as to what pupils need to do to make progress and so identify individual targets. Pupils are involved in evaluating their own progress and in setting their own targets.

88. The annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements. However, there is some lack of clarity in the written comments. In a number of foundation subjects, they focus on work covered rather than on what the pupil knows or has achieved.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

89. The findings of the inspection team match those of the school in its self-evaluation report.

90. The curriculum fully meets all legal requirements. There are appropriate policies for positive race relations and for the teaching of sex education, drugs awareness and personal and social education (PSE). Religious education is taught in line with SACRE guidance. The school procedures and practices both in classrooms and in the normal routines of school life are fully inclusive and free from any kind of discrimination.

91. The school's agreed aims and mission statement form the foundation for a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils and the wider community very well. Schemes of work that appropriately support non-specialist

teachers are fully in place. Teachers' planning is very detailed and builds effectively on pupils' previous experiences and prepares them for the next stage of learning.

92. The curriculum ensures that all pupils are appropriately challenged. Work for pupils with SEN suitably differentiated and they receive the support they require. Pupils with SEN make very good progress and the needs of the gifted and talented are also appropriately addressed. The school is actively inclusive and staff help pupils to celebrate the achievement of all through learning diaries.

93. There are equal opportunities for both girls and boys in all activities and any pupils from other ethnic groups are included very well. Pupils from the Special Needs Learning Centre (SNLC) are fully integrated into the life of the school and regularly join in mainstream activities, including PE. This results in mainstream pupils valuing and respecting diversity and the contributions of others.

94. Curriculum planning identifies key skills and these are carefully mapped to the curriculum to ensure that pupils learn them systematically. The school helps pupils develop a high standard of creativity and problem-solving skills through curriculum subjects of drama, poetry and art and also through initiatives such as developing thinking skills and learning strategies.

95. Personal and social education (PSE) is also well mapped to the curriculum and successfully underpins all the work of the school. The well-integrated PSE that the school provides, through circle time, school council, peer mediation and other strategies, ensures that pupils develop positive relationships. As a result, they learn about rights and responsibilities and this helps them to co-operate well with their peers and with adults.

96. The school's effective planning for *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* in all subjects ensures that pupils have a strong sense of their Welsh identity while also being part of a broader global community. Cultural enrichment through music, singing and visits from Welsh musicians, artists and poets makes a further contribution to pupils' very good progress in their cultural development.

97. Bilingualism is very successfully promoted throughout the school across the main curriculum, daily Welsh activities, Welsh phrase of the week and the use of incidental Welsh in all aspects of school life. This results in pupils' confident and natural use of Welsh in all situations.

98. Learning experiences are further enriched through planned trips, residential visits and a very good range of extra-curricular activities that include Green Club, creative dance, music, karate and a good range of sports taught by professionals. Every child has an equal opportunity to be involved in sports and shows. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments and many perform in regular class assemblies to which parents are invited. The school successfully creates a learning environment that promotes fun, creativity, respect and enjoyment. Visiting artists, poets, police officers, local business, parents and grandparents allow pupils extra opportunity to widen their experiences beyond the school environment.

99. The school is proactive in recycling and pupils are encouraged to consider issues of sustainability and global citizenship. The school is working towards its silver award as part of the Eco schools project.

100. The school's partnerships with parents, other providers and interested parties are good and continue to develop well. The school has worked very hard to encourage parents to become involved in the life and work of the school, and parental involvement has improved greatly since the last inspection, when it was considered to be under-developed.

101. Parents are kept well informed through a useful prospectus and the annual report of the GB, through regular consultation meetings with staff and through informal daily contact. The quality of information provided in the monthly 'Monnow Mail' newsletters is very good and informs parents of the life and work of the school as well as celebrating pupils' achievements. A constructive home-school agreement is in place, which has readily been accepted by parents.

102. Parents appreciate the welcoming nature of the school and value the ready access they have to the headteacher and staff. A notable feature of this partnership is the way in which the school seeks parents' views and often acts upon them. The Parents' Forum is a very good vehicle where parents can express their concerns, ideas and opinions and become involved in the decision-making process.

103. Good pastoral, administrative and curricular links have been developed with the receiving secondary school and with the infant school from which pupils transfer.

104. Regular liaison meetings, an exchange of information and ideas, joint in-service training, teacher exchanges and bridging units help to promote continuity of education between KS1, KS2 and KS3. Arrangements for transition are good at all levels and ensure pupils settle quickly into their new school environments.

105. Year 2 children visit the junior school to take part in fun, problem solving activities. This helps them become familiar with the teachers and enables staff to make assessments of standards and possible needs. Year 6 pupils visit the Bettws High School and pupils from the SNLC also visit their new schools. The school has successfully introduced meetings between the pupils from Monnow and from the other local KS2 feeder schools prior to transfer to High School and to promote good relations.

106. The school has recently established partnership arrangements with an initial teacher training institution and is well prepared to receive student teachers. Training opportunities are provided for students undertaking childcare and vocational qualifications and the school welcomes secondary school pupils undertaking work-experience placements. Students are well supported by staff and they make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

107. The school is at the heart of the Bettws estate and works in partnership with a wide range of agencies to support children, parents and the local community. The commitment of staff, governors and pupils to the local community is exemplary.

108. Teachers are highly successful in raising pupils' awareness of the world of work, and the vocational aspect of the PSE programme is very well addressed. Through their visits to a variety of retail, commercial and industrial sites, pupils are gaining first-hand knowledge of different working environments and an understanding of the variety of work undertaken in their locality and further afield.

109. The school's working relationship with the education and business partnership (EBP) is highly productive and local employers are very supportive of the school. Several teachers have undertaken relevant industrial placements, which have contributed to their professional development and enhanced curriculum provision for pupils.

110. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. Each of the elements is completely integrated into the curriculum and the ethos of the school. The promotion of spirituality is addressed particularly well.

111. The school makes very good provision for pupils to develop their spirituality through soft music, adjustments to lighting, reflective displays in classrooms and opportunities for quiet thought and reflection. As a result, pupils' spiritual awareness is of a very high standard.

112. The school uses Collective Worship very successfully as a medium through which to teach human values. As a result, pupils develop effective strategies for improving self-control and demonstrate a strong sense of right and wrong. They recognise fair play and show a well developed understanding of moral issues and injustice.

113. The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to make the connection between faith and charity work and this promotes a greater understanding of the need to help others. Pupils also develop a strong sense of stewardship of the Earth through their work on global citizenship. Pupils assess their own impact on the environment through measuring their own Global Footprint.

114. The school creates good opportunities for pupils to reflect on the differing cultures, racial backgrounds and beliefs of others and to increase their understanding through their work in geography and religious education. For example, in circle time, when pupils consider problems faced by asylum seekers, they develop respect for and acceptance of those who differ from themselves in race, culture or religion.

115. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are very good and are enhanced by many opportunities to take part in competitions sponsored by industry and relevant agencies, and through involvement in enterprise activities, including an enterprise week.

116. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities and run the school's healthy eating tuck shop, which gives them valuable insight into the running of a profitable business. Their problem-solving and decision-making skills are well developed as they readily contribute to class and school councils, to the Green (eco) Committee and to the peer mediation scheme.

117. The school is fully committed to lifelong learning and national priorities are well reflected in its life and work. Pupils are very aware of their own community and how they can contribute to its regeneration through active citizenship, education, partnership and care for the environment.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

118. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement of grade 1 made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

119. The inspection team recognises the many outstanding features in the care and support the school provides for all pupils, including those with special education needs (SEN) in main stream classes and in the SNLC. Pupils, whatever their ability, positively thrive in the warmth of the school's caring ethos. The result of this is that they develop a strong belief in themselves and in their ability to achieve.

120. Pupils spoken to during the inspection overwhelmingly expressed the view that teachers look after their educational and pastoral needs very well. Parents at their meeting with inspectors supported this view. Observations made during the inspection confirm it. It is because of this high quality of care and support that teachers provide, that pupils make good progress in their learning and talk proudly of their achievements.

121. The school makes very good use of the wide range of good support offered by outside services such as the behavioural support unit and social services. The initiatives that the school has set in place over the last three years, such as one-to-one counselling for the most vulnerable children and assertive discipline, have been instrumental in raising expectations in the attitudes and behaviour of pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure at Monnow Junior School and that it is a good place to learn.

122. The school works in partnership with parents and carers very well. An impressive bank of measures has been set in place to involve parents more in their children's education. The parents' forum, that meets each term, enables parents to bring up issues that are of concern. All suggestions made by parents for the benefit of pupils are considered carefully and are acted upon if appropriate. Parents are given detailed written information about what their children are to learn, at the beginning of each new term.

123. The school has very good procedures in place to ensure that new pupils settle into the routines and demands of school life with the minimum of disruption to their learning. Pupils say that their teachers do many things to help them to enjoy coming to school. Oppressive behaviour happens only rarely and when it does, it is dealt with successfully.

124. Peer mediation, in pupils' views, has been a great success. Older pupils, who volunteer, are well trained in mediation techniques and they say that they feel that they are making a good contribution to trouble-free break times.

125. Teachers take very good account of the PSE framework and good use is made of personnel and events outside school, such as the police liaison officer and 'Crucial Crew', to support pupils' personal and social learning.

126. The very good relationships teachers have with their pupils, enables full and frank discussions over a wide spectrum of educational and pastoral issues. Pupils express great confidence in their teachers and are happy to share their problems with them.

127. The headteacher has established rigorous procedures to monitor pupils' punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance. The school's policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are very effective and teachers are skilled at implementing a range of effective strategies to secure positive behaviour and attitudes.

128. Pupils whose behaviour is giving cause for concern are counselled, parents are involved and support is sought from external agencies and the LEA if necessary. These arrangements work well and with support, pupils' behaviour improves. When behaviour falls below accepted levels, teachers deal with situations firmly, quietly and calmly.

129. Effective procedures are in place to encourage good attendance and punctuality, to ensure pupils' absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations where necessary.

130. The school's partnership with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is very productive. Regular meetings contribute to the successful monitoring of attendance and to the development of further strategies to improve attendance rates.

131. The indifferent attitude of a minority of parents in accepting responsibility for the regular and punctual attendance of their children is disappointing to the school. In a minority of cases, the welfare service prosecutes parents for failing to ensure their children attend school on a regular basis.

132. The school has clear, well-documented policies and procedures, including risk assessment, for assuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. The headteacher, staff and governors monitor health and safety issues carefully and review arrangements on a regular basis.

133. As part of *Welsh Network of Healthy Schools*, the school is successful in promoting healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Pupils can buy fruit at break-time and have access to fresh water throughout the school day.

134. The duty of care is fundamental to the school's ethos and consequently staff work in pupils' best interests to nurture their welfare and to protect them. The school's policy and procedures to deal with child protection issues are clearly

understood by all staff and training is regularly updated. The headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection issues and effective working partnerships have been established with social services and a range of external welfare agencies.

135. The provision the school make for pupils with SEN in mainstream and in the SNLC meets the requirements of the revised code of practice and is exemplary. Among the many outstanding features of this provision is the effectiveness of the integration of pupils from the SNLC with mainstream classes during some lessons. The practice clearly benefits the personal and social learning of all pupils and ensures equal opportunities for all.

136. The school also makes very good provision for the special educational needs of brighter pupils through well organised withdrawal groups to extend their learning.

137. Pupils on the SEN register in mainstream classes profit from well focused learning activities and good levels of support from LSAs. This enables pupils to make good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans. (IEPs)

138. The SENCO works diligently with pupils with SEN in mainstream classes to ensure that such pupils have high levels of concentrated support and that their progress is tracked well. Class teachers monitor progress carefully and ensure that pupils move steadily toward their individual targets for improvement.

139. Pupils who are in the SNLC, including those with complex personal and learning difficulties, make good and sometimes very good progress in learning. Their teachers have very high expectations of them and pupils respond positively. Assertive discipline is used very effectively by teachers and all adults working with children. As a result, classrooms are mostly calm and workmanlike places. The praise that teachers lavish on these pupils has a powerful impact upon the good progress they make.

140. Record keeping and assessment procedures are well managed by the SENCO and the teacher in charge of the SNLC. IEPs are regularly reviewed and progress rigorously monitored. They are pupil specific and well focused on helping each pupil to achieve.

141. Parents are closely involved in the writing of the IEPs and in reviews each term. Parents are kept very well informed about the progress their children make in their schoolwork.

142. Good links with outside agencies are maintained. Teachers take advantage of the support of outside agencies such as the educational psychologist and the behavioural support team through regular SEN clinics.

143. The school's provision for ensuring equal opportunities is good with outstanding features. Pupils spoken to during the inspection expressed the view that everyone has equal treatment and that there are no gender issues; boys and girls have the same opportunities.

144. The measures taken by the school to eliminate oppressive behaviour including racial discrimination, bullying and all other forms of harassment are very effective. Any incidents are infrequent and the school functions well as a harmonious community where all pupils are valued equally.

145. Pupils deal with the notion of disability with great understanding and sensitivity. Their perceptions of disability go beyond the physical aspect and in this respect they feel that the school deals with disability well. It is clear through discussion with pupils that the positive attitudes shown by them towards those with disability are being promoted well by the school.

146. Policies to promote race equality and diversity are in place and are actively promoted through the curriculum, circle time, assemblies and acts of collective worship. There is a designated member of staff to deal with any racial incidents if and when they happen.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

147. The findings of the inspection team agree with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.

148. The overall quality of leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff with management responsibilities, subject leaders and governors is excellent. This strong teamwork effectively supports pupils and enables them to make very good progress.

149. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. She has a clear vision for the school and has, with the help of her staff, transformed its ethos, raised the aspirations of its pupils and improved the quality of the education it provides, since her appointment.

150. The headteacher is very successful in engaging parents more effectively in the life of the school and in involving them in their children's education. She leads by example, while also allowing colleagues the opportunity to develop their own leadership qualities and responsibilities.

151. The values and aims of the school, based on encouragement and respect, are evident in every aspect of the life in the school and the conduct of those who work there. The working relationships between the head teacher, staff, parents and other stakeholders are outstanding. Parents are extremely confident in the school and are delighted by the way in which standards of behaviour have improved.

152. The excellent deputy headteacher shares the head's vision and belief in the school. He supports the head very effectively and provides a strong role model for staff and pupils. The deputy assists the head in monitoring all aspects of school, including lessons, support of pupils and teachers' planning. He also has designated responsibility for looked after pupils, those that are gifted and talented, and for assessment.

153. Staff work closely together in year-group teams and support each other very well. Roles and responsibilities are very clearly understood. Subject leaders regularly monitor the quality of the work in their subjects and manage their resources effectively. They feed information back to staff and governors on strengths and areas for development.

154. Leaders and managers strive to improve end of key stage results year on year through setting challenging targets for their pupils. They take account of national and local priorities such as the need to provide water and fruit for pupils and to develop pupils' responsibility for their own learning through 'Building Learning Power' initiatives. They ensure that the school teaches sustainable development and works with the community on recycling projects.

155. Staff receive very good training and development through the school's performance management system. They are encouraged to select training courses to suit their own developmental needs as well as the priorities of the school. The school also very successfully uses whole school training to address identified priorities such as behaviour and anger management. This has been particularly effective in maintaining a consistent approach to handling conflict.

156. A large number of staff pursue research and development opportunities and acquire specific and higher qualifications. There are appropriate induction programmes for both newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school, including LSAs.

157. The GB is extremely capable and competent and very supportive of the school. It has a clear understanding of its role and discharges its responsibilities very effectively. Governors know the strengths of the school and areas for development because they self-evaluate well. They are fully aware of how their standards compare with other schools both locally and nationally. They receive detailed information on standards from the head teacher and they know how to ask the right questions. Governors analyse the performance of boys and girls and 'looked after' pupils in addition to the achievement of SEN pupils and those with language needs.

158. Governors have a good understanding of recent developments in the subjects for which they have responsibilities. They examine pupils' books, meet curriculum leaders and study schemes of work to familiarise themselves with what is being taught and assess how well pupils are doing. Governors confidently seek evidence when assessing the impact of new initiatives. They are increasingly aware of their responsibility for observing teaching and learning, though this aspect of their role is still developing. They attend relevant training and identify their own areas for development.

159. The GB meets regularly throughout the school year and fulfils all regulatory and legal requirements. Appropriate policies are in place to meet statutory requirements and these are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

160. Governors set the strategic direction for the school through working with the headteacher to draw up an effective School Improvement Plan (SIP) that prioritises costs and reviews targets.

161. Governors have a good oversight of the budget and supervise expenditure well. Decisions on expenditure are closely linked to the priorities identified in the SIP and they make every effort to secure best value for money.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

162. The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's self-evaluation.

163. The headteacher, governors and staff are fully committed to improving standards and a very positive culture of self-evaluation has been developed. There are agreed values and norms about all aspects of school life, particularly pupils' learning and behaviour.

164. Highly effective procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvements. The outcomes are based on first-hand experience and involve all those who have an interest in the school's work. The involvement and views of parents and pupils are central to the self-evaluation process and are gained through questionnaires and through the school council.

165. Subject leaders scrutinise pupils' work and teachers' planning documents, and gather exemplars of good practice in a very broad range of subject portfolios. A rolling programme of classroom observations to monitor teaching and learning is undertaken by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and LEA advisors. Each subject area has been carefully evaluated to identify strengths and areas for development.

166. The analysis of assessment records, including end of key stage tests, helps to identify trends and shortcomings and there is a very effective and useful system in place for tracking and monitoring individual pupils, or specific groups of pupils, across the school.

167. The school's self-evaluation report is first-class. It clearly identifies the sources of evidence to support the answers for each key question. It is concise yet comprehensive, and accurately identifies where improvements are needed.

168. The report is an outstanding feature and informs the school's improvement plan (SIP) with targets and priorities for improvement. The SIP is a very good working document and the targets set are regularly reviewed and monitored by staff and

governors. The GB ensures that each target is fully supported by appropriate resources.

169. Consistent improvements over the past three years, particularly in pupils' standards and behaviour, are a direct result of plans and actions.

170. The inspection team agreed with the judgements made by the school in all seven key questions.

171. The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection. All the key issues have been fully addressed. The quality of teaching and learning has been significantly improved and a high quality of leadership and management has emerged. This is outstanding.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

172. The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's judgement in the self-evaluation report.

173. The school is very well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers, who are well deployed. They ensure that the National Curriculum (NC) is delivered effectively and that the learning and pastoral needs of all pupils, including those with SEN, are well met. Teachers are supported by well-motivated LSAs. Together they are a very effective team, successful in promoting high standards in pupils' work and behaviour.

174. There is an excellent culture of mutual support among the teachers and they work together with high levels of professionalism. Support staff are well trained and carry out their duties with dedication. Teachers and support staff share daily planning for the classes and this ensures time is well used.

175. Performance management procedures are fully active. They are rigorous and ensure that the professional needs of teachers and the needs of the school are fulfilled. Network group meetings, where staff meet colleagues from different schools in the locality to discuss among other things, curriculum issues, add another dimension to professional development.

176. Although teachers attend out-of-school courses, in house training has been particularly successful in providing effective staff development.

177. The school makes very good provision for the induction and training of newly qualified teachers. (NQTs) Such teachers are given the maximum support from their colleagues and have access to out of school courses designed to meet the needs of NQTs. Additionally, the school has set in place provision for the mentoring of teachers in the early stages of their career. Currently, the deputy headteacher is the school's NQT mentor.

178. The school caretaker carries out his responsibilities very well ensuring the safety and well beings of all pupils. The cleaning staff keep the school in a high state of cleanliness. The very good standards observed during the inspection are a credit to them. Mid-day supervisors and dining and kitchen staff contribute strongly to the inclusive ethos of the school in which all pupils are valued.

179. The standard of the accommodation is very good for the number of pupils on role. Classrooms are sufficiently large and adjacent work areas cater admirably for a range of practical and small-group work. The computer suite is sufficiently large to accommodate a whole class. There is also a multi-sensory room presently used by pupils with SEN in the Learning Centres at the school.

180. The school is decorated to a good standard and displays of pupils' work around the school are outstanding. They provide many opportunities for pupils to demonstrate, with pride, the quality in their work.

181. The outside accommodation is large and provides plenty of space for pupils attending the school. There are plans to use some of the green area to set up a forest school. The school council is active in planning for benches on hard play areas and for the restoration of playground markings.

182. The school has a plentiful supply of good quality resources to meet the needs of the school curriculum. Very good and efficient use is made of them by teachers and pupils to enhance learning.

183. The computer suite is generously supplied with personal computers and three classrooms are fitted with inter-active white boards. However, there are no laptop computers in classrooms for pupils to use for research activities. SNLC classes are equipped with stand-alone computers to support differentiation and leaning.

184. Very good use is made of people from outside the school. Authors, artists, musicians and other visitors enhance the quality of the school curriculum. Similarly, pupils use the locality and undertake educational visits to places of interest.

185. Spending is very well managed to support the work of the school. Purchasing is led by self evaluation and priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Curriculum co-ordinators monitor, audit and evaluate resources in their subject areas. They ensure that the quality is maintained.

186. The senior leadership team and the governing body, through its finance sub committee, manage the budget effectively. The school makes the best use of all its resources to provide the very best learning opportunities for all its pupils.

187. The school provides very good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

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

Good features

188. Pupils throughout the school use their well developed listening skills to very good effect in lessons. They pay close attention to what their teachers tell them and thereby clearly understand what they are being taught and what their teachers expect of them. Because their listening skills are very good younger pupils understand the purpose of the lesson and quickly engage with the main focus of the learning activity.

189. Older pupils too, use their highly developed listening skills effectively. In sessions where they collaborate with one another to brainstorm ideas, they listen to one another carefully and respond appropriately, advancing the thinking powers of all those in the group. Less-able and quieter pupils are drawn in and feel that their contributions are valued.

190. Pupils with SEN and those in the SNLC also listen very well to their teachers and to each other. Pupils in the Learning Centres are particularly supportive of each other as they strive to express their ideas.

191. Pupils, including those with SEN, are making good progress in developing their speaking skills. Many of them are eager to answer questions during lessons. They clearly enjoy advancing their own points of view when the questions are open-ended. Many show a conscious attempt to use more sharply focused words to express themselves. When speaking to visitors, older pupils in particular express themselves clearly and precisely, especially, when they feel there is a need for candour. Pupils in the SNLC use their speaking skills well to talk about their learning activities and those things they take pleasure in.

192. Pupils throughout the school including those with SEN in mainstream classes and those in the SNLC respond positively to the books they read. Younger, able and more-able pupils use their developing word attack skills effectively to read more difficult words. They talk about characters and plots and express reading preferences. Older, less-able pupils clearly enjoy their reading activities. They use high levels of concentration when they absorb themselves in books. More-able pupils can discuss at some length the merits of books written by famous authors such as *J.K. Rowlings* and *Roald Dahl*. Some express a keen interest in the works of Shakespeare and of Charles Dickens. Able and more-able pupils read with good levels of accuracy and fluency and often use intonation well when reading out loud.

193. From Y3 to Y6 and in the SNLC, pupils take great pride in their handwriting. They learn the skills well and by the time they reach Y6, many pupils can write fluently in a cursive style where letters are well proportioned, joined uniformly and word spacing is even. Because of the very good attention they pay to developing

good handwriting, the presentation of their work is good and sometimes very good. Pupils in the SNLC learn to write very well. They pay close attention to the conventions of handwriting and as a result can produce work where the handwriting is well formed and therefore the meaning of their writing is clear to the reader. All pupils appreciate the award of pen licenses when their handwriting reaches a good standard. They strive hard to make sure their handwriting maintains a high standard to enable them to retain their award.

194. As they progress through the school pupils persevere with their spelling and their use of punctuation and achieve well.

195. Year three pupils successfully collaborate to create interesting stories in the style of legends and myths. They use their thinking skills well to create interesting story lines supported by descriptive and expressive words. They have a good understanding of the structure of stories and use sentences appropriate to each stage in the text.

196. Pupils in Y3 and Y4 increasingly use short sentences combined with longer more descriptive sentences to increase the impact of their writing. They have a good knowledge of different genres of writing and write for different audiences with the power sometimes to shock and to amuse. They use their writing notebooks well to record their ideas and redraft their work to ensure high standards of presentation.

197. In Y6, pupils study the work of *William Shakespeare* with much interest and compare *Shakespearean* and modern day writing. They develop a very good understanding of the essential features of each type of writing. As a result, they write impressive imaginative letters in the style of *Shakespeare*. They use their ideas perceptively, and describe how a supporting character views the plot in one of the scenes from *Macbeth* in the dramatic language of the time. Pupils in Y6 use dictionaries and thesauruses effectively to ensure accuracy in their work.

198. Pupils in the SNLC work hard at their writing tasks. Whatever the length of their writing, they take pride in presenting their ideas. Many combine interesting sentences and descriptive vocabulary to produce good quality work to the best of their ability.

Welsh second language

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

Good features

199. As they progress through the school, pupils, including those in the SNLS classes, use the language with increasing accuracy and confidence for a range of purposes and in a variety of context. They use incidental Welsh effectively during registration periods and social occasions.

200. They sing a range of songs and hymns, including the Welsh national anthem, with clarity, confidence and enjoyment.

201. Pupils understand a variety of everyday classroom instructions and questions, responding accurately. They ask and answer questions about the weather, their feelings and their personal details, using a wide range of vocabulary and sometimes using the past tense.

202. Older pupils hold extended conversations when discussing their likes and dislikes of a range of foods, hobbies and activities. They extend sentences with different conjunctions and explain the reasons for their answers to simple questions.

203. They complete a succession of written tasks in their workbooks correctly.

204. Their ability to count, tell the time and create simple dialogues using learnt language patterns is developing well.

Science

Key Stage 2: Grade 1 – Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

205. Pupils' investigative and experimental skills are developing very well. When brainstorming ideas, pupils draw successfully on the knowledge and understanding they acquired in earlier lessons. In the SNLC classes, pupils have excellent recall of previous work.

206. Pupils work extremely well in groups, listening to each other's ideas and coming to corporate decisions. They make sensible predictions using the correct scientific vocabulary and draw conclusions consistent with the evidence.

207. Following a wide range of practical investigations and problem-solving activities, pupils have developed an excellent understanding of what contributes a fair test. They understand that the accuracy of results is affected by any small change in the conduct of an experiment.

208. Very good quality presentation of outcomes, in table form or graphically using their ICT skills, portray the confidence they have in their science work.

Good features

209. Pupils successfully construct simple electrical circuits and correctly explain how switches control the flow of electricity. Older pupils know the difference between circuits in parallel or in series and are aware of the significance of these in everyday life.

210. Through well planned investigations, they accurately sort a variety of materials according to their properties, including their use as conductors or insulators of electricity or whether they are magnetic or non-magnetic.

211. Pupils identify and name the organs of flowering plants and explain the different methods of seed dispersal. They are well aware of the different types of environment that plants and animals need to survive successfully.

212. They know the requirements of a healthy diet, the importance of exercise and the harmful effects of smoking and drugs on the body.

213. Older pupils correctly explain the relationship between the earth, the moon and the sun, and their effect on night and day.

Information technology

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

Good features

214. Pupils in all year groups are confident in using Power Point to create a range of different presentations. They progress well in exploring different ways of displaying the slides, as well as experimenting with additional features and options appropriate to their stage of learning. This also helps them to successfully develop their literacy skills. Most pupils become increasingly confident in using the internet to research a range of cross-curricular topics.

215. Pupils in Y3 are very enthusiastic about their work in IT and they make very good progress in acquiring new skills. They confidently move between the pages of a database and search for the answers to given questions. They quickly learn to change from record view to picture view using the correct buttons. Pupils successfully sort pages according to different criteria.

216. Year four pupils use technology with growing confidence to develop skills in other subjects. For example, they search the internet for information on climate, location, population and language when studying St Lucia. This helps extend their enquiry skills in Geography. Pupils enter information into text boxes to produce newspaper articles on the Stricken Stuarts, using word processing. This also helps them develop their literacy skills in addition to their understanding of history.

217. Pupils in Y5 demonstrate that they thoroughly understand the use of modelling as a method of simulating real-life experiences. For example, they confidently describe the design of games they have previously examined during the course of their internet research. They then discuss their own design with considerable knowledge and understanding.

218. Pupils link their work in IT very effectively to their learning in other subjects when they devise their own games that teach scientific or historical facts. They successfully create and add hyperlink buttons to their games. They explore independently how to hide and alter buttons and clearly describe the process to their colleagues.

219. Pupils in Y6 use *Excel* to display and interrogate data on methods of transport. They also use the program to create a formula to calculate percentages. They

explore a range of graphs, including line graphs, and discuss their suitability for displaying different types of information. They select the most appropriate for the purpose and explain why this is best.

220. Pupils develop a good understanding of the use of technology in everyday life when they use the internet and email. They also e-mail in Welsh and this helps them develop their bilingual skills. Pupils use technology to enhance their work in other subjects. For example, they use the digital camera to photograph their partner as a basis for their artwork on ethnic face painting in cultural ceremonies.

Shortcomings

221. Pupils` progress is uneven in some classes and year groups and their knowledge of some of the elements of the IT curriculum is under-developed.

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| Art |
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Key Stage 2: Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

222. Pupils throughout the school use sketchbooks very well to develop ideas using different media to try out techniques and to capture images for evaluation. Pupils use the contents of their sketchbooks to provide the inspiration for more-finished pieces of work. The quality and the originality of their finished artwork are often enhanced by this practice.

223. Pupils from Y3 to Y6 use the school digital cameras to provide starting points for their creative activities. From these they make effective use of a range of materials, tools and techniques to produce interesting and pleasing images and artefacts.

224. Pupils throughout the key stage have a good knowledge of the work of famous artists. They study the work of Welsh artists and artists from other cultures. Through this study, pupils articulate their understanding of diversity as represented through art from different parts of the world and an appreciation of the variety of subject matter to be found in the work of Welsh artists.

225. In Y3, pupils refine their perceptions of the shape and proportion of faces through portraiture. They develop a good understanding of how a face is proportioned and use this understanding to make portraits, using careful line drawings, which are full of character and of a good standard.

226. Pupils in Y4 enjoy the tactile experience of moulding clay. They observe closely the shape and form of various natural objects, often using magnifying glasses to pick out the detail. They experiment with ways of making spherical shapes out of the clay. They use tools sensitively to represent the lines, marks and textures they have observed in natural objects.

227. In Y5, pupils exploring Welsh landscape successfully use watercolour washes to create the sense of space and light in their pictures. They use mixed media very effectively in their collage and pastel work depicting the image of landscape seen from the air and from ground level.

228. Pupils in Y6, in their study of the works of artists in Wales, have good levels of appreciation of subject matter and the techniques they use to achieve originality and impact. They are able to compare and contrast the work of artists in Wales such as *David Bellamy*, *Nicholas Evans* and *Jack Crabtree*. They use charcoal to create their own pictures in the style of Jack Crabtree using pressure on the charcoal and smudging techniques skilfully to produce pleasing and effective work.

229. Pupils in the SNLC approach their artwork with much enthusiasm. They have great aptitude for making different marks to achieve different effects. They really enjoy trying things out. They evaluate their work and share their evaluations with one another effectively. They experiment using different surfaces to make interesting prints and try hard to improve their techniques.

Religious education

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

Good features

230. Year three pupils discuss special places demonstrating good knowledge. They pose sensible questions for their visit to the local church and record their findings. They discuss the importance of rules and draw up their own list of commandments or rules for behaviour.

231. Pupils know a good range of Bible stories such as the story of the Good Samaritan. Year three pupils are developing a good understanding of Judaism through exploring religious artefacts. They ponder over the uses of the Seder Plate, the Torah and the Mezuzah and discuss their ideas with others. Pupils know that Jews worship in a synagogue and eat special foods as part of their religious practices. They also have some basic knowledge of Islam through studying the nine pillars. Some pupils explain that Mecca is a Holy place for Muslims.

232. Pupils in the SNLC achieve very well in religious education. Pupils in Y3 reflect on 'specialness'. They know why people go to church. They design posters encouraging people to respect one another and to be kind and be helpful.

233. Year five pupils in mainstream and SNLC use ICT to support their learning in religious education very effectively. They produce power point presentations and research charity work using the internet. They access information about minefields and discuss the work of the charities that support victims and campaign for mines to be cleared.

234. Pupils in Y4 know that the Bible is important to Christians. They develop an awareness of self-denial when they reflect on 'What I would give up'. They explore

celebrations from different faiths and understand that these are associated with the commemoration of past events.

235. Year five pupils progress particularly well in their religious understanding. Pupils understand what makes a good Christian and explore ways of helping others. They discuss charity work and become increasingly aware that it reflects Jesus' teaching. Pupils explore a good range of religious artefacts and resource materials to carry out effective research into different religions.

236. Through their research into pilgrimage, pupils understand that groups of people from many different religions, including Christianity, journey to Holy sites. They discover that there are Holy sites all over the world, including Britain and Wales, and locate these on a globe. Some pupils begin to realise that Israel is a place of pilgrimage for both Christians and Jews. Pupils have a particularly good understanding of Islam and discuss the purpose of the hajj confidently. They also study Hinduism and retell some of the stories.

237. Pupils in Y6 link their work in religious education very effectively with their literacy lessons. They explore a good range of traditional religious stories from different faiths and cultures. Pupils reflect on possible conflict between the scientific and Christian views of creation. They prepare very thoughtful points for discussion and some begin to reconcile the two arguments in a very mature manner.

238. Pupils understand that different religions may have different belief systems. They study Judaism and link some of the traditional stories with present day religious festivals. Pupils identify good and bad characters in the stories and consider ways in which good and evil might manifest itself in human behaviour.

Shortcomings:

239. Pupils' first hand experience of talking to those from modern-day faith communities other than Christians is under-developed.

School's response to the inspection

The Headteacher, staff and governors of Monnow Junior School welcome the Estyn report following the inspection undertaken in January 2006. The inspection report, which supports the school's own self evaluation, acknowledges the many strengths and outstanding features of the school. The awarding of the highest grade in all seven key questions confirms the professional and positive manner with which the teaching staff, support staff and governors undertake their duties. Such positive endorsements will enable the school to build on these very high standards for even further improvement.

We are particularly pleased that the report states that the quality of teaching and standards of achievement are well above the Welsh Assembly all-Wales targets, and that the high quality teaching is a major strength of the school.

We are delighted to note that inspectors have commented on the many outstanding features in the care and support the school provides for all pupils, and that the behaviour and personal development of our pupils is judged to be excellent.

The inspection team recognised that the leadership of the school is both visionary and transformational and this has had a direct impact on progress since the last inspection; this was judged to be exceptional. The many outstanding features highlighted in the report signify that we as a high functioning and professional team can confidently move forward and continue to make further improvement.

The Headteacher, staff and governing body will address the inspection recommendations to:

- continue to raise standards
- ensure clarity in the annual report to parents
- maintain the very good ethos of the school
- continue with efforts to improve attendance and punctuality

These recommendations will form part of the 2006/2007 School Improvement Plan. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress made.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Name of school | Monnow Junior School |
| School type | Nursery and Primary |
| Age-range of pupils | 7 – 11 years |
| Address of school | Darent Close, Bettws Newport |
| Postcode | NP9 6SQ |
| Telephone number | 01633 852636 |

| | |
|--|--|
| Headteacher | Mrs Meryl Echeverry |
| Date of appointment | October 2003 |
| Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority | Mr Noel Trigg Newport |
| Registered inspector | Mr Merfyn Douglas Jones |
| Dates of inspection | 16 th - 18 th January 2006 |

Appendix B

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 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 55 | 64 | 72 | 77 | 268 |

| Total number of teachers | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time equivalent (fte) |
| Number of teachers | 13 | 3 | 14.6 |

| Staffing information | |
|--|-------|
| Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes) | 21:1 |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes | n/a |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes | 4:1 |
| Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes | 27 |
| Teacher (fte): class ratio | 1.2:1 |

| Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection | | | |
|--|-----|-----|----------------|
| Term | N | R | Rest of School |
| Spring | n/a | n/a | 91% |
| Summer | n/a | n/a | 92% |
| Autumn | n/a | n/a | 92% |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals | 50% |
| Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection | 0 |

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

| National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2005 | | | | | | | Number of pupils in Y6 | | | | | 78 |
|---|--------------------|----------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|---|----|----|----|----|
| Percentage of pupils at each level | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | D | A | F | W | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| English | Teacher assessment | School | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 23 | 41 | 23 | |
| | | National | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 16 | 46 | 30 | |
| Welsh n/a | Teacher assessment | School | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | National | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mathematics | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 17 | 48 | 23 | |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 46 | 31 | |
| Science | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 13 | 3 | 40 | |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 50 | 37 | |

| 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 | 63% | In the school | n/a |
| In Wales | 70% | In Wales | n/a |

- D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
 A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
 F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
 W Pupils who are working towards level 1

The school chose not to involve the pupils in the national assessment tasks.

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

A team of five inspectors, including a lay inspector and a peer assessor, inspected the school over three days.

The headteacher was the nominee and played a supportive and active role during the inspection.

Pre-inspection meetings were held with staff, parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school.

Fifteen questionnaires were completed and returned by parents and carefully analysed by the inspection team.

During the inspection, discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers and support staff.

Discussions were also held with pupils about their work and the life of the school in general.

Forty-five lessons or part lessons were observed and a sample of pupils' work, practical and written, from across the ability range in each year group, was examined.

Pupils' behaviour was observed at various times during the school day.

Inspectors attended assemblies and observed extra-curricular activities.

Documentation presented by the school prior to, and during the inspection, was analysed.

Post-inspection meetings were held with the staff and with the governing body to discuss the outcomes of the inspection.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

| Team member | Responsibilities |
|--|---|
| Merfyn D Jones Registered Inspector | Key Questions 1, 2 and 6 Subjects: Welsh second language and science |
| Mrs Jan Marsden Team Inspector | Key Questions 3 and 5 Subjects: Information Technology and religious education |
| Mr Kerry Knapper Team Inspector | Key Questions: 4 and 7 Subjects: English and art |
| Mrs Janet Warr Lay Inspector | Contributing to all key questions and subjects |
| Mrs M Echeverry Nominee | Contributing to all key questions |
| Mrs Joan Giles Peer Assessor | Contributing to all key questions and subjects |

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Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the headteacher, staff, governors, pupils and parents of Monnow Junior School for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.