

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

**Pantside Primary School  
Old Pant Road  
Pantside  
Newbridge  
NP11 5DE**

**School Number: 6762207**

**Date of Inspection: 05/06/06**

**by**

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79243**

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- \* 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
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Pantside Primary 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 Pantside Primary School took place between 05/06/06 and 07/06/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dr Jim Hewitt 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:

<b>Grade 1</b>	good with outstanding features
<b>Grade 2</b>	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Grade 3</b>	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Grade 4</b>	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
<b>Grade 5</b>	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. Pantside Primary School caters for pupils between three and eleven years of age. It is situated on the hillside above Newbridge and enjoys wonderful views of the surrounding countryside. Pantside was originally a coal mining village. Pupils come from the immediate vicinity of the school, which is an area of high unemployment and social and economic deprivation.
2. In the main, housing is local authority owned and there are few private dwellings. Some housing association homes have recently been added and an increasing percentage of families of pupils who attend the school have been placed at Pantside. This has undermined the general sense of community. The school serves as one of the few places on the estate where the community can meet.
3. There are currently 186 pupils on roll who are organised into seven mixed-ability classes and two local education authority [LEA] specialist resource bases for children with social and communication difficulties. Twenty-three children also attend the nursery for five mornings a week. Overall, the number on roll has been consistent since 2002.
4. Many children enter the nursery with limited skills in language and independence. Early baseline assessment results show that, in comparison with similar schools, children's performance is in lowest 25 per cent. Children take up full-time placement in the reception class in the term following their fourth birthday.
5. English is the home language of all pupils with no pupils speaking Welsh as their first language. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language and less than one per cent of pupils come from non-white British backgrounds.
6. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals [37per cent] is well above national averages. One pupil is 'looked after' by the local authority and two pupils have been excluded in the past 12 months.
7. The school identifies 67 pupils (36 per cent) as having special educational needs [SEN], which is well above the national average. Of these, 16 pupils have a statement of SEN outlining their particular needs. These pupils are based in the two social and communication classes and travel to school in LEA transport. The National Curriculum is not modified or disapplied for any pupil.
8. The school has undergone considerable changes in staffing and provision over the past two years including the appointment of the current head teacher in September 2004 and the deputy head teacher in January 2005.

9. The school is in its third year of the Healthy Schools award scheme.
10. The school was last inspected in July 2000.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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11. **Vision Statement**

Happy Together – Learning for Life

Dysgu Hapus – Dysgu Byw

The school has a wide collection of aims and objectives relating to its ethos, the curriculum, the staff, the accommodation and environment, the community, its pupils and the use of resources. These are “characterised by a united effort to improve the quality of our provision continually to meet the needs of all children and to ensure that they enjoy learning and feel part of their unique community.”

12. **Targets identified in the School Improvement Plan 2005/6 are to:**

- improve standards of literacy and numeracy throughout both key stages;
- raise standards of achievement in information technology / information and communication technology [ICT];
- develop Early Years / Foundation Phase provision;
- improve assessment procedures;
- raise standards in design technology and in geography;
- improve SEN provision;
- extend ‘Healthy Schools’ provision;
- implement local cluster school initiatives;
- improve the appearance and use of both interior and exterior buildings;  
and
- undertake a furniture/storage and resources audit.

## Summary

13. Pantside Primary School has shown a marked improvement over the last two years. There is now a tangible sense of unity, purpose and optimism which is most effectively expressed in the pride which pupils have in their school and their knowledge that the staff are working to help them. The professionalism and refreshing enthusiasm of the recently-appointed head teacher and deputy have set the school earnestly on the path to self-improvement. Much has been achieved but, as the school recognises, there is more to do.

### Table of grades awarded

14. The inspection team agreed with the school's overall judgements made in its self-evaluation report in key questions 3 and 7. It awarded higher grades in the remaining five key questions because it felt that the school had made further progress since its original judgements.

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

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	3	2
Mathematics	3	2
Information technology	2	2
Design technology	3	3
Art	2	2
Religious education	3	3

15. In the subjects inspected pupils generally achieve good standards although progress is most evident towards the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2. Girls achieve less well than the boys in key stage 1. This is against national trends.

16. Pupils standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
4%	65%	31%	0%	0%

17. These percentages exceed the Welsh Assembly Government's all-Wales targets for 2007 and show good improvement on the grades given at the previous inspection.
18. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
19. Initial assessments indicates that on entry children perform below or well below local and national averages but they make good and often very good progress in all areas of learning. They make particularly good progress in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT and are developing good personal and social skills and an enthusiasm for their work. Their creative and bilingual skills are also developing well.
20. Similarly, pupils in both key stages 1 and 2 show good progress in the development of the key skills of speaking and listening. Reading has improved and is of a good standard with older pupils in key stage 2 using books well for research and pleasure. However, there are shortcomings in the quality of writing and in the development of numeracy skills for younger pupils in both key stages. Pupils' use of ICT and the development of their creative skills are good in both key stages. Overall, pupils develop good bilingual skills and a have a good awareness of the culture of Wales.
21. Pupils with SEN, including those in the two social and communication classes, make good progress relative to their abilities in the key skills and the National Curriculum subjects
22. End of key stage 1 statutory assessment results in 2005 are below local and national averages in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools across Wales (based on schools in the same free school meals category) the school is in the lower 50 per cent for mathematics and science, and the lowest 25 per cent for English and the core subject indicator (the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level 2 in all three subjects). Results in English are well below the averages and the overall performance of girls is significantly weaker than that of the boys. However, recent data indicates improvements beyond predictions for groups of pupils targeted for specific intervention.
23. In key stage 2, the school results in 2005 are just below local and national averages in English, further below in mathematics and substantially lower in science. When compared with similar schools nationally, the school is in the upper 50 per cent for English, the lower 50 per cent for mathematics and the lowest 25 per cent for science. There is an upward trend in both English and mathematics and results for the core subject indicator (pupils gaining the

expected level 4 in all three subjects) are the best the school has achieved. The number of pupils gaining level 5 in English is above local and national averages.

24. Standards are rising especially where the school has focussed intervention and improved planning and resources. However, it is evident that pupils make most progress in the Early Years and towards the end of the key stages. The progress pupils make as they move through the school and their understanding of what they need to do to improve has been adversely affected by the long-term absence (and subsequent involvement in the school's development) of key members of the teaching staff.
25. Pupils make good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. They are very proud of their school and share its vision. Older pupils, in particular, are mature, confident and respectful with a positive attitude to work. Generally, pupils behave well and respond positively to the school's strategies.
26. Pupils are involved in the process of decision-making, particularly through the school council, and work well together, understanding the need for equal opportunities. They are developing a good understanding of the community and of sustainable and economic development. However, their awareness of their roles within the community and their understanding of what it means to live in a diverse and multicultural society is underdeveloped.
27. Attendance is above local but below national averages. One factor (which the school is trying to address) is the increasing number of families taking holidays during term time. There is also a significant number of pupils who are persistently late. Of most concern, however, is the low attendance of children in the Early Years.

### **The quality of education and training**

28. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
7%	68%	25%	0%	0%

29. These percentages show good improvement on the grades given at the previous inspection.
30. Teaching is a strength of the school and a high proportion of lessons are good and some, notably in the Early Years, have outstanding features. In the best practice throughout the school, teachers enthusiastically present stimulating and challenging lessons. They have developed strong supportive relationships with the pupils and have high expectations of achievement.
31. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge. They plan well and use a range of teaching resources and strategies to good effect, building well on previous learning. Explanations and instructions are clear and work is well-

matched to pupils' needs. All pupils, including those in the social and communication classes, are treated equally and have equal access to the experiences and opportunities offered. Teaching assistants and voluntary and specialists support workers make a valuable contribution to the learning, behaviour and personal development of pupils. Teaching and support staff in the social and communication classes successfully balance structured teaching with the need for pupils to integrate with their peers.

32. However, in some lessons, teachers fail to give pupils opportunity to reflect on and discuss what has been taught. The lessons lack structure, challenge and pace and opportunities are missed to develop pupils' writing skills. Further, in some year groups, careful monitoring of pupils' progress has been adversely affected by the long-term absence of teaching staff.
33. The school has identified (in its recent policy document) methods to improve whole school assessment systems. It also recognises (in its self-evaluation report) the need to ensure effective and consistent use of data to inform planning. All statutory requirements are in place. However, there is little use of subject portfolios and limited assessment in subjects other than the core subjects and information technology. The school's marking policy is not consistently applied and pupils are not yet effectively involved in planning for their own progress.
34. The school provides a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements and is accessible to all. Documentation is of good quality but, because much of it is very recent, there has been insufficient time for its full impact on standards to be made. The school has recently produced a comprehensive policy document for the development of pupils' key skills but has not yet incorporated this into medium and short term planning to ensure continuity and progression.
35. The school promotes pupils' moral, social and cultural development well with good regard given to *y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*. However, opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual awareness are missed. There are good links with parents and with industry and pupils are developing a good understanding of both sustainable and economic development. The school reflects national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration well. Awareness of global citizenship is at an early stage.
36. The school has a very positive ethos in which every pupil feels valued and included. There are good systems to support pupils starting at the school and to help them make the change to secondary education. Attendance, punctuality and behaviour are monitored extremely rigorously. Pupils are fully involved in school life, notably through the school council. They enjoy a diverse range of extra-curricular activities and receive good support from a variety of outside agencies. All aspects of health and safety and child protection are effectively addressed.
37. The school makes good provision for pupils with additional learning needs through early identification and subsequent effective implementation of the

latest 'Code of Practice. Literacy support to targeted pupils in the mainstream classes is particularly effective. The needs of pupils on the autistic spectrum are generally well met. However, there is insufficient ongoing specialised training provided for staff to enable them to meet this group of pupils' challenging needs most effectively.

38. There is a culture of mutual respect and tolerance in which all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnic origin or ability level have equal access and opportunity to provision. The school is developing strategies to address disparities in the academic achievement of boys and girls but the school's promotion of good race relations and understanding of the diversity of life in modern Britain is at an early stage of development.

### **Leadership and management**

39. Governors, parents, pupils and staff all recognise the transformation in the school since the appointment of the head teacher and the deputy head teacher. Through their clear direction, they have built a co-ordinated team with a strong sense of purpose, optimism and drive towards improving provision and raising standards. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and committed to the development of their particular responsibilities. Good systems are in place for the professional development of all staff and the school. Challenging, but realistic, targets have been set for both staff and pupils.
40. The governing body is very supportive of the head teacher and is fully committed to the school. Despite the relative inexperience of some of its members, it fulfils all statutory requirements in setting the school's strategic direction and in monitoring provision and standards.
41. A culture of critical self-evaluation is being established in the school and generating valuable first-hand evidence from a wide range of sources from staff, governors, pupils, parents, the LEA and other external agencies. Most importantly, evaluation informs planning and the school has allocated sufficient and relevant resources to meet the range of appropriate priorities identified in the school development plan. Despite the newness of the systems, measurable improvements are taking place and good progress has now been made in addressing issues identified at the previous inspection.
42. Resources in the school are well managed. There is an appropriate number of suitably qualified teachers and teaching assistants who are all deployed to good effect with procedures in place to ensure their continued professional development. Administrative, caretaking, cleaning and mid-day supervisory staff provide good support.
43. Accommodation provides a good setting for teaching and learning and is enhanced by bright and effective displays. Planning, preparation and assessment time is well planned and used effectively; most noticeably in the Thursday afternoon curriculum enrichment sessions. There is a wide range of teaching resources, which are of good quality and effectively monitored by

subject leaders. In particular, recent improvement in provision for information technology is making a big impact on raising standards. The governing body and head teacher effectively monitor the school's budget.

44. The school provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

In order to move the school forward the staff and governing body need to:

- R1 improve continuity and progression by ensuring that the school's identified priorities are consistently addressed across those year groups where pupil progress has been limited by long-term teacher absence;
- R2 continue to raise standards in subjects where there are shortcomings; particularly for girls in key stage 1;
- R3 implement fully the procedures and practices set out in the school's key skills policy document;
- R4 further develop assessment procedures to ensure effective monitoring of standards in the foundation subjects and involve pupils more in their own self-evaluation;
- R5 ensure that staff working with pupils who have additional learning needs are kept abreast of current best practice in their field;
- R6 continue to improve attendance and punctuality, especially that of children under-five.

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 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

45. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation of this key question as grade 3. The inspection team feels that pupils make good progress from low baselines on entry and evidence indicates that standards are rapidly improving.

46. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	65%	31%	0%	0%

47. These percentages exceed the Welsh Assembly Government's all-Wales targets for 98 per cent of lessons to be grade 3 or above and 65 per cent of lessons to be grade 2 or above. They show good improvement on the grades given during the previous inspection.

48. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, standards of achievement in the subjects identified for inspection are as follows:

Inspection Area	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	3	2
Mathematics	3	2
Information technology	2	2
Design technology	3	3
Art	2	2
Religious education	3	3

49. Overall, in both key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils achieve good standards in the six subjects inspected although the attainments of girls in key stage 1 is below that of the boys. Generally, pupils make good progress. This is particularly marked towards the end of both key stages. Irrespective of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, the vast majority of pupils achieve the realistic but challenging targets they are set.

50. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Baseline assessment results indicate that most children enter the nursery with attainment that is below or well below local and national averages for children their age.

51. Under fives in the nursery and reception classes make good, often very good progress in all areas of learning. They make particularly good progress in the key skills of ICT, literacy and numeracy. Their bilingual skills are developing well.

52. Children in under-fives classes confidently and independently participate in the interesting, practical and creative activities that teachers provide for them. Of particular note, are their developing personal and social skills, improving behaviour and enthusiastic application to work.
53. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils' use of the key communication skills of speaking, listening, and reading is generally developing well across the subjects. In particular, pupils listen attentively and speak clearly and confidently. Reading is improving as a result of specific input from specialist teachers and remedial support although younger pupils have difficulties with specific subject terminology. Older pupils are using books and other resources competently for research and pleasure. However, there are shortcomings in both key stages in the quality of pupils' writing across a range of subjects because of the lack of planned opportunities for progression. This is particularly evident in the work of younger pupils in both key stages. By the end of key stage 2, however, pupils use their writing skills well in other subjects for a variety of purposes.
54. Standards and progress in numeracy are under-developed in lower key stage 1 and lower key stage 2. However, pupils in years 4,5 and 6 increasingly use their skills in measuring, counting and recording to support their work across the curriculum. Pupils throughout the school use ICT confidently and effectively to reinforce their knowledge and understanding in a good range of contexts.
55. Older pupils are beginning to enjoy and benefit from increasing opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills in ICT and mathematics. Creative development is good, particularly in the use of art to illustrate themes and topics in other subjects.
56. Pupils have a good awareness of the culture and language of Wales, and use some basic language patterns well. They make steady progress in acquiring bilingual competence. They follow instructions given in Welsh well, make good oral responses and show steady progress in reading and writing.
57. Pupils with additional learning needs including those with SEN based in the social and communication classes make good progress relative to their abilities. When withdrawn for support work in literacy; pupils enjoy their lessons, understand the need for support and comment positively on their progress. Targets identified in individual educational programmes are regularly and consistently achieved.
58. Analysis of key stage 1 statutory assessment data shows an improvement from the previous inspection. Although improvement has been inconsistent, indications are that recent strategies have had a positive effect on pupils' performance.
59. In 2005, the school's key stage 1 results were well below LEA and national averages in all the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results in English were particularly weak at 34 per cent below the national

average. Science results were 9 per cent below national averages and mathematics results 14 per cent below. The number of pupils gaining the higher level 3 in each subject was also below the averages. When compared to similar schools across Wales (in the same free school meals category), the school is in the lower 50 per cent in mathematics and science and the lowest 25 per cent in English and the core subject indicator, that is the number of pupils who achieve the expected level in the three core subjects. Test results, however, do include those of statemented pupils in the social and communication class.

60. Boys outperformed girls in mathematics and science and had similar results in English. The consistently weaker performance of girls in key stage 1 is very much against the national trend and a concern identified by the school.
61. End of key stage 2 statutory assessment test results show an upward trend in English, mathematics and the core subject indicator (based on the percentage of pupils gaining level 4 in each core subject) but a downward trend in science. The school's key stage 2 results are just below LEA and national averages in English, further below them in mathematics and substantially below them in science.
62. When compared with similar schools nationally, the school is in the upper 50 per cent for English and the core subject indicator, the lower 50 per cent for mathematics and the lowest 25 per cent for science. The number of pupils gaining the higher level 5 was above LEA and national averages in English and science but below in mathematics. The core subject indicator result was the best the school has ever achieved. Boys' results in mathematics and girls' results in science are consistently below averages. As with key stage 1, the results of pupils based in the social and communication class are included in the data.
63. The school has a clear understanding of the learning needs of children on entry and during their progress through school and it sets realistic but challenging targets which most pupils achieve. Further, where the school has provided direct and focussed intervention through specialist remedial schemes, focussed training and improved planning and resourcing, standards have measurably risen. Overall, pupils make good progress as they pass through the school although this is not as rapid in the two year groups affected by long-term absences of teaching staff.
64. Pupils are acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills, which they apply with increasing success to new and unfamiliar situations. Older pupils, in particular, are developing a good general understanding of their levels of achievement and progress. However, overall, pupils have not developed a clear picture of what they need to do to improve and how they can address their weaknesses. Academically, pupils make best progress in Early Years classes and towards the ends of each of the key stages,
65. Pupils make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and in their moral and wider development. They have a great enthusiasm for

school life with a keen sense of belonging and pride in their school. They share the school's vision and enjoy creating their own class rules and trying to abide by them. They strive to be polite and courteous and have a clear understanding of right from wrong. It is to the school's credit that older pupils are so mature, confident and respectful.

66. Overall, pupils have a good attitude to their work, although some younger pupils still have difficulties with concentration and behaviour. Older pupils are good role models and they have a noticeable effect right across the school. Pupils in year 3 appreciate times when the class comes together to discuss and resolve individual problems.
67. Most pupils behave well in lessons and in the playground. They respond well to positive strategies to promote good behaviour. Year 6 pupils report that behaviour has improved considerably recently and that school is a happier, calmer place, although some "tweaking" is still needed. They acknowledge the improvements made in playground organisation and resources and say that bullying is now rare.
68. Pupils have been actively involved in the recent changes at the school and share in decision-making in a thoughtful and mature way. They hold a wide variety of roles and responsibilities. As members of the school council they formally, and very professionally, interview pupils who apply for particular posts such as librarian. By the end of key stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of how organisations work and they develop effective lifelong learning skills.
69. In lessons, pupils work collaboratively and co-operatively sharing views and ideas. Relationships are strong and supportive. Older pupils, in years 5 and 6 particularly, are developing good research skills. In some classes, pupils' learning benefits from spiritual moments in which they reflect and think deeply about experiences in their own lives and issues in the world around them.
70. Pupils show a good awareness of equal opportunity issues and are developing a respect for the diversity within society. They understand that they must respect the views of others and that all people are equally important. However, especially in key stage 1, pupils have less understanding of what it means to be part of a multi-cultural society and the issues that may arise from this.
71. Pupils are developing an awareness and understanding of their own community and the workplace through educational visits. They are also developing an appreciation of the need for sustainability in the world around them through their involvement with recycling and by growing their own food in the garden. Generally, however, their awareness of their roles within their own community is underdeveloped.
72. The average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection was slightly above the LEA average but below national averages. Absences are caused mainly by sickness; for instance, the school was adversely affected over two terms by the e coli epidemic. However, there is an increasing

number of families who take holidays in term time. The school is working hard to address this issue and sets pupils attendance targets. Pupils are keen to be part of the leading class each week. Pupils with the best attendance are rewarded termly and at the year end.

73. Of most concern, is the low attendance of children in the Early Years' classes. Despite the best efforts of the school and the education welfare officer to establish a routine of regular attendance and punctuality, a small number of families are slow to respond and continue to give concern.
74. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and are punctual; more than half attend the breakfast club that is available. However, although the majority of pupils live within walking distance of the school, there is a small number in each class who are often late. They miss the important start to the day and this adversely affects their progress.

## The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

75. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's own self-evaluation in which it awarded a grade 3 for this aspect. The inspection team feels that the quality of teaching observed was good and a significant improvement on that reported in the previous inspection.

76. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	68%	25%	0%	0%

77. A high proportion of teaching across the school is good, and sometimes very good in the Early Years classes. However, a quarter of the lessons observed had some minor shortcomings.

78. In the lessons which have outstanding features, members of staff:

- show an infectious enthusiasm which captures pupils' imagination;
- demonstrate exemplary interaction with, and management of, pupils;
- have very high expectations of behaviour and achievement; and
- use varied practical activities to challenge pupils.

79. In the majority of lessons teaching is good, members of staff:

- have planned well and utilise a good range of resources which are appropriate to pupils' age and ability;
- make learning objectives clear at the outset and consolidate them during the lesson;
- build effectively on previous learning;
- use well-considered questions to challenge thinking;
- give clear instructions and explanations and provide positive feedback;
- deliver lessons with good pace to meet deadlines;
- deploy support staff well to keep pupils focussed and on task;
- use effective strategies to overcome inappropriate behaviour;
- have developed a positive working relationship with pupils;
- incorporate pupils' own experiences and contributions effectively into the lesson; and
- use outside agencies and voluntary support to good effect.

80. In those lessons which have some shortcomings, members of staff :

- impart a wealth of relevant information but do not give pupils opportunity to discuss or consider the issues raised;
- do not manage the organisation of the lesson well and focus on aspects not related to the main learning objectives;

- do not challenge pupils sufficiently;
  - conduct the lesson at a slow pace, finishing with a rushed ineffective plenary;
  - fail to use behaviour management strategies effectively; and
  - fail to take advantage of opportunities to develop pupils' skill in writing.
81. Teachers demonstrate secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and effectively use their specialist knowledge and the resources available to enhance the quality of lessons. Bilingual skills are taught well with staff taking advantage of incidental opportunities as they arise. Throughout the school, teachers treat all pupils equally, consistently and fairly and ensure that everyone has access to all the opportunities and experiences offered.
82. Teaching assistants have a very good understanding of pupils' needs, especially those with more complex difficulties. They show good awareness of the subjects that are taught and contribute effectively to the progress that pupils make in learning, behaviour, personal development and social skills. In conjunction with the temporary supply teaching staff, they also make a valuable contribution to ensuring that there is some continuity of provision in those classes affected by long-term teacher absence.
83. In the majority of classes, good and effective attention is paid to meeting the needs of pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN and more able pupils. In particular, specialist intervention using commercial schemes has helped to improve standards in literacy. Generally, work is appropriately planned to engage and challenge all pupils. However, real understanding of pupils' needs, the appropriateness of work set and careful monitoring of progress is less effective where there has been a lack of continuity in teaching, particularly in year 1.
84. Staff working specifically with pupils on the autistic spectrum in the social and communication classes provide good support for their pupils. They work hard to balance the more structured organisation of the social and communication class base with the social and educational need for inclusion. They currently have a good range of skills and experience but have recognised the need for continuing professional development in order to meet the specific needs of this group of pupils most effectively.
85. The school's recent and comprehensive assessment policy sets a clear direction for development. All statutory requirements are met through baseline assessment profiles, end of key stage assessments and a wide range of standardised and in-house tests are used to inform progress. Target-setting documentation is completed and sent to the LEA for further analysis. This has helped the school identify where to focus remedial support most effectively.
86. Some teachers are increasingly using assessments to inform their planning. For example, baseline assessment arrangements are rigorous and provide a wealth of useful information on children's day-to-day progress. Teachers use this to identify difficulties, provide work that is set at the right level, and to set targets for further development.

87. However, rigorous evaluation and monitoring of data is not consistent and not used to direct pupils' future work. The folders in which test data are stored are cumbersome and unwieldy. In particular, there is little evidence of assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information technology. There is little use of subject portfolios containing graded and annotated samples of pupils' work to support teachers' judgements.
88. Despite the school having a good marking policy, it is not used consistently to provide pupils with strategies to help them clearly understand what they need to do to improve aspects of their work. Generally, teachers share objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons and check, during and at the end of the lesson, how well they understand what is being taught. Some pupils are involved in setting personal targets, but this practice is inconsistent. In its school development plan, the school recognises that whole school assessment procedures are an area for further development.
89. Annual reports to parents about their children's progress conform to statutory requirements and are of good quality. They contain evaluative and constructive comments on pupils' achievements and skills in every subject. Reports also outline clear targets for improvement. Recently, both parents and pupils have been given the opportunity to comment on the report. Procedures for reviewing and reporting the progress of pupils with additional learning needs in the social and communication classes are thorough and meet all requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

90. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
91. Overall, the school provides pupils with a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is equally accessible to all pupils, including those with SEN and effectively meets their needs and aspirations. Temporary members of staff work hard to try to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
92. Policy documents are of very good quality. Most reflect current good practice but several are very recent and, at the moment, indicate aspiration and intent. Similarly, the school has recently undertaken a major revision of its schemes of work but there has been insufficient time for their impact on standards to be assessed fully. Teachers are currently evaluating their effectiveness. They are modifying them to ensure that they incorporate thorough provision for key skills within each subject, a range of varied teaching strategies to meet the needs of all, and opportunities for continued assessment and evaluation.

93. The quality of provision for the Under Fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Detailed plans are prepared to ensure a wide range of stimulating and varied activities. In particular the well-developed balance of indoor and outdoor activities means that children are already well prepared for the new Foundation Phase.
94. The school has recently produced a comprehensive policy document for the development of pupils' key and basic skills but has not yet incorporated this into medium and short term planning to ensure continuity and progression. In practice, however, there is good evidence that the skills of speaking, listening and reading are identified and addressed in individual lessons and opportunities for developing ICT are many and varied. New initiatives, such as 'Teaching Talking' and 'Language and Play' have been particularly effective in raising standards in communication. However, provision for developing pupils' writing and numeracy skills across the curriculum at key stage 1 and in lower key stage 2 is limited.
95. The varied programme of visits and visitors to the school significantly broadens and enriches pupils' experience and they recount visits they have made with enthusiasm. A wide range of well-attended after-school clubs is offered to all throughout the week. Younger pupils are developing an awareness of road safety through their involvement in the Kerbcraft initiative.
96. The school promotes pupils' moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils' personal and social education is a prominent feature of school life. Involvement with the school council from an early age, for example, ensures that pupils recognise that their views are taken seriously. They develop an understanding of the consequences of their actions upon others. The introduction of the 'Buddy' system where older children teach the younger children how to play correctly has had a positive impact on standards of behaviour. Many have developed good independence and team-building skills as a result of residential stays at outdoor pursuits centres. Pupils' awareness of the culture of Wales and other cultures is developing well through planned opportunities across the curriculum. However, learning experiences for promoting pupils' spiritual development are under-developed, and opportunities are missed, even during acts of collective worship, for periods of reflection
97. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their bilingual skills in a range of school activities. Staff ensure that Welsh is used during assemblies, registration and generally throughout the school day. These situations often involve pupils in listening and responding to instructions. Bilingual signs are prominently placed in and around school. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* features prominently in the life and work of the school. Suitable opportunities are created in subjects' across the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness of the language and culture of Wales.
98. Parents are very supportive and there is a good relationship between them and the school. They feel welcome and involved and have good opportunities

to make their views known through questionnaires and consultation meetings. They engage in substantial fund-raising. The school makes further efforts to involve them in their children's education by offering work and play classes that are run by the Basic Skills Agency and information technology classes that are run by Cross Keys College.

99. The school has established a range of valuable links with industry in a very short time. Pupils are involved in a variety of first-hand experiences through workshops, lessons and carefully planned educational visits that develop their understanding of the world of work and enhance their work in all areas of the curriculum. For example, they have worked with professional artists to design the tiles that enhance the entrance to the school building. They are introduced to opera and drama through working with students from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and professional theatre groups. Their skills in dance and physical education are developed through working with a professional dance teacher and sports coaches. Older pupils have had valuable work-related experiences at the local supermarkets and an electronics factory. Six teachers including the head teacher have also undertaken industrial placements to enhance their managerial skills.
100. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop understanding of sustainable development and healthy eating through their involvement in the garden project. Opportunities to research into crop rotation, garden design, and recycling and compost schemes enable older pupils to develop their ICT skills. Similarly, lessons are planned which encourage pupils to care for their environment and make it attractive through planting tyre pots and flower beds and keeping the grounds litter free. The school also acts in a sustainable way to reduce utility bills. For example, rain water is collected and used for the garden project. There are water bags in the toilets and light sensors throughout the school. The school is working towards the bronze Eco award. However, although the school encourages pupils to support charities such as Action Aid, it does not have consistent and effective strategies to develop pupils' awareness of global citizenship.
101. Pupils develop the skills required to support economic development well through their role on the recently-established school council. They have a real voice in improving the school. They interview their peers for jobs in the school such as librarians and prefects and organise fundraising events for playground games and equipment as well as benches for the quiet area. Year 6 pupils help sell fruit in the Healthy Tuck shop. All pupils have the opportunity to take responsibility by undertaking monitor roles. They take their roles very seriously and show great commitment.
102. The school reflects national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration very well. The school is at the heart of the community. More than half the pupils attend the daily Breakfast Club that is run by parents and a significant numbers attend a wide range of after school clubs run on four evenings each week.

103. Children in the Early Years classes benefit from working with their families in language and numeracy courses whilst older pupils enjoy guided reading sessions. The school hosts daytime adult education classes in IT. Many parents purchase the appropriate software used by the school and consequently are better able to help their children. Pupils, in turn, see themselves and adults as life long learners.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

104. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's own self-evaluation in which it awarded a grade 3 for this aspect. The inspection team feels that good progress has been made in addressing the shortcomings identified by the school in its original judgement and so has awarded a higher grade.
105. Overall, the quality of personal support and guidance is good. Pupils' views are sought through questionnaires and, through the school council, they regularly help set targets for improvement in school life. The school has a very positive ethos that ensures that every pupil feels valued and included. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good and this contributes to the overall warm supportive atmosphere.
106. The school works closely with support agencies through regular 'Partnership in Practice' meetings and through several well-established and beneficial remedial initiatives. Support programmes are carefully planned and integrated into the school's work and ensure equality of opportunity. Pupils know what is expected of them and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school. Additionally, professionals such as the police and school nurse effectively support the school's personal and social education policy.
107. The school has a positive partnership with parents and works hard to involve them in the education of their children. Both informal verbal and formal written communication is regular and effective. The recently-established Parent Council is taking an increasingly active part in school life through regular planned meetings with the head teacher. Parents are kept well informed about activities and events through newsletters', home/school diaries and the school website.
108. Induction arrangements for the Early Years children are carefully planned and implemented. A brochure provides very useful information about daily procedures. Pupils moving across key stages take part in "changeover sessions" with their new teachers. There are effective procedures in place to support pupils who join the school at a later stage. New pupils quickly learn routines and settle well into school life. There are well-established transition arrangements with the receiving comprehensive school. Year 6 pupils are involved in cross phase projects in English, mathematics and information technology with the local comprehensive school.

109. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are very rigorous. The school operates a first-day response to absence system and works closely with the education welfare officer on cases that give concern. The “five minute rule” and the breakfast club have produced improvement in the overall attendance rate and punctuality. Both good and improved attendance is regularly rewarded for individuals and by class. However, despite the school’s best efforts, a small number of parents do not fully support the school’s arrangements for the attendance of their children.
110. There are very effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils’ behaviour and performance. All staff apply policies for behaviour management consistently and act as very good role models. Arrangements to encourage pupils to behave well are very effective in class, around the school and on the playground. Pupils know what is expected of them respond well to the reward system.
111. Adults in the school are well aware of pupils’ particular needs and are knowledgeable about procedures in the event of accidents and emergencies. They are alert to issues relating to the well being of the pupils. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and risk assessments are undertaken before educational visits and regular health and safety audits are conducted.
112. The school is in its third year the Healthy Schools Award scheme. It promotes health and fitness for pupils through diverse extra-curricular activities ranging from residential visits to the maintenance of a vegetable garden. Games and play equipment encourage teamwork and active break times and lunchtimes. There are also healthy options at lunchtime.
113. All policies and procedures for child protection are effectively in place. There are two designated governors for child protection and the head teacher and deputy act as named persons. Teachers and support staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in this aspect.
114. The school makes good provision for pupils with additional learning needs and all statutory requirements are fully met. Effective procedures have been established to identify pupils with SEN early; and mainstream teachers apply good strategies to ensure all pupils with SEN are fully engaged in classroom activities. The special educational needs co-ordinator [SENCo] and the peripatetic language support teacher work closely with class teachers in producing and monitoring individual educational programmes for pupils. These are reviewed regularly with appropriate opportunities provided for parental input. Currently, the SENCo does not play a major role in supporting curriculum planning.
115. Many pupils with SEN need intensive support with literacy. The school has very good arrangements for providing this by withdrawing groups of children into well-appointed teaching areas that adjoin mainstream classrooms. There, they receive support from experienced and skilled support staff and visiting specialists. ‘Catch Up’ schemes for reading and ‘Teaching Talking’ schemes have proven particularly effective. Teachers take great care to build flexibility

into these arrangements so that pupils do not miss other work. Assessment records, examination of pupils' work, reviews of ongoing individual educational programmes, and discussions with pupils show that they enjoy the sessions and make good progress.

116. Arrangements for supporting pupils with a statement of SEN in the two social and communication classes are good. Teachers and assistants have substantial experience in working with pupils on the autistic spectrum and they provide a suitable range of experiences in well-resourced classrooms to meet many of their academic, social and personal needs. However, not all staff have received appropriate up-to-date training in this specialised field to enable them to meet fully the needs of pupils who can present difficult and challenging behaviours.
117. Pupils spend the majority of their class time in the social and communication bases, but do integrate appropriately into mainstream classes for specific lessons. The pupils join children of their own age for assemblies, breaks and lunchtimes and are accepted as equal members of the school community. The SENCo and head teacher, ensure that all staff and pupils maintain a positive and constructive attitude towards those with more complex needs.
118. Pupils' behaviour is generally good. This is due to the application of a clear policy and effective strategies, combined with an ethos of mutual respect and understanding. There are specific lessons on personal, social and health-related topics, some of which involve group discussions (Circle time). There is an effective buddy system and a rewards and sanctions system that is applied fairly and commonly understood. Exclusions have been few but these have been dealt with in an appropriate, positive and constructive manner. Pupils themselves comment that there has been a real improvement.
119. The school promotes equal opportunities well. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils know that they are valued, and are treated equally and with respect. The school is aware of the differing performance of boys and girls in the core subjects and is developing strategies to address the problem. Pupils receive a high level of support and guidance whatever their social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background.
120. In a culture of mutual respect and support, staff work hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access and an equal chance to succeed. Pupils from the social and communication classes are very warmly welcomed and well integrated into classes right across the school. Success and good progress are fostered and celebrated whenever possible. Playground activities and zones and extra-curricular sessions, encourage interaction between all pupils. Pupils now accept each other as equal members of the school community. Pupils are not stereotyped because of their gender, ethnic origin or ability.
121. The school recognises its responsibility to promote good race relations across all areas including religious education and the personal and social programme of work. It strives to celebrate differences and promote respect in assemblies. Pupils in year 6 have good awareness of racial issues and respect and

recognise diversity. However, the school does not sufficiently address younger pupils' knowledge and understanding of the broader aspects of living in a multicultural society.

122. The school has effective measures to enable it to eliminate harassment, bullying and discrimination, and to develop a supportive, inclusive ethos. It has addressed the problem of poor behaviour positively and pupils benefit from good systems, which reward and celebrate good behaviour. No incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour were noted during the inspection.
123. The school's motto "Happy Together – Learning Together" underpins all aspects of school life. Secure and happy relationships between adults and pupils are evident throughout the school, enabling it to function as a happy, safe community.
124. The school makes good efforts to ensure that pupils with disabilities are treated equally. To this end, it has produced an appropriate disability access plan and subsequently carried out reasonable adjustments to the building to ensure it is fully accessible to all pupils and adults with physical disabilities. Discrimination is not tolerated.

## Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

125. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's own self-evaluation in which it awarded a grade 3 for this aspect. The inspection team feels that initiatives introduced by the head teacher effectively cover all requirements for this aspect and so awarded a higher grade.
126. Since his appointment, under two years ago, the head teacher has made an excellent contribution to the life and work of the school. He is a positive, committed, enthusiastic, and well-informed professional who provides strong and effective leadership. Under his guidance and with the strong and valuable support of the deputy head teacher, he has established a very clear direction for the future to which governors, staff, parents and pupils all subscribe. In a relatively short period of time, the head teacher has built a co-ordinated team with the common purpose of improving provision in all aspects of school life and raising standards. The strategic direction of the school is explicitly stated in the aims and targets of the school development plan. There is now a strong sense of purpose, pride and optimism in the school.
127. Subject leaders are knowledgeable, committed and developing their expertise in the subjects for which they are responsible. They have been involved in policy-making and have reviewed their schemes of work thoroughly although in some areas such as mathematics they are still in the evaluative and development stage. Monitoring is done through scrutiny of pupils' work, review of class teachers' planning and through lesson observation with feedback to teachers. Subject leaders have received training and support to consolidate their skills and build confidence in this area. This enables them to prioritise areas for development in an informed way. They are at an early stage in developing portfolios of pupils' work, to demonstrate the standards achieved by pupils in a way that will bring consistency to assessment.
128. Managerial systems to support, develop and improve the performance of individual staff and departments are very effective. The school successfully implements performance management procedures in line with statutory requirements. Procedures are in place to ensure that individual members of staff share their professional development opportunities with each other. This has a positive impact on raising standards. Additionally, the head teacher has set a high priority on developing formal and informal arrangements for whole school staff appraisal and review.
129. The school sets targets to improve standards at all levels of school life. On behalf of the LEA, it sets, and in some instances exceeds, the challenging targets for cohorts of pupils to achieve. It identifies pupils who need support because of their difficulties and produces appropriate individual targets for

them. The school is making good progress in developing strategies and targets to extend its more able pupils.

130. The school takes good account of national priorities such as sustainable development, the development of bilingualism, *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* and the Healthy Schools project and these are integrated into its strategic development.
131. The governing body is very supportive of the head teacher, staff and pupils. The well-established chair of governors is totally committed and works closely with the head teacher on all aspects of school development. Governors are kept very well informed verbally by the head teacher and through half-termly reports.
132. Governors have clearly defined roles and responsibilities that they take seriously. All required sub-committees are in place and meet their responsibilities well. The link governors for the core subjects, for SEN, and for child protection, have received appropriate training and help monitor provision in the school. Four governors work in school. They are fully involved in weekly staff meetings, are very supportive of all aspects of the school's work and make a valuable contribution to strategic planning. Some governors are very recently appointed and, although they have undertaken appropriate training, are still developing their understanding of educational practice and the range of their responsibilities.
133. Overall, governors take due account of the head teacher's professional advice but also bring their own varying expertise and experience to setting the school's strategic direction. They have monitored the effectiveness of the school's provision well and have ensured that decisions on spending priorities have been focused on the school's needs.
134. The governing body meets statutory requirements in full.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

135. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's own self-evaluation in which it awarded a grade 3 for this aspect. The inspection team feels that the quality of self-evaluation is comprehensive and effective and so awarded a higher grade.
136. A culture of critical self-evaluation is being firmly established and starting to provide the school with first-hand evidence of its performance in many areas. Procedures are comprehensive, systematic and based on real evidence. Due to the newness of these procedures, however, the full impact on education and pupils' standards has yet to be realised.

137. All staff and some governors have received training in developing self-evaluation skills and make a valuable contribution to the process. The views of parents, pupils, and agencies such as the Education and School Improvement Service and the LEA are actively sought and valued. This is helping to create a sense of belonging, ownership and a pride in the school. The school council is also playing an important role in bringing about improvements and pupils are keen to point these out to visitors. Similarly, the new parent council is proving a success and a number of very supportive parents are heavily involved in a cycle of redecoration for the school. The recent Pantside News is also used well to communicate the school's vision and actions.
138. The school self-evaluation report clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses. It is a good working document that outlines plans for improvement. These match closely the areas for development identified by the inspection team. The team also agrees with the school's overall judgements made in the report on key questions 3 and 7. However, it awarded higher grades in the remaining five key questions because it feels that the school has made further progress since its original judgements.
139. Although the self-evaluation systems are new, the school already has a wealth of evidence on which to base its evaluations. To enable it to achieve its identified priorities, the school has purchased an extensive range of new resources.
140. Pupils' performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is meticulously monitored and analysed and staff are well aware of how pupils are performing against similar schools and nationally. Subject leaders monitor long-term targets and follow groups of pupils in order to measure the impact of improvements.
141. New and enthusiastic subject leaders have been appointed, and they have set about reviewing and auditing their subjects, and developing informative action plans for improvement. This is enabling them to play a more effective role in strategic planning and provide significant input into the whole school improvement plan. They have started to observe lessons and scrutinise pupils' work. In the core subjects, the early years, and religious education they now have a good understanding of achievement. Leaders of other subjects are not as well informed about standards because assessment arrangements for these subjects are not as well developed. Newly-formed year group teams are addressing daily issues and setting collaborative targets.
142. The school improvement plan is based on academic cycles, with funding suitably allocated to key areas. Results of an LEA review were used effectively to help focus the school on priorities identified in its own self-evaluation report. It is also an effective working document, enabling the head and deputy head teacher to pursue rigorously improvements in the quality of education that the school provides and in pupils' standards. It includes criteria by which the school will judge its success. Targets are reviewed regularly in

conjunction with governors, and adjusted or new ones planned where necessary. The performance management system links well into planning priorities.

143. The school recognises, however, that more needs to be done to develop the processes of action planning. Initially, the school was slow to respond to the recommendations of the previous inspection, but under the new leadership it has responded swiftly and effectively. An outstanding feature of this is the well-planned provision for the education of children under five.
144. The good procedures now in place are helping the school evolve and, despite the newness of the systems, measurable improvements are now taking place.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

145. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
146. Teaching staff in the mainstream school are well qualified, experienced and are well deployed. Appropriately skilled support staff work closely with them to support pupils and assist in the effective delivery of curriculum objectives. This is a good feature. Teaching and support staff in the social and communication classes, have valuable skills and experience in working with the needs of pupils based there and receive good support from outside agencies. The school has identified the need for continued focussed training for staff working with pupils who have marked additional learning needs to ensure they are kept fully abreast of the latest developments and best practice.
147. The effective administration support, led by the school secretary, ensures that the day-to-day life of the school runs smoothly and effectively. The caretaker, canteen and lunchtime staff are clearly valued members of the school team and make an important contribution to the school's caring and supporting ethos.
148. The quality and quantity of resources to support work throughout the curriculum are good overall. Resources match the needs of all pupils well and are deployed effectively. An appropriately-stocked library provides good quality reading resources. However, ventilation is poor, and the room becomes hot and stuffy when a whole class is in there using lap tops and reference books for research.
149. Teachers make good use of the available accommodation to ensure that learning activities are stimulating. Inside the school, the environment is bright and colourful due to the many displays of pupils' work arranged by their teachers or support workers. The social and communication classes provide good bases for working with pupils with additional learning needs. The school

hall is spacious and offers plenty of room for indoor gymnastic activities. The outdoor secure play area and shelter for the nursery is a recent addition and is a good provision. The school has identified the potential to extend this to include the reception in the near future together with an outside classroom. The hard play areas are ample and in a good state of repair. The grassed areas are well maintained.

150. Since being in post, the head teacher and governing body have wisely invested a considerable amount of money in all curricular subjects, especially information technology. The interactive whiteboards are used effectively and the recent acquisition of a bank of lap tops with wireless communication has made a positive impact on standards.
151. The school organises planning, preparation and assessment time well using its own teachers and teaching assistants together with outside providers for lesson coverage. As part of this, on Thursday afternoons, all key stage 2 pupils take part in an enrichment afternoon. The senior management team, participating staff and pupils look forward to and enjoy these sessions. Pupils say that although it is good fun you are really learning.
152. There are appropriate regularly updated job descriptions in place for all teaching and non-teaching staff. Performance management systems are effectively established and outcomes from this meet both the identified needs of the school and the individual needs of staff. All teaching staff have benefited from General Teaching Council for Wales grants to pursue courses to enhance their own professional development. This is seen as a vital factor in raising the standards of achievement of pupils. The careful deployment of staff to their best effect and the regard given to their professional development has had a strong impact on developing a sense of unity, purpose and optimism.
153. Spending decisions are suitably matched to the school's priorities. Staff work closely with the head teacher to identify priorities and spend resources wisely. The head teacher and governing body have suitable regard for the principles of best value and they carefully monitor the impact of spending decisions.
154. From low levels of attainment on entry, pupils achieve well and make good personal, social and academic progress in their time at the school. Older pupils display mature and responsible attitudes although there is still work to be done for some in reaching national standards of educational attainment.
155. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### English

**Key Stage 1:** Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

#### Good Features

156. As pupils progress through key stage 1, they listen with growing attention and concentration to their teacher's explanations and instructions and to other pupils' contributions. They listen attentively to familiar stories and retell them simply using their own words. Although, assessed performance is behind that of national averages, pupils make considerable progress in year 2 extending their vocabulary and improving their ability to speak in sentences. As pupils in year 2 grow in confidence, they adapt what they say for different purposes and audiences and collaborate, to some degree, in discussions.
157. Overall, pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in reading. They describe their favourite characters simply and are able to recall some major events in well-known stories they have heard. Most year 1 pupils recognise full stops and capital letters. Pupils have a developing knowledge of the alphabetical order of letters. Some older pupils can identify grammatical conventions, such as an exclamation mark or a question mark. By the end of key stage 1, more-able pupils read unfamiliar texts with developing confidence.
158. Overall, pupils make adequate progress during key stage 1 in their writing. They are beginning to think about the words they use, so their writing makes sense and they make sure that their writing has one good idea. More able pupils use words like 'then' to join ideas together and produce writing that is interesting to the reader, using capital letters and full stops appropriately. By the end of key stage 1, a few rewrite stories in their own words, using some of the key features of narrative. Standards in handwriting in key stage 1 show a wide variation with younger pupils at a very early stage of tracing while others in year 2 can write legible sentences freely.
159. Skills in speaking and listening in key stage 2 are good; particularly in years 5 and 6. Pupils express their considered views confidently and precisely, listen with interest when others are speaking and evaluate what has been said, before responding. Conversations with some of the pupils are frank, lively and informative.
160. The majority of key stage 2 pupils read correctly, with good understanding. They use appropriate strategies to gain meaning and read with obvious enjoyment in group reading sessions. Pupils across the key stage display more advanced reading skills as they search for information from books and the Internet and use dictionaries and search engines effectively. By the end of the key stage, reading is accurate, fluent and expressive. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about books they have read and identify the reasons for

enjoyment of particular books. They read aloud with clear voices and appropriate expression and characterisation.

161. Year 1 pupils respond to a limited range of literacy texts through tasks, which includes written responses to stories, sequencing pictures and description of characters. They write in simple sentences or underwrite in the form of recount, letter or labelling diagrams. Progress is more rapid in year 2. Pupils respond to an increasing range of text, which includes shopping lists, fact sheets, poetry and independent research.
162. Pupils in year 5 and in year 6 write effectively and produce lively work, which includes dialogues, portraits, newspaper reports and poems. They plan and organise their work well and use connective words effectively. More able pupils are able to write increasingly more complex and extended pieces of work. Pupils successfully use appropriate vocabulary, develop valid opinions and display sensitivity in their descriptions.
163. In key stage 2, pupils' knowledge of language develops well. They enhance the quality of their written work through neatness, good punctuation and accurate spelling.
164. Consistent and focussed intervention using schemes such as 'CatchUp' and 'Talking Together' have been very effective in improving the general oracy and reading skills of pupils in mainstream classes in both key stages. Pupils in the social and communication classes also make good progress relative to their abilities and to the targets set for them by their class teachers and language specialists.

### **Shortcomings**

165. Pupils' skills in writing are under-developed in key stage 1. They do not write for a sufficiently wide range of purposes and audiences; and have a limited ability to plan, review and improve on their initial attempts.
166. Pupils' performance, especially that of girls, in end of key stage 1 national curriculum tests, is well below local and national averages.

<b>Mathematics</b>
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**Key Stage 1:** Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

### **Good Features**

167. In key stage 1, pupils are developing an appropriate understanding of number bonds and patterns. They understand the relationship between addition and subtraction and order numbers correctly. In year 2, most make good progress in numeracy and mental mathematics skills. They know the difference

between odd and even numbers and count on and back in steps of 2, 3, 5 and 10.

168. Pupils know the value of various coins and use them accurately to calculate small sums of money. They have a growing understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes. They are learning to handle data and to order and present simple information accurately in the form of pictograms, lists, tables and graphs and are developing their mathematical language well when describing angle turns.
169. In key stage 2, pupils continue to reinforce their work in numeracy with an increasing understanding of patterns and relations. They further develop different mental strategies and are confident in explaining their workings using the correct mathematical terminology.
170. Older key stage 2 pupils have a firm command of place value, including decimal places, a good knowledge and recall of multiplication tables and are beginning to master complex calculations using the four rules of number. The more able understand the relationship between percentages, fractions and decimals. The majority name and describe the features of two- and three-dimensional shapes correctly and their understanding of symmetry is good. They name, draw and read angles accurately, calculate perimeters and areas and fix or find positions using co-ordinates with good degrees of provision. They collate data and create and analyse graphs accurately.
171. Pupils with SEN based in the two social and communication centres work at a level appropriate to their abilities and achieve the targets set for them.

### **Shortcomings**

172. In key stage 1, many pupils find it difficult to explain their mathematical reasoning and their skills in using and applying mathematics.
173. In key stage 1, pupils' skills in problem-solving are under-developed.
174. Key stage 1 pupils and younger key stage 2 pupils have limited experience in using standard and or non-standard measures for mass and capacity.

<b>Information technology</b>
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**Key Stage 1:** Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

### **Good Features**

175. Pupils in key stage 1 show confidence and familiarity in using information technology. They use a good range of basic computer skills including moving and positioning the cursor purposely with the mouse and using basic keyboard functions such as letters, numbers, punctuation keys, the space

- bar, and the enter/return keys. With support, they can open programs and save work.
176. Year 1 pupils use a variety of 'paint' features such as *fill* and *erase* on a simple publishing program to create pictures related to the topic on which they are working. They then add appropriate text in a font, size and colour of their choice.
  177. Year 2 pupils create data tables and subsequently simple graphs, which they print independently. They show good progress in extending their word processing and graphics skills. Pupils are developing good rudimentary skills in writing 'procedures' to program screen turtles to complete a journey.
  178. Key stage 1 pupils enjoy exploring and navigating appropriate simulation / adventures games and talk appropriately about their choices and predicted outcomes.
  179. In key stage 2, pupils show increasing competence in using information technology for a variety of purposes. For example, they use an internal e-mail system effectively to communicate with each other and with the teachers.
  180. In years 3 and 4, pupils extend their word-processing skills through introduction to 'Word.' They enhance the quality of their presentations by importing pictures from 'Clip Art' and have created interesting and entertaining storybooks with animation, sounds and music which they have composed themselves. Some written work involves the use of Welsh text.
  181. In year 5, pupils access search engines such as 'Google' to *cut* and *paste* images to support their work on Islam. They develop good desktop publishing skills when producing brochures and leaflets related to their work in geography or in providing information about an author.
  182. Year 6 pupils are very competent at locating, retrieving and saving information to files, and confidently use the word processor to record commands for logo work. In one ambitious project, year 6 pupils work with pupils from the local comprehensive school, on a *Powerpoint* presentation about their transition from junior to secondary education. Pupils use digital cameras and software to support projects they are working on, to record and evaluate work and to produce and edit a film '25 reasons why I believe in my school.'
  183. Pupils with SEN in the social and communication centres and in mainstream classes show good skills in their use of information technology and their progress in English and mathematics is accelerated through regular use of appropriate software.
  184. Overall, key stage 2 pupils are developing good research and independent learning skills when using the Internet in conjunction with the more traditional use of text books to find out information related to current topics. As a result

of this, they show an increasing maturity and sense of purpose in their learning and appreciation of their role as students.

### **Shortcomings**

185. Pupils' skills in using the interactive whiteboard are under-developed

<b>Design technology</b>
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**Key Stage 1:** Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 2:** Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

### **Good Features**

186. Pupils at both key stages draw upon the skills gained in other subjects and apply them successfully to their design and technology projects. For example, key stage 1 pupils use their knowledge of materials to help them in their project 'How do you like your toast?' Younger key stage 2 pupils use their knowledge and understanding of nets to aid them in designing boxes, while older key stage 2 pupils transfer independent learning skills and knowledge gained in the curriculum enrichment sessions.
187. At key stage 1, pupils use appropriate vocabulary when making simple decisions about the shape and design of a food product. They incorporate their scientific knowledge to explain how bread changes when heated for a specific amount of time.
188. Younger key stage 2 pupils show a good understand of the need for basic hygiene when designing and making jam tarts. They use sketches to record their plans and label their designs accurately.
189. Following previous work relating to the theme of 'bullies', year 6 pupils design puppets using sketches to record their plans. Pupils understand the need to research their product thoroughly using Internet, books and other sources to generate ideas, which they subsequently discuss and consider. They talk enthusiastically about ways to solve design tasks, and choose suitable materials based on knowledge of their properties and the most effective methods of joining them.
190. All pupils understand the need to handle tools and equipment carefully.

### **Shortcomings**

191. Key stage 1 pupils ability to develop and convey their own design ideas through drawing and modelling is limited.
192. Pupils have insufficient knowledge and understanding of basic mechanisms e.g. wheels, axles etc.

193. Key stage 2 pupils do not investigate, take apart and appraise simple products and applications to learn how they function.
194. They do not rigorously appraise their own products to identify strengths and weaknesses and test for sturdiness.

<b>Art</b>
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**Key Stage 1:** Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

### **Good Features**

195. Standards are good in artwork across both key stages because pupils are very interested in their art experiences and this makes them eager to learn. Their displayed work around the school is colourful and interesting, showing a good progression in skill development.
196. In most classes, pupils use their sketchbooks well to develop and practise their skills and evaluate their work. They make exciting choices of colour, materials and techniques. In both key stages, they use computer programs regularly and confidently to develop their art skills, for example, in portrait painting.
197. Work in two- and three-dimensions is good throughout the school. Pupils in the key stage 2 social and communication class, for example, create good quality Celtic jewellery in clay, Celtic weaving patterns and Round House models in recyclable materials, to support their work in history. Their work is bold and interesting.
198. Pupils in both key stages 1 and 2 develop their skills when working under the guidance of visiting artists. They have created an attractive, colourful and eye-catching mosaic clay tile collage for the entrance hall. Pupils in key stage 2 work with a ceramicist to create interesting and uniquely-shaped bowls and plates in clay.
199. Key stage 1 pupils display good recall and good understanding of techniques they have previously used, for example, wax method, and wet-on-wet painting and dabbing. They evaluate the success of their own methods thoughtfully. They use these techniques effectively in their current work to create a large dragon painting, working collaboratively in their groups. They confidently work on a variety of scales. With support, they use a technical vocabulary appropriately related to the techniques used. They create patterns that are detailed and intricate
200. Pupils in key stage 2 have a good knowledge of visual language and use this to identify and explore elements of tone, shape, line and colour. Their appraisal of the work of artists from the European and Welsh culture, and other cultures is a strong feature.

201. Younger key stage 2 pupils respond effectively by creating their own interesting work in the same style as well-known artists. They mix vibrant colours to create glowing sunset tones as a background for their African animals silhouettes. They work with a Welsh artist to create colourful block print collage in the style of Mabinogion creatures.
202. Older pupils respond practically and imaginatively to the art objects related, for example, to a beach scene, and use their knowledge to good effect when creating observational beach drawings. They confidently select, control and experiment with a range of individually chosen materials, showing a good level of autonomy. They record effectively and creatively from direct observations, producing good results.
203. The Art club makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and the development of art skills.

### **Shortcomings**

204. In some classes, sketchbooks are not used effectively to practise and develop skills.

<b>Religious education</b>
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**Key Stage 1:** Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 2:** Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

### **Good Features**

205. Pupils in both key stages 1 and 2 develop good knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs, festivals and practices of a range of world faiths, including Christianity. Older pupils understand that religions have much in common, as well as differences.
206. Year 2 pupils have a secure knowledge of aspects of both the Christian and Jewish faiths. When they visit a local church and prepare their own questions to ask the vicar, they come to understand the significance of these places to a community and develop some insight into the main ceremonies and the church calendar.
207. Pupils begin to develop social and moral values through learning about the lives of significant religious persons, such as Mother Theresa and Florence Nightingale.
208. Younger pupils in key stage 2 display a good knowledge of the importance of, and reasons for, prayer. They create their own thoughtful and imaginative prayers for certain times of the school day.
209. Pupils in year 5 gain an insight into life experiences and have a good understanding of the need for rules after studying the Ten Commandments.

They say that this has enabled them to write their own class rules and helped them to ensure that the school is an orderly and happy community.

210. Pupils in year 6 draw together their knowledge of different world faiths. They study light festivals across a range of religions and then consider and interpret “light” and “dark” behaviour. Their conclusions are thoughtful and reflective when they explore their feelings and relate them, not only to issues such as vandalism and poor behaviour, but also to kind and helpful behaviour. This develops them socially and morally.
211. Older pupils in key stage 2 have well-developed personal research skills, which is evident in the good quality of their project work on the Jewish faith. They draw evidence from the Internet, from books and from faith visitors to the school. Their work is well informed, detailed and interesting. They reflect deeply on issues raised in the lessons, enhancing their spiritual development.

### **Shortcomings**

212. In many classes across both key stages, pupils’ skill in interpreting and expressing ideas and views related to issues that have been raised is limited.
213. The quality and quantity of written work is inconsistent across the school.

## **School's response to the inspection**

The Governors and Staff welcome the findings of the report and would like to thank the inspection team for their professional approach and manner throughout the inspection process. The opportunity for constructive dialogue between team members and all staff was highly valued.

We are extremely pleased that the report highlights the good work that we have been doing since the last inspection and in particular during the last two years. We are also proud that our children have been recognised and praised for their positive approach to school life and the commitment that they show to raising standards at our school. The skills and dedication of teaching staff, working alongside the devoted and talented support staff are suitably recognised. The report states that the school has a sense of unity and purpose, with which we agree. More importantly for us is the use of the word optimism as we believe, with more work, the future will hold greater success, happiness and pride.

An action plan will be produced to address the recommendations of the report. We believe that addressing the recommendations has already begun and with further focus and rigour we can develop attendance, improve assessment procedures, build on the development of Key Skills and raise girls' attainment. Training for staff who work with pupils with additional learning needs and improving progression within school will be key areas of our journey to being 'Happy Together-Learning for Life'.

We look forward to sharing this plan with our community and working in partnership to ensure continuous improvements and developments are made. Regular reports will follow for the community and Governors will address action plan areas in their annual report.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Pantside Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Old Pant Road, Pantside, Newbridge, Gwent
Postcode	NP11 5DE
Telephone number	01495 243286

Head teacher	Mr Nic Naish
Date of appointment	September 2004
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Trevor Jones
Registered inspector	Dr Jim Hewitt
Dates of inspection	June 5 - 7 2006

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	11.5	20	22	27	34	28	27	28	197.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	11		11

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	11.5 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes 16	3 : 1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Summer 2005	78.9	88.2	91.8
Autumn 2005	86.1	93.6	93.7
Spring 2006	83.6	90.7	92.0

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	37%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	2

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2005			Number of pupils in Y2:				
			30				
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	3*	7	40	40	10
		National	0	4	12	64	20
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	3*	10	27	50	10
		National	0	4	14	56	27
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	3*	10	37	50	0
		National	0	5	14	69	12
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	3*	6	24	57	10
		National	0	2	11	64	23
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	3*	3	20	57	17
		National	0	2	10	64	24
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	3*	3	14	63	17
		National	0	2	9	66	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	50	In Wales	81

- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements.  
 \* one pupil with a statement of SEN for autism who follows the national curriculum but for whom testing was inappropriate.  
 W Pupils who are working towards level 1

**National Curriculum Assessment Results**  
**End of Key Stage 2:**

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2005</b>				Number of pupils in Y6					25			
<b>Percentage of pupils at each level</b>												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	
English	Teacher assessment	School	4*	0	0	0	0	24	0	40	32	
		National	0	0	2	0	1	4	15	46	31	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School										
		National										
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	4*	0	0	0	0	20	8	44	24	
		National	0	0	2	0	1	3	15	47	32	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	4*	0	0	0	0	8	20	32	36	
		National	0	0	2	0	0	2	11	51	34	

<b>Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)</b>			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	64	In the school	
In Wales	72	In Wales	

- D Pupils who are exempted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum.
- \* one pupil with a statement of SEN for autism who follows the national curriculum but for whom testing was inappropriate.
- 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

## Appendix 4

### **Evidence base of the inspection**

A team of four inspectors spent a total of ten inspector days in the school. The head teacher attended team meetings and acted as nominee on the inspection team. Additionally, a peer assessor took a full part in the process during the inspection period.

The inspectors observed:

- 28 lessons or part lessons, covering all classes;
- acts of collective worship;
- pupils throughout the school day including breaktimes, lunchtimes and when entering and leaving school; and,
- extra-curricular activities.

The team considered:

- a wide range of pupils' past and present work;
- comments from the pupils about their school;
- 29 responses to the parents'/carers' questionnaire; and,
- the school's self-evaluation report, development plans, policy documents, schemes of work and other documentation;

Before and during the inspection the team held discussions about the life and work of the school with:

- parents of pupils at the school;
- the head teacher and staff;
- the governing body; and,
- representatives of agencies linked to the school.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Jim Hewitt Registered Inspector	Context, Summary, Recommendations, Appendices, Contributions to: Key Question 1 Key Question 2 Key Question 4 Key Question 5 Mathematics, Information Technology
Peter Roach Team inspector	Contributions to: Key Question 1 Key Question 2 Key Question 3 Key Question 7 English, Design Technology
Kay Andrews Team Inspector	Contributions to: Key Question 1 Key Question 4 Key Question 6 Art, Religious Education
Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to: Key Question 1 Key Question 3 Key Question 4 Key Question 5
Nic Naish Nominee	Supplying information for the inspection team Attending team meetings
Debbie Woodward Peer assessor	Observing lessons, Examining pupils work, Contributing to team meetings

The contractor was:

Evenlode Education Ltd.,  
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### Acknowledgement

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