

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

**Oldcastle Junior School
South Street,
Bridgend.
CF31 3ED**

School Number: 6722198

Date of Inspection: 08/05/06

by

**Michael T. Ridout
78730**

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- * 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
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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gsi.gov.uk

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Oldcastle 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 **Oldcastle Junior School** took place between 08/05/06 and 11/05/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Michael T. Ridout 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. Oldcastle Junior School is a community school for boys and girls aged from seven to eleven years. It is organised in eight classes. There are 223 pupils on roll and the average class size is 28. There are 10.1 full-time equivalent (fte) teachers, including four part-time teachers. There are four learning support officers (LSO) to enhance this provision.
2. The school is situated in an urban residential area of mostly privately owned houses near the centre of Bridgend. The school describes the community as relatively advantaged. Three per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is well below national and local averages. Three per cent of pupils are from ethnic minorities. A very small number of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. English is the predominant tongue spoken and the school teaches Welsh as a second language.
3. Assessment data confirms that the school receives pupils from a range of abilities. In every cohort, there is a high proportion of more-able pupils and the relatively small proportion of less-able pupils is reflected in 11% of pupils being identified as having special educational needs (SEN). This is a low proportion when compared with most schools. No pupils have a statement of SEN.
4. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Investors in People accreditation. The school was previously inspected in June 2000. Since that time, resources for information and communications technology (ICT) have been updated. Although the number on roll has reduced, the basic organisation of classes remains the same and the judicious use of financial resources has enabled the school to maintain a good level of staffing.

The school's priorities and targets

5. The school's work is guided by its motto: *Success lies upstream you cannot drift there.* Through its aims the school endeavours to provide:
 - *a community where there are good relationships and there is mutual respect between all members of that community;*
 - *a curriculum and approach to learning which is matched to the needs of the children;*
 - *a positive atmosphere, which encourages self-esteem and high expectations.*
6. The main priorities in the school improvement plan (SIP) 2005/6 are:
 - to maintain standards in English, mathematics and science;
 - to review and revise assessment procedures;
 - to achieve the Eco school award and achieve healthy school status;
 - to increase the amount of incidental Welsh used in the school;
 - to implement *Brain Gym* and *Mind Mapping* in all classes;
 - to implement peer support for anti-bullying strategies.

Summary

7. Oldcastle Junior School successfully maintains its position as a high achieving school. The many outstanding features in its provision reflect exemplary qualities in educational leadership that skilfully promote effective teamwork and a vibrant learning culture.

Table of grades awarded

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

8. The inspection team agrees with the grades awarded by the school for each of the key questions in its self evaluation document.

Standards

9. In thirty-two lessons or parts of lessons, in the subjects inspected, standards of achievement were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
34%	53%	13%	-	-

10. Grades for standards in subjects inspected:

Subjects	Inspection grade
Welsh second language	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 1
Science	Grade 1
Information technology	Grade 2
History	Grade 1
Music	Grade 2

11. The overall standards attained in literacy and numeracy are outstanding.
12. Learners of all ages and abilities, including those with SEN, achieve well in relation to the learning targets set for them by the school.

13. The overall level of competence achieved in key skills is outstanding.
14. Pupils' bilingual skills are developing well.
15. The school's National Curriculum (NC) results are outstanding. They reflect consistency in the standards attained, a trend of improvement and the maintenance of high standards.
16. The most recent results place the school's performance in the top twenty-five per cent of schools in relation to national benchmarks.
17. Pupils make good overall progress in learning, although the very good progress of the more-able pupils in the upper school is not always consistent across the school.
18. Pupils' positive attitudes, exemplary relationships and highly responsible behaviour are outstanding features.
19. Pupils make excellent progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development.

The quality of education and training

20. In forty lessons or parts of lessons, mainly in the subjects inspected, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
25%	57%	18%	-	-

21. The proportion of Grade 1 and Grade 2 teaching observed is well ahead of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of 65% Grade 2 or better teaching to be achieved by 2007.
22. The good and outstanding features of teaching include high expectations, knowledge of *best practice*, excellent working relationships and enabling pupils to achieve success.
23. Lesson planning builds well on schemes of work and is tailored particularly well to pupils' differing needs in the upper school.
24. The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning is outstanding.
25. The richness of curricular provision is outstanding. Particular features include first-hand experiences, extra-curricular provision, very effective planning to promote basic and key skills and the strong focus on personal and social education (PSE).
26. This provision reflects the strengths of the school's partnerships with parents, the community and other institutions.

27. The school provides very high quality care, support and guidance to all its pupils. It is an inclusive community with an enabling ethos that is outstanding.

Leadership and management

28. The quality of educational leadership and direction provided for the school is exemplary.
29. Senior managers plan effectively for improvement and strategic management is particularly successful in promoting improvements.
30. A culture of self-evaluation linked to rigorous monitoring is a key feature in the school's success.
31. The provision and efficient use of all resources are outstanding.
32. The school has maintained its position as a *good school with several very good features* since it was last inspected in June 2000. Progress in relation to the key issues raised at the time is good.
33. Given the maintenance of high standards over time and the culture of continuous improvement the school provides very good value for money.

Recommendations

34. The staff and governors should continue to work in partnership with appropriate agencies in implementing the school improvement plan and placing particular emphasis on:
- R1 improving further the already high standards of achievement across the curriculum by ensuring the most-able pupils consistently achieve their best.

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

35. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report for this key question.
36. The outstanding features of pupils' achievement are particularly evident in:
- the high standards attained in the core subjects at the end of KS2;
 - the high standards achieved in literacy and numeracy;
 - high levels of competence in key skills;
 - positive attitudes and responsible behaviour;
 - excellent progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development.
37. In thirty-two lessons or parts of lessons, in the subjects inspected, standards of achievement were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
34%	53%	13%	-	-

38. Relative to age and ability learners achieve very well across the curriculum. This is clearly evident in the high standards of work observed and the confident manner in which learners recall previous work and confirm the extent of their knowledge and skills, both during lessons and in discussion with inspectors.
39. The overall standards attained in literacy and numeracy are outstanding.
40. Learners of all ages achieve very well in relation to the targets set for them in English, mathematics and science. Furthermore, less-able pupils, including those with SEN, achieve very well in relation to the targets set for them in individual education plans.
41. Across the school, pupils reach outstanding levels of competence in key skills. The older more-able pupils have a very good understanding of the importance of key skills for lifelong learning and demonstrate particular competence in using key skills to further their studies.
42. Bilingual competence is developing well. Pupils' oracy skills in English are particularly well developed and in Welsh pupils confidently use known phrases in dialogue with adults and their peers.
43. Learners achieve similar levels of success regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. The school is successful in ensuring boys and girls attain similarly high standards in the core subjects of the NC.
44. The school's results in the end of key stage NC statutory assessments are outstanding. The school is justifiably proud of its results. At the end of KS2, pupils attain high standards in relation to national expectations in the core

subjects of the NC. The school meets or exceeds its end-of-key-stage targets for attainment.

45. The KS2 results for 2005 show 95 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or above in English, and 97 per cent in mathematics and in science. More than half the pupils attained Level 5 in English and mathematics and around two-thirds in science. The proportion attaining at least Level 4 in all three subjects was 95 per cent. This is well above national figures for 2004.
46. The profile of the KS2 results is well above the national performance figures for 2004. In comparison with similar schools having up to eight per cent free school meals, results were well above average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion attaining at least expected levels in all three subjects places the school's performance in the top twenty-five per cent of schools, when compared with national benchmarks.
47. Trends in the school's performance show a steady improvement with the maintenance of high standards. Analysis of the results indicates generally consistent performance. The school's NC results are an impressive achievement.
48. Learners readily acquire new knowledge and skills. Pupils of all abilities listen attentively to their teachers and contribute enthusiastically to discussions, often demonstrating a good capacity to develop ideas and increase their understanding. The first-hand evidence of inspection indicates that at least good overall progress is made across subjects, although the very good progress made by the more-able pupils in the upper school is not always consistent across the school.
49. Pupils have a sound awareness of their individual learning targets and goals from constructive discussion with their teachers. Many have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work.
50. In line with age and ability, learners make good overall progress towards fulfilling their potential. At the end of KS2, they are particularly well prepared for the next stage of their education.
51. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are consistently good with outstanding features. This contributes significantly to the standards pupils achieve and to the quality of life in the school. The school is a very happy, caring and supportive community where all pupils are valued equally.
52. Pupils are well motivated, enthusiastic and enjoy their learning. They listen attentively to their teachers, engage readily in discussion, co-operate well with adults and their peers and settle quickly to their tasks. They sustain concentration, often for extended periods, and are keen to do their best.
53. Pupils' very good behaviour is evident not only in lessons, but also in morning worship, in their playground games, at meal times and in their orderly movement around the school. They are developing into independent, responsible and mature individuals who show respect and consideration for all involved in the school community.

54. Attendance rates are good, averaging 95 per cent for the past three terms and instances of unauthorised absence are minimal. Registration is conducted efficiently and teachers are rigorous in recording and reporting pupils' absence. Pupils are punctual and keen to attend school, and lessons start promptly.
55. The number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time rightly concerns the governing body (GB). This has an adverse impact on the continuity of pupils' formal education and decreases overall rates of attendance for the school.
56. The school complies with all attendance requirements set out in the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99, *Pupil Support and Social Inclusion*.
57. Pupils' ability to work independently, in pairs and as part of a group is generally very well developed. Pupils learn how to organise group activities fairly, share responsibilities and to ensure everyone contributes.
58. Older pupils, in particular, plan and organise their own work with minimum supervision, use their initiative and make decisions to improve their own learning. They are confident, articulate and display a high degree of self-discipline.
59. The ethos of the school values and celebrates imagination and individuality, and pupils are confident in expressing their ideas and opinions because they know their contributions are valued and respected by staff. In the upper school, pupils' problem-solving and decision-making skills are very good and they have a very clear understanding of democratic processes.
60. Pupils' personal, moral and social development is outstanding. The exemplary relationships that pupils enjoy with staff, the supportive ethos of the school and the sensitive moral and spiritual content of collective worship enables pupils to develop a secure set of moral and personal values to guide them. Pupils demonstrate honesty, fairness and tolerance in their work and play.
61. In discussion with pupils, they demonstrate a genuine respect for other faiths and cultural traditions within society and feel strongly that everyone should be treated equally, fairly and with dignity.
62. 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 locality 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

63. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report for this key question.
64. Teaching is a notable strength of the school. Outstanding features are particularly evident at the upper end of the key stage and although shortcomings were identified in a minority of lessons across the school, there is considerable evidence of the positive impact of teaching across the full curriculum.
- 65. In forty lessons or parts of lessons, mainly in the subjects inspected, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:**

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
25%	57%	18%	-	-

66. The proportion of lessons judged grade 1 is seven percent higher than the national picture reported in the most recent report by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector.
67. The outstanding features of teaching are:
- highly skilled teaching that challenges pupils to extend their learning and achieve their best;
 - the excellent quality of working relationships that promotes learning so well;
 - high levels of subject knowledge and of current *best practice* in primary teaching;
 - teacher-pupil interactions of a very high order.
68. Other good features evident in many lessons were:
- the variety of teaching techniques used, including clear explanations and the imaginative use of resources and artefacts to engage pupils' interest and concentration;
 - well focused interventions when pupils are working on tasks;
 - high expectations and lessons conducted at a very good and lively pace;
 - the imaginative use of the interactive whiteboard to enliven lessons;
 - the effective use of the LSO;
 - tasks well matched to pupils' differing needs and abilities;
 - effective plenary sessions linked to the lesson objective.
69. Occasional shortcomings were:
- introductions prolonged and a lack of focus on key aspects of new learning;
 - a slow pace to the lesson;
 - insufficient links with previous learning;
 - the tasks, for the more-able pupils in particular, were not always sufficiently challenging.

70. Teaching provides very good role models and the quality of the working relationship between the staff and pupils is exemplary. This is a key feature in the standards achieved as it makes a significant contribution to pupils' motivation, effort and learning. Pupils have great respect for their teachers and support staff.
71. Teachers set high expectations and pupils' efforts are praised. This makes an important contribution to their progress and achievement.
72. Teachers have good and sometimes very good subject knowledge. They are well informed about the latest developments in primary education. In lessons, they are very enthusiastic and use a variety of teaching strategies and relevant resources very effectively.
73. When working alongside teachers, the LSOs make a valuable contribution to the quality of the teaching and learning. They give very good help and guidance to small groups of pupils.
74. Planning for lessons is of a high standard overall. Plans denote clear aims and appropriate learning activities. For the most part the learning objectives are made very clear to pupils.
75. Taken overall, teaching effectively promotes equal opportunities. This is exemplified particularly well in the upper school where issues of gender, race and disability equality are proactively addressed.
76. Overall, teaching develops pupils' bilingual skills well. For the most part lessons provide relevant opportunities for pupils to use their second language in informal situations.
77. In general, effective use is made of assessment information, including day-to-day assessments, to group pupils and match work to individual needs and abilities. There is a good focus on tailoring the work to the needs of slower learners, but in otherwise good lessons the challenge provided in the work for more-able pupils is not always sufficiently developed to enable these pupils to excel.
78. The outstanding features of assessment include:
 - the rigour of teacher assessments and the consistency of pupil profiles;
 - the systematic use of standardised tests and assessments;
 - the quality and consistency of end of year reports to parents and carers.
79. The arrangements to assess, record and monitor learners' achievements and progress are well developed and provide a clear and accurate picture for individuals and year groups.
80. The statutory requirements for assessment are well met. In particular the process of setting individual and year group targets for attainment are both rigorous and effective.
81. There is good emphasis on promoting learners' understanding of the purpose of assessment. The marking of work is often used well to promote pupils' awareness of their achievements or an understanding of how to improve an aspect of work. Pupils have a sound understanding of their learning targets and the older pupils have opportunities to contribute to self-assessment, such as in reviewing their own progress.

82. The end-of-year written report provides parents and carers with a wide-ranging commentary about their child's progress and achievement. The high quality of these reports is exemplary and the arrangements for consultations with teachers are much valued by parents.

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

83. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report for this key question.
84. The overall quality, nature and richness of the curriculum are outstanding features of the school's provision. Particular features include:
- enrichment of the curriculum through first-hand experience and a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities;
 - very effective planning to promote basic and key skills;
 - the focus on personal and social education (PSE) and enabling pupils to learn with appropriate independence;
 - the school's partnerships with the community and other institutions.
85. The curriculum complies with statutory requirements, and equal access is provided to a broad and generally well balanced curriculum that is relevant to the needs and abilities of pupils. Knowledge and understanding is developed very well throughout the curriculum and for the most part the provision builds effectively on the well developed skills many pupils already possess.
86. Across the academic year, an appropriate amount of time is given to each subject. The overall framework for the curriculum includes detailed long-term and medium-term planning. This promotes appropriate breadth, progression and continuity in learning. The implementation of schemes of work is kept under review. The school is developing its provision further in information technology, to extend pupils' experiences in the use of simulation and modelling and in music, to ensure opportunities for composing and appraisal are consistently implemented.
87. There are rigorous and very effective strategies in place to map opportunities to develop the key skills in all subjects. This provision has been developed since the last inspection and the integrated whole-school approach now implemented is having a marked impact on standards.
88. Many of the learning experiences provided enable pupils to develop a range of skills relating to independent work. The opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs and groups are very important elements of the provision. These are outstanding features.
89. The school provides very good opportunities across the curriculum for developing pupils' creative skills. Furthermore, problem-solving skills are

effectively promoted, not only in mathematics, science and design and technology, but also in subjects such as history and geography.

90. After-school and lunch-time extra-curricular provision is wide ranging and has a very good quality, particularly in sport and music. More extra-curricular activities, than at the time of the last inspection, are now provided for younger pupils and the homework set across the key stage is appropriate and well targeted.
91. High regard is paid to the importance of learning from first-hand experience. Very well planned visits such as in science, history, geography and religious education have a significant impact on the standards achieved. This is an outstanding feature of provision. The curriculum is also enriched by the contribution of visitors that include both individuals and drama groups.
92. There is a strong Welsh ethos throughout this school. The emphasis placed upon, and the provision to promote, bilingual skills are developing well and becoming more consistent. Use of Welsh incidentally throughout the school day is encouraged and a recent initiative using *tocyn iaith* has proved very popular, and classes who win the weekly *cwpan Cymraeg* display it with pride.
93. The focus on the wider Welsh dimension is a strength of the provision and pupils are given very well focused opportunities to learn about contemporary Wales and its challenges as well as a detailed focus on aspects of its history. An annual eisteddfod provides very good opportunities for pupils to express their feelings and understanding through a range of media.
94. Effective opportunities to further pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures are clearly planned. Pupils understand and respect the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and social and cultural traditions. Collective worship, PSE, religious education and geography all contribute well to pupils' awareness of diversity within society. The school has participated in a Comenius project, linking with schools in several countries. This successfully increased pupils' understanding of the European dimension in education, as well as providing opportunities to develop key skills.
95. Pupils' spiritual development is very well promoted and they have experiences of an exceedingly high standard in the whole-school acts of collective worship. They have good opportunities to offer opinions and to reflect on the themes in the assemblies. Collective worship encourages a sense of awe and wonder, and a range of themes over the year encourages pupils to think about some of the fundamental questions of life. This provision includes a class assembly, presented by pupils, on a weekly rota.
96. Procedures for pupils' moral and social development are very good. The strong emphasis placed upon ensuring that pupils are polite to one another and to staff and visitors is very successful. Pupils' attitudes to education are healthy and enthusiastic. There is strong emphasis and constant encouragement to help others throughout the school. Personal responsibility, making choices, service to others, community and bullying are examples of themes that encourage social, moral and spiritual development.

97. There are very good and effective opportunities to promote co-operation and decision-making within groups in the classroom. Older pupils accept responsibilities to look after younger pupils. The peer mediation programme helps to ensure that playtimes are happy occasions. In addition, Y5 pupils help with reading in Y3. The school council is instrumental in developing pupil participation and encouraging greater awareness of the democratic process. Pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves is raised very effectively, they respond very well and make much effort in collecting money and contributing to good causes.
98. Provision for PSE and health education is very good. The coverage of PSE is successfully integrated throughout the curriculum and clearly identified in lesson planning. There is a clear and comprehensive scheme of work. Very effective use is made of circle-time sessions.
99. The school's partnerships with parents, the local community, other schools and higher education institutions are highly successful and have outstanding features that enrich the life and work of the school and enhance pupils' learning experiences.
100. Parents are very supportive of the school and are pleased with the standards their children achieve within a caring, supportive environment. They express satisfaction with the aims and values of the school and appreciate the ready access they have to the headteacher and staff.
101. Communication with parents is well established and effective. The quality of information provided in the school prospectus, the annual report of the GB and in the monthly newsletters is of very high quality and provides parents with comprehensive information about the life and work of the school as well as celebrating pupils' achievements. A constructive home-school agreement is in place, which has been well received by parents.
102. Parents and friends make a very good contribution to the life and work of the school by supporting school activities, accompanying pupils on educational visits and in fund-raising for the school. The Parent, Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA) organises many social and fund-raising activities that enhance links with the local community and provide the school with a valuable source of additional income. Funds raised are used purposefully to enhance learning resources for all pupils.
103. Highly effective pastoral, administrative and curriculum links have been developed with the receiving secondary school and with the infant school from which pupils transfer. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils are very good; Y3 pupils settle quickly into their new school, and every effort is made to ensure Y6 pupils are well prepared for secondary school and approach it with confidence.
104. The school enjoys a successful partnership with Trinity College, Carmarthen and regularly provides training facilities for student teachers. The school also welcomes secondary school students undertaking work-experience placements. Students are well supported and mentored by staff and they make a positive contribution to the life and work of the school.

105. The many positive links with the local community are very effective and contribute significantly to pupils' learning in a number of curriculum areas. The school and its various activities are very well supported and valued by the local community.
106. The school's commitment to work-related education is outstanding. A range of productive partnerships enriches pupils' learning with local employers and relevant agencies.
107. Teachers successfully address the vocational aspect of the PSE programme and a range of well planned visits to commercial, industrial and retail sites enhances pupils' learning. The school's partnership with the Ford Motor Company is particularly effective.
108. Pupils have a good understanding of the industrial changes that have taken place in Bridgend and are well informed of the impact that out-of-town retail developments have on the local economy.
109. Few teachers have undertaken a relevant industrial placement with a view to enhancing professional development and enriching curriculum provision for pupils, but placements are planned for the autumn term.
110. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are well developed. Mini-enterprise projects where pupils design, produce, finance and market their goods for sale give pupils good insight into the running of a profitable business.
111. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills and contribute to decision making through their involvement in competitions, the peer mediation initiative, and the school council and eco committee. A notable feature of the school is the way in which pupils themselves instigate change and translate their ideas into practical solutions.
112. The headteacher and staff are highly successful in tackling social disadvantage, in challenging stereotyping and in promoting equal opportunities for all pupils. High expectations of pupils with regard to behaviour and achievement, coupled with opportunities to develop pupils' independence ensure that all pupils know they are valued equally and as individuals. The school's commitment to equality and social inclusion is exemplary.
113. Pupils' awareness and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship is good and this is a rapidly developing aspect of the school's curriculum. The whole-school community actively promotes sustainable development and global citizenship through its commitment to *think global, act local*.
114. Pupils are involved in re-cycling schemes and understand the problems of litter and pollution. Members of the eco committee regularly monitor the school's water and energy consumption. As part of the *eco-schools award scheme*, the school is working towards achieving the silver award for conservation and commitment to the environment.

115. The highly successful partnerships established with schools in Finland, Italy and Japan enable pupils to have a truly international understanding of the lives of children in different countries and the global forces that shape their lives.
116. The school is successfully laying the foundations for lifelong learning and community regeneration, and national priorities are well reflected in the life and work of the school. The high priority given to pupils developing independence and taking responsibility for their own learning permeates school life.
117. Pupils know their community well and understand what is needed for its continued success. They recognise that through partnership, citizenship and care for the environment they can make a real contribution to their community.

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 made by the school in its self-evaluation report for this key question.
119. The particularly outstanding features identified include:
- the ethos of the school; the promotion of well-being, self-esteem and awareness of the needs of others;
 - liaison with partner schools and supporting agencies;
 - the school is an inclusive community.
120. The school provides very high quality care, support and personal guidance to its pupils. There is a calm and positive atmosphere and relationships based on courtesy and respect are of a very high order. Effort and success are very effectively celebrated.
121. Pupils of all abilities are included well in the life and work of the school. Their attitude towards the school is very positive and they hold the view, which they express strongly, that their school is a very caring and happy community. They are very confident that they can turn to teachers and support staff at any time for advice and support. They feel very much part of the decision making process as their views are regularly canvassed, such as through questionnaires.
122. All staff know pupils well and are aware of their backgrounds. Personal and pastoral care arrangements are very effective and are strengths of the school's provision.
123. The partnership with parents and carers is very good with effective and supportive links. Relationships are close and positive responses were received at the meeting prior to the inspection. Communication with parents is effective and the school responds positively to suggestions. A parental survey has been carried out on a range of issues. The school's open-door policy allows parents daily opportunities to discuss issues. More formal arrangements exist for parents and carers to attend the school twice a year for dialogue with teachers on their child's progress.

124. There are very good links with a range of outside agencies.
125. The processes of induction from the infant school are very well established and effective. These arrangements support pupils and inform parents well.
126. Transfer arrangements to the comprehensive school are also very well developed and effective. Teachers from Brynteg Comprehensive School regularly attend 'cluster' meetings with local primary phase schools. This enhances the transition for pupils and in recent years effective curricular links between the schools has enhanced continuity in pupils studies very well.
127. The monitoring of behaviour, attendance, punctuality and performance is thorough and rigorous. The school's policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are very effective and consistently applied by staff. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of all adults in the school.
128. The quality of academic support and guidance, based on individual assessment and linked to high but realistic expectations of pupils, is well established and very effective. Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in the setting and monitoring of their individual targets and in planning their own progress.
129. The headteacher has established very effective procedures to encourage good attendance and punctuality, to ensure pupils' absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations where necessary. Regular and effective liaison takes place with the education welfare service.
130. The school makes every effort to ensure the healthy development, safety and well-being of pupils and is successful in establishing an environment where pupils feel secure and safe. The school has a detailed policy and set of procedures to promote health and safety, including risk assessment, which are monitored and implemented consistently by the headteacher, staff and the GB.
131. Arrangements for dealing with accidents and emergencies are well established and effective; all staff have undertaken training in emergency first aid procedures and pupils are well supervised at break-times. Mid-day supervisors make a significant contribution to the care and welfare of pupils during the lunch breaks.
132. The promotion of healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle through the *Welsh Network of Healthy Schools* initiative is a successful aspect of school life and pupils have access to fresh water and fresh fruit on a daily basis. The high priority given to the development of pupils' emotional and personal well-being through initiatives such as the peer mediation scheme, the 'worry box' and circle time is highly beneficial to pupils.
133. The duty of care is fundamental to the school's ethos and staff work in children's 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 and implemented by staff, and training is regularly updated.

134. There are outstanding features in the headteacher's approach to dealing with child protection issues. As the nominated person with responsibility for child protection procedures, he handles a range of issues with great sensitivity and works closely with social services and other external agencies to secure the children's welfare.
135. The quality of provision for additional learning needs is very good overall.
136. The arrangements to diagnose and support special educational needs (SEN) are very well focused and effective. Individual education plans (IEPs) are closely tailored to pupils' needs, they take appropriate account of their views and the arrangements to regularly review progress towards IEP targets, including the involvement of parents and other agencies where appropriate, are systematic and in line with the SEN Code of Practice.
137. There is regular and effective liaison between the SEN co-ordinator, class teachers and the language support teacher. The learning programmes for pupils with SEN are well supported, particularly through the input of the LSOs.
138. The school plans to meet the needs of the most-able pupils through the provision of suitably differentiated teaching and learning tasks. This provision is most effective in the upper school.
139. 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.
140. Pupils, whatever their gender or social background, have equal opportunity to participate in all activities. Fairness, tolerance, equality and respect for different views and values are clearly promoted and are outstanding features.
141. The school promotes very good race relations and a policy on equal opportunities and race equality is in place. Diversity and difference is celebrated in school assemblies and pupils are regularly reminded of their importance. The PSE curriculum, 'circle time' and religious education provide opportunities to discuss real-life issues and these are approached with sensitivity and consideration.
142. There are clear policies and strategies for promoting a high standard of behaviour. There are effective policies and procedures for preventing bullying. Any incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly, and in addition, a peer mediator scheme gives pupils the opportunity to resolve differences using their own resources and skills.
143. Although no pupils with physical disabilities currently attend the school, an accessibility plan is in place to help cater for future developments.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

144. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report for this key question.
145. The particularly outstanding features identified included:
- clear direction and values;
 - setting challenging and achievable targets and goals;
 - strategic management to improve provision.
146. Leadership consistently and effectively provides clear direction for the work of the school. The school's motto, aims and values are well known, clearly understood by all staff and well reflected in the positive and enabling ethos that permeates its life and work.
147. The school's values strongly support equality for all with a particular emphasis on supporting all pupils in learning how to learn. This is a particularly strong feature in the upper school.
148. Clear emphasis is placed on national and local priorities. This is reflected in the overall high standards achieved and the effective liaison arrangements with partner schools for instance.
149. The target setting process is rigorous and successful. The systematic approach adopted ensures both realistic and suitably challenging targets are set and met year on year. This exemplifies a commendable drive to continually improve standards and enhance provision for the benefit of pupils.
150. Tools such as *performance management* are used effectively to focus and motivate staff in bringing about improvements in the quality of educational provision. There are systematic arrangements for professional review and to promote the staff's continuing professional development. These arrangements are very well managed.
151. These formal managerial systems are well supported by a collegiate approach in implementing improvement initiatives through excellent teamwork that promotes effective communication on a day-to-day basis.
152. The GB fulfils its supervisory role and discharges its statutory responsibilities well. There are well established arrangements for committees and individual governors to become well informed about the work of the school.
153. The GB is fully and effectively involved in the development planning process and is assisted well in monitoring the school's performance through regular reports from the headteacher and presentations by subject co-ordinators.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

154. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report for this key question.
155. The particularly outstanding features identified include:
- the culture of self-evaluation;
 - the quality and rigour of monitoring;
 - the effectiveness of planning for improvement.
156. There is a clear rationale for self-evaluation. The school is very successful in establishing procedures that are comprehensive, systematic and based on clear evidence. The culture of self-evaluation focuses on every aspect of school life and is very well established. There are very strong links between the process of self-evaluation and the SIP.
157. The drive towards continuous improvement is a very strong feature particularly in relation to forming secure judgements about standards and the quality of education provided. A notable feature is the involvement of all stakeholders, including all staff, governors, pupils and parents. Data and information from a very wide range of sources, including questionnaires, inform the process of self-review well.
158. Effective use is made of evaluation strategies provided by the LEA. There is a very comprehensive four-year monitoring programme in place. The quality and rigour of the monitoring role of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and many curriculum leaders are crucial elements of the programme. This is exemplified well in the monitoring undertaken in the subjects under focus.
159. The school makes very good use of teacher assessments, standardised tests and teachers' expertise to identify specific weaknesses and to set realistic targets for pupils. The governors are made fully aware of benchmarking statistics, the main findings of the analysis of results and are involved in discussions of targets set by teachers.
160. The SIP clearly identifies priorities, targets, responsibilities and costs and senior managers and governors ensure that each element is effectively supported with the necessary resources. Progress in achieving improvement targets is very carefully monitored.
161. The self-evaluation document, produced prior to the inspection, provides soundly based judgements. It offers a good range of relevant information and detailed analysis of all aspects of school life. The identification of what has already been achieved and of areas for further improvement is clear. The inspection team agreed with the grades allocated by the school to each of the key questions. This confirms the school's self-evaluation is based on secure evidence.

162. During the last few years, the process of self evaluation and planning for improvement has led to the establishment of a wide range of important initiatives, many of which have already brought about clear improvements. These include notable developments in literacy, in particular with regard to standards in writing, ICT provision, the use of incidental Welsh, the promotion of thinking skills, problem solving in mathematics, investigative work in science and history and very well focused planning for promoting key skills. The teaching and learning of Welsh has developed into a strong subject in the school and is a noteworthy area of improvement.
163. Progress since the last inspection has been good in addressing the key issues identified in that report and in consolidating and building upon the good provision and standards that were highlighted at that time.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

164. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report for this key question.
165. The efficient use, organisation and management of resources are particularly outstanding features and reflect the headteacher's skilled and consistent strategic management of resources over time.
166. There are enough well qualified, specialist and experienced teachers to meet the needs of pupils and deliver all aspects of the curriculum effectively. There is a range of curriculum expertise with particular strengths in the teaching of the core subjects and several foundation subjects, especially history. All teachers undertake curriculum leadership roles well.
167. The LSOs make a very good contribution in supporting teachers and pupils and are valued members of the school community. They provide sensitive and unobtrusive support for pupils' learning.
168. The administrative officer makes a valuable contribution to the smooth and efficient running of the school. The ancillary staff, including the caretaker, mid-day supervisors, canteen staff and cleaners, makes a valuable contribution to the overall quality of life in the school. The headteacher ensures that all teaching, support and ancillary staff are valued and respected for the contribution they make to the school. A very good team spirit is evident.
169. Pupils have ready access to a wide range of very good quality resources appropriate to their age and needs. Considerable investment has been made in ICT resources, and the computer suite. Inter-active whiteboards are well utilised to support pupils' learning. A well stocked central library and individual class libraries contribute well to the standards pupils achieve across the curriculum.
170. The school's accommodation is good overall. It is very clean and well maintained through the vigilance of the caretaker and cleaners.

171. The age and design of the building imposes some constraints; the hall and some classrooms are small, which hinder practical lessons. Despite this, imaginative use is made of the building to provide a bright and stimulating environment for pupils. There are designated areas for practical activities in music and art and the quality of display is very good. The displays are used effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements and as a tool for learning.
172. The school has no grassed area for games and athletics, and the outdoor, hard-surfaced playground is uneven and irregularly shaped. However, the very good alternative arrangements made for the delivery of some physical education activities at other venues minimise the impact of the accommodation on standards.
173. The school is on two levels, with classrooms and other facilities on the second floor only accessible by stairs. This has accessibility implications for disabled pupils. The school is aware of this within the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). A clear plan is in place, including liaison with local education authority services, to ensure equal and appropriate access and provision for disabled pupils.
174. The school makes efficient and effective use of all available resources. The organisation of classes, daily routines and the deployment of staff including the arrangements for two job shares and a teacher to provide cover for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time, are well considered.
175. Teachers are appropriately deployed and the arrangements to ensure their continuing professional development are especially well managed. Furthermore, the arrangements for performance management are well established and contribute well to strategic management and school improvement.
176. Resources are very well matched to the school's priorities. Strategic planning of finance through the SIP process is a particularly strong feature. High priority is given to maintaining a good level of staffing, investing in resources such as ICT and maintaining a good level of resources in all subjects,
177. There are effective systems, involving all staff, to review the provision of curricular resources. The GB systematically reviews spending plans and monitors income and expenditure. There are robust procedures to ensure value for money.
178. The school is successful in using its resources to build on the good standards attained by most pupils on entry in Y3. The outcomes in terms of the consistently high standards attained at the end of KS2 together with the contribution the school makes to pupils' personal development indicate the school provides very good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Welsh second language

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good with no important shortcomings

Good features

179. Across the key stage, pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards Welsh and respond effectively when given opportunities to use the language. As they move through the school they develop an increasing confidence in their use of Welsh and make good and often very good progress in their pronunciation and intonation skills. At appropriate levels, they make good use of a range of video programmes associated with elements of the scheme of work.
180. Across the key stage, pupils' oral skills are at least good. A significant minority demonstrates very good oral skills at the upper end of the school.
181. Younger pupils in KS2 demonstrate good speaking and listening skills and effectively use a good range of sentence patterns and vocabulary relating to a variety of personal information including, likes and dislikes, clothing and the concept of time.
182. Pupils in Y3 and Y4 make good use of the language patterns they are learning through effective opportunities to work in pairs and hold simple conversations. In Y4, pupils demonstrate a good grasp of the vocabulary relating to food and they confidently use a good range of sentence patterns to identify likes and dislikes.
183. Older pupils focus well on a wider range of sentence patterns and vocabulary including a more specific focus on the third person. Pupils in Y5 demonstrate a good grasp of vocabulary associated with clothes as well as food and drink. They ask questions about the cost and make observations about the length of items of clothing for instance. Pupils say what they like, and can and cannot do, in relation to everyday activities. In Y6, pupils provide a good range of information as they introduce themselves confidently. They have a good grasp of time and make good progress in their use of the past tense.
184. Across the key stage, at appropriate levels, pupils make good overall progress in reading. Their skills in reading show good development in terms of accuracy, expression and understanding. In upper KS2, pupils often make very good progress in reading their own work and texts associated with the scheme of work, as well as class reading books. A significant minority of older pupils uses a range of full sentences very effectively to answer set questions about the text.
185. Across KS2, pupils make good progress in writing skills. Younger pupils write words and sentences and short dialogues using familiar patterns. Older pupils write more extended sentences, paragraphs and dialogues. Pupils in Y6 have written good quality letters introducing themselves and involving a good range of sentence patterns. They have also written impressive dialogues in the form of a

drama. Overall, pupils display good skills in using their grasp of Welsh to gather information and to present their findings in graph form.

Mathematics

Key Stage 2 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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Good and outstanding features

186. In Y3, pupils are competent with addition and subtraction within 100; they enthusiastically subtract 50 from target numbers and have a secure understanding of rounding numbers to the nearest ten. Pupils use re-grouping strategies well to solve number problems. They understand place value, including hundreds, tens and units, and use their knowledge of number bonds and multiplication tables to aid their calculations well.
187. Pupils know that pictures can be used to represent information and demonstrate a good knowledge of mathematical vocabulary when interpreting pictographs.
188. Pupils in Y4 have a good knowledge of the two, three, four, five and ten times tables, they halve and double numbers to 100, have a good understanding of place value to 1000 and confidently sort numbers into sets of multiples.
189. Pupils have a good understanding of co-ordinates, identify lines of symmetry, know the properties of different polygons and show a good understanding of the points of the compass when measuring right angles. They measure length accurately in centimetres and millimetres.
190. In Y5, pupils develop a very good knowledge of fractions, decimals and percentages. They estimate and measure length accurately and use co-ordinates successfully to plot shapes on a grid when investigating shapes. They successfully extend their skills through using ICT to input commands to control the plotting of polygons on the computer screen.
191. Pupils use appropriate mathematical terms correctly and have a good knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, including reflective symmetry. They calculate the area of irregular shapes in square centimetres and identify lines of symmetry in repeating patterns. They make particularly good progress in solving mathematical problems, extend their skills of handling data using ICT very well and demonstrate a very good knowledge of angles.
192. In Y6, pupils have a very good understanding of areas and perimeters, and the different types of triangles. They successfully use a protractor to measure acute and obtuse angles to the nearest degree; calculate area and volume using appropriate formulae and successfully plot polygons using co-ordinates on a grid extending to the four quadrants.
193. Pupils have a very good knowledge of number, such as multiplication patterns and positive and negative numbers. They answer questions about graphs and charts very well and have a very good knowledge of the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages. The pupils use a wide range of

mathematical vocabulary and they skilfully solve number problems mentally and confidently explain their strategies.

194. The breadth, depth and consistency of pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills across all aspects of the subject are outstanding by the end of the key stage.

Science

Key Stage 2 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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Good and outstanding features

195. Pupils in all classes demonstrate very positive attitudes towards the subject and they are very aware of the importance of science in their lives and in the world around them. At appropriate levels, they make very good progress in asking scientific questions. The development of their use and understanding of science vocabulary is an outstanding feature.
196. Across the school, pupils develop a very good understanding of the factors that contribute to healthy eating and living.
197. In Y3, pupils develop good investigative skills as they identify magnetic and non-magnetic objects and the strength of bar magnets. They investigate the concept of insulation effectively and demonstrate good skills of recording temperature. They are beginning to develop a good knowledge and understanding of habitats.
198. Pupils in Y4 have a very good knowledge and understanding of the concept of evaporation and demonstrate effective skills in planning experiments relating to separating mixtures and evaluate the processes involved to bring about improvements. They have very good awareness of the importance of fair testing and demonstrate very effective problem-solving and research skills as they focus on investigating the permeability of several different types of rock.
199. Pupils in Y5 have a very good knowledge of plant parts and their functions. They are beginning to focus very effectively on the the concepts of pollination, fertilisation and germination. They develop a very good knowledge of the solar system and a very good understanding of the concept of reflection. The pupils demonstrate very effective skills as they investigate the lengths of shadows and separating mixtures of sand salt and pencil sharpenings. They have a very good awareness of the importance of repeating experiments to ensure accuracy.
200. In Y6, pupils develop a very good knowledge and understanding of animals and plant groups and classify them particularly well according to a range of criteria, including whether they are producers or consumers. They develop a very good grasp of the use of branching and numbered keys in relation to this work.
201. The older pupils develop a very good understanding of the water cycle and the concept of evaporation. They focus very effectively on the concept of friction and air resistance. Their skills of investigating features relating to these topics

are very well developed. They generate ideas very effectively and demonstrate very well developed prediction skills.

202. Across year groups, and in particular in the upper part of the key stage, the depth and breadth of the subject knowledge pupils develop is outstanding. The very strong grasp which pupils develop in relation to the process of planning and conducting investigations is also an outstanding feature.
203. At appropriate levels across the school, pupils' skills of predicting, observing and presenting their findings are very well developed. They use resources very effectively and their skills of drawing conclusions are very good. They analyse and present their conclusions very effectively in written form, pictorially and in the form of tables and graphs. Very good use is made of pupils' ICT skills in this context, particularly at the upper end of the key stage.

Information technology

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good with no important shortcomings

Good features

204. Across the key stage, pupils have well developed keyboard skills, they skilfully manipulate the mouse to control events on the screen and acquire good levels of competence in operating a range of programs. Pupils confidently use tool bars, menus and editing techniques and know how to save, retrieve and print their work.
205. In Y3, pupils confidently 'log on' and 'log off' the system and know how to import a picture from clip art. They successfully combine text and graphics in a poster linked to work in science, for example, and enter information using a database. When learning to use e-mail the more-able pupils confidently operate the tutorial program.
206. Pupils in Y4 confidently use the features of a word-processing package to edit text and graphics. They manipulate text in a variety of ways to improve its appearance. They know how to highlight, cut and paste, delete, change fonts and demonstrate a good range of skills when using a graphics package to create repeating patterns.
207. When using a sorting tree program linked to work in science, pupils quickly gain competence in operating the branching database. They type in questions, click on relevant icons and follow the sorting process well.
208. In Y5, pupils build well on their skills with text and graphics such as when conducting research and writing pieces linked to work in English and history. They increase their skills in the use of databases and spreadsheets well such as when learning to input and access information on a spreadsheet displaying holiday information. Pupils know how to select and present information in graphical form.
209. Pupils in Y6 know how to navigate selected web sites. They scroll through information, clearly describe operations such as 'cut and paste' and confidently

explain how they construct a simple slide sequence to present information on historical topics, using a multi-media program.

210. Across the school, pupils gain confidence in using the inter-active whiteboards provided in every classroom. Each pupil has their own file, placed in class folders on the server. These files provide good evidence of the range of work covered and the good standards achieved in word processing and the use of databases, spreadsheets, graphics packages and multi-media software.

History

Key Stage 2 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

211. Pupils across the key stage exhibit a high level of interest and enthusiasm in the subject. This is evident in their enthusiastic and knowledgeable recall of a rich variety of learning experiences, which include a number of well planned visits.
212. The development of pupils' historical vocabulary and their skills in historical enquiry are outstanding features. Furthermore, their skills in presenting historical information in a wide range of ways, including sketching, model making, role-play activities and both extended and imaginative writing, are developing particularly well and exemplify very effectively the depth of pupils' historical knowledge and understanding.
213. The use pupils make of a wide range of timelines to develop a very good understanding of chronology, both within specific periods and across the centuries is an outstanding feature of achievement.
214. Pupils understanding of the importance of historical sources and the progress they make in their skills of interpreting evidence and working as historians are outstanding features.
215. Across the key stage, pupils make very good use of historical fiction, including books with a Welsh dimension, to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the periods they are studying.
216. Younger pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the work of archaeologists, such as in their study of the Celts and Romans, and demonstrate very effective gathering of information from replica artefacts. Pupils develop a very good knowledge of people in Celtic society, including the druids, and the importance of the location of hill forts.
217. In Y4 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of primary and secondary sources, such as when drawing evidence from the Bayeux Tapestry. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the importance of castles. They put their designing and making skills to very good use in constructing models of motte and bailey castles and demonstrate a good understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of this type of castle. Pupils enhance their understanding of different types of castles through well focused visits and by comparing castles in the immediate locality and further afield.

218. In Y5 pupils use a range of pictorial and documentary sources very effectively to construct family trees of Tudor monarchs. They demonstrate a good knowledge of the Battle of Bosworth and its significance, explore every-day life and customs very effectively and have a very good awareness of why the armada was defeated. They focus very well on events such as the dissolution of the monasteries and make good use of opportunities to explore Tudor street sounds in music lessons.
219. As part of their work on the Victorian era, older pupils make very good use of a visit to a mining museum to enhance their understanding of the living and working conditions of a substantial proportion of the population of South Wales at the time. In work associated with the Rebecca Riots, pupils effectively explore rural life, making very good use of documentary evidence. They also make very good use of ICT skills in projects relating to Victorian inventions.
220. In Y6 pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of features relating to the Second World War. They have a very good knowledge of its causes and use a range of sources including artefacts, documentary and oral sources as they explore the impact of the war on social life. Their work includes a focus on evacuation, the role of women and *digging for victory*. In addition, they make a study of a prisoner-of-war camp in the locality.
221. At the end of the key stage, pupils make very good use of their research skills to enhance their understanding of change through time as they focus on houses and homes from Celtic times to the present era.

Music

Key Stage 2 - Grade 2: Good with no important shortcomings

Good features

222. The quality of singing in whole-school gatherings is very good. In class and group situations, pupils demonstrate increasing skills when singing in unison and most accurately maintain their part in a two-part song.
223. Across the school, pupils steadily increase their knowledge of musical vocabulary. They are becoming familiar with terms such as tempo, pitch, rhythm, harmony, lyrics and melody and are making good progress when distinguishing between musical elements as they compare a range of music.
224. In Y3, pupils accompany a song, using notes from the C pentatonic. In groups they sing along to a CD track, play a steady beat using chime bars and tambourine, and play a drone, (notes C and G), with chime bars. Most play and sing in time.
225. Pupils in Y4 compare sound tracks that represent different animals, commenting on pitch and tempo. They perform a two-part song well and working with a partner they select appropriate instruments to devise musical motifs that match different animal movements. These pupils make good progress in composing and performing skills.

226. In Y5, pupils have a clear understanding of musical terms, including dynamics, pitch, rhythm, timbre and tempo, and use this vocabulary appropriately when comparing musical styles from different cultures. This is particularly evident in their work on Tudor Street Cries.
227. This work is developed well in collaborative groups when pupils demonstrate good ideas and make good use of voice and instruments in their compositions to convey the atmosphere of a street market in Tudor and present day styles. Particular groups achieve high standards of performance.
228. Pupils in Y6 have a developing knowledge of different musical styles including jazz, pop and some classical works. They confidently sing in tune with clear diction, clap a simple rhythm from a graphic score and compose and perform an accompaniment to a *Rap* with great enthusiasm. Pupils work hard to improve their work and show a sense of occasion when performing to their peers.
229. A significant number of pupils benefit from instrumental tuition, (strings, woodwind and brass) and a number learn to play other instruments, such as piano, outside of school. This together with the participation of a large number of pupils in music clubs, including recorders, choir and guitar, has a significant impact on standards.
230. Across the school, pupils engage in music making with enjoyment and their good efforts result in good progress and achievement in the tasks they undertake.

School's response to the inspection

231. The inspection findings recognise that Oldcastle is a high achieving school and confirmed that we have continued to build on the successful findings of our last inspection. It is particularly gratifying that they identified effective teamwork, and an enabling ethos as outstanding features and described the school as having a vibrant learning culture.
232. We are very pleased that the standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as key skills, were found to be outstanding. In addition the report recognises the positive attitudes, exemplary relationships and responsible behaviour of our pupils.
233. The inspection team were thorough and rigorous throughout the inspection process, and we are naturally pleased that they were able to confirm the judgements made in our self evaluation.
234. Our school motto is 'success lies upstream' and we believe that the inspection has identified the elements that make our school what it is. The sustained effort on the part of all involved in the education of our pupils ensures that Oldcastle is a happy and secure environment, where every child is valued and given the opportunity to grow in confidence and independence.
235. The recommendation to further improve the high standards of achievement, especially in relation to the most-able pupils, will be a major priority for the school development plan in the next academic year. A copy of the action plan will be sent to all 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	Oldcastle Junior School
School type	Community Junior
Age-range of pupils	7 – 11 years
Address of school	South Street, Bridgend.
Postcode	CF31 3ED
Telephone number	01656 653895

Headteacher	Mr. Laurence Chilcott
Date of appointment	1 st September 1995
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Sian Kalinka
Registered inspector	Mr. Michael T. Ridout
Dates of inspection	8 th – 11 th May 2006

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group						
Year group	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Total
Number of pupils	56	54	58	54	1	223

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	8	4	10.1

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	N/a
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27.9
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.26 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection	
Term	Whole School
Summer 2005	94.3
Autumn 2005	95.9
Spring 2006	94.8

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	3
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2: 2005 with National figures for 2004

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results:								Number of pupils in Y6: 57				
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	38.6	56.1
		National	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.4	0.7	5.0	16.4	46.1	30.4
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	45.6	50.9
		National	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.4	2.6	16.0	48.1	31.8
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	29.8	66.7
		National	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.2	1.2	9.6	50.5	37.6

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment			
In the school:	95	In Wales:	71

- 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
B Pupils not entered for the tests because they are working outside the set levels of the tests.
W Pupils who are working towards level

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

- The inspection team consisted of three inspectors who worked for nine inspector days (over four days) gathering first-hand evidence. In total, 40 lessons or parts of lessons were observed and standards and teaching graded. Inspectors evaluated the pupils' work.
- The headteacher took the role of nominee, ensuring effective communication with the inspection team. The nominee attended meetings with inspectors and contributed fully to the discussion of inspection evidence.
- Inspectors observed registration sessions, school assemblies and break-times. All teachers present were observed teaching. Discussions were held with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, representatives of the GB, parents and others, both during the initial inspection visit and during the inspection.
- All the available work and records of a representative sample of pupils from all year groups were scrutinised. Inspectors sought the views of a number of pupils in discussions with them.
- A large amount of documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection.
- The registered inspector held a meeting attended by fourteen parents before the inspection and considered fifty parents' responses to a questionnaire.
- At the end of the inspection, the main findings of the inspection were discussed with the headteacher in his role as the nominee. A short time after the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the staff, and the governors, to report the findings of the inspection.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr. M. T. Ridout Registered Inspector	Context Summary Recommendations Key question 1: How well do learners achieve? Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management? Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources? Assessment and additional educational needs elements of key questions 2 and 4. Mathematics Information technology Music
Mr. B. Jones Team inspector	Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment? Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards? Welsh second language Science History
Mrs. J. Warr Lay inspector	Aspects of Key questions: 1, 3, 4 and 7.

Acknowledgement:

The inspectors wish to thank the governing body, staff, parents and pupils of the school for their co-operation, assistance and courtesy before and during the inspection.

The Contractor for this inspection was:

Baker Phillips Educational Communications Ltd (BPEC).

Oaks Lea

Knolton

Overton

WREXHAM

LL13 0LF

Telephone: 01978 710332 (Wrexham Office) 01594 510414 (Lydney Office)