

Report by Dr David G Evans
Penygarn Junior School, 23/10/06

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

**Penygarn Junior School
Penygarn Road, Pontypool. NP4 8JR**

School Number: 6782225

Date of Inspection: 23/10/06

by

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78706**

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- * nursery schools and settings maintained or used by local education authorities (LEAs);
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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
- * the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre Plus.

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

The inspection of Penygarn Junior School took place between 23/10/06 and 25/10/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dr David G Evans, undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

"There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **short** 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. Penygarn Junior is a local authority community school, which serves the areas of Trevethin, Penygarn and St Cadoc's on the outskirts of Pontypool.
2. The catchment area has been designated a Communities First Area by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and there are high levels of social deprivation and unemployment.
3. Approximately 37 per cent of the pupils are entitled to receive free school meals (FSM), a figure which is above the national average. Seventy-eight pupils (38 per cent) have been identified as having additional educational needs, and this is also above the national average. A recent survey has identified significantly low levels of literacy and numeracy skills in the catchment area.
4. The school faces significant challenges in terms of Child in Need and Child Protection referrals.
5. There are currently 206 pupils on roll, representing the full range of ability. There are no pupils from Welsh-speaking families and Welsh is taught as a second language. Over the last three years, the school has suffered as a result of the general demographic trend of falling numbers.
6. The school is facing a proposed amalgamation with the adjoining infant school in September, 2007.
7. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality mark for the third successive time and it is also a designated ECO school.
8. The school was last inspected in November 2000.

The school's priorities and targets

9. The School's Strategic Plan (SSP) states that the school aims:
10. 'to provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment in which all members of the school community can achieve their full potential and develop their particular talents'.
11. The school's main priorities in the SSP for the current year are:
 - the on-going development of additional education needs procedures;
 - the on-going development of assessment procedures;
 - the development of sustainable development and global citizenship, incorporating racial harmony; and

- the further development of Welsh/bilingualism.

Summary

12. Penygarn Junior is a good school with many outstanding features. High quality teaching enables pupils to achieve well. The school's evaluation of its work is extremely thorough and leadership and management are outstanding. The school is a flourishing, vibrant community in which pupils feel appreciated and supported in every aspect of their educational and personal development.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

13. Pupils enter Year 3 with levels of attainment that are below average.
14. Inspection evidence shows that well over half of those who complete the national assessments for seven-year olds perform either at the lower end of level 2 or at a lower level.
15. In the 2006 NC assessments at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4 in English was below national and local averages, while in mathematics and science the proportions were above both the national and local averages. When compared with similar schools (those schools in the same free school meals group), English results were below average, while those in mathematics and science were well above average. When rolling averages are taken into account for the last three years, the performance trend in English is an improving one. Overall, girls performed better than boys in the 2006 assessments.
16. Inspection evidence shows that, during the last three years, there were significant numbers of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in the Year

6 groups. In 2006, for example, 53 per cent of pupils who sat the assessments were identified as having SEN and 76 per cent of these had Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

17. Overall, pupils make good progress with no important shortcomings in the development of their key skills. Their progress in speaking and listening through the medium of English is an outstanding feature of the school. In every class pupils listen very attentively and respond confidently and clearly to adults. They express opinions sensibly and they discuss willingly and purposefully with each other and with their teachers.
18. Pupils' progress in reading and writing through the medium of English, in speaking, listening, reading and writing through the medium of Welsh and in bilingual competence is good with no important shortcomings.
19. Pupils' use of mathematical skills is good with outstanding features. Their data-handling skills are of exceptional quality. Pupils' skills in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are good with outstanding features. In all classes, pupils use computers confidently for a variety of purposes. Pupils' work in ICT is a model of good practice.
20. Across the school, pupils' personal and social education skills are good with outstanding features. Pupils also make very good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They show very positive and caring attitudes towards each other and display a high degree of care for their school and for the values it promotes.
21. Pupils' problem-solving skills are good with no important shortcomings. They regularly take decisions and work things out for themselves. They solve problems effectively in subjects such as mathematics and science.
22. Creative skills are good with no important shortcomings. Pupils express themselves creatively using a wide range of resources and media. Their musical skills develop particularly well during effective choral sessions.
23. Inspection evidence demonstrates that all pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress in attaining their agreed learning goals. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment on entry and they acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills successfully. An outstanding feature of the school is that learners succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. Another outstanding feature is that learners understand what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve their work.
24. Pupils' behaviour and respect for others is exemplary. They have a very clear understanding of what the school expects of them and they conduct themselves very sensibly both in lessons and around the school.
25. Pupils have a very good understanding of equal opportunity issues and they show a mature level of respect for diversity. Pupils prepare well for effective

participation in the workplace and the community and they enjoy learning about the world of work.

26. There are good features that outweigh shortcomings in relation to the overall attendance patterns. The average attendance figure for the three terms preceding the inspection was 92.1 per cent.

The quality of education and training

27. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 37% | 60% | 3% | 0% | 0% |

28. This compares well with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in her annual report 2004-2005. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 79% of lessons, with 18% of lessons having outstanding features (grade 1).

29. Where the teaching was judged to be good with outstanding features, the outstanding features include:

- teachers having very good knowledge of individual pupils' learning needs;
- teachers managing the behaviour of pupils very well and using support staff very effectively; and
- staff members making highly original use of the interactive whiteboards to improve the quality of lessons and to enthuse pupils;

30. Where the teaching was judged to be good with no important shortcomings, the good features include:

- clear presentation of aims and objectives at the beginning of lessons;
- effective revision at the end of lessons; and
- an effective pace of learning, with challenging questions by the teachers.

31. In lessons where teaching was judged to have shortcomings these include:

- teachers not planning well enough for the lessons;
- expectations not being sufficiently ambitious nor the work sufficiently challenging; and
- at times, the pace of the lesson is slow.

32. The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good with outstanding features. It is an integral part of the teaching and learning process in the school. The school meets all statutory requirements.

33. The school has developed a comprehensive, rigorous and very manageable system of assessment that is used extremely well to match activities to individual pupils' needs.

34. An outstanding feature of the assessment process is the way in which pupils are given opportunities to be involved in evaluating their own learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers make positive comments on the work.
35. Teachers inform parents and carers about their children's progress at parents' evenings and through written annual reports. The end-of-year reports for pupils are comprehensive, clear and informative.
36. The school responds very well to pupils' learning needs and provides them with equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and interesting curriculum. The curriculum fully meets National Curriculum (NC) and legal requirements.
37. The curriculum is very well supported by comprehensive schemes of work that provide very clear progression and continuity in pupils' learning. The provision for the development of key skills is good. Detailed curriculum maps and plans ensure that this provision is becoming more embedded in the school's practice.
38. The school makes outstanding provision for the development of pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils have a clear sense of ownership and responsibility for the school, its environment, their community and the outside world. The school has a very strong sense of 'family' and its ethos encourages pupils to care for individuals and to appreciate other people's values.
39. The policy for Personal and Social Education (PSE) closely follows national guidelines and provides pupils with a wide range of learning opportunities.
40. There is an outstanding number of extra-curricular clubs in school. Pupils clearly enjoy these and many participate in the out-of-school provision.
41. The promotion of pupils' bilingual skills is generally good. Pupils respond well to the use of Welsh in daily routines and they are eager to share their knowledge of Welsh phrases with visitors. Study of the culture and heritage of Wales through Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is well established in practice, especially in areas such as history and music.
42. The head teacher and staff are highly successful in tackling social disadvantage, in challenging stereotyping and in promoting equal opportunities for all pupils. The school's commitment to equality and social inclusion is exemplary.
43. The whole school community actively promotes sustainable development. The school was the first in south Wales to be awarded the ECO status. This area represents an outstanding feature of the work of the school.
44. The quality of care, support and guidance provided by the school is good with outstanding features. The school is an extremely happy community where all pupils work and play in a safe and secure environment.

45. The school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and employers and takes good account of their views. The majority of parents respond positively to questionnaires about the quality of education and the care provided by the school. However, there is scope to involve parents more in their children's learning.
46. An outstanding feature is the school's very successful 'Assertive Discipline' strategy, which very effectively encourages consistent management of behaviour throughout the school. The school's policies and procedures to promote very good behaviour are exemplary.
47. Child protection procedures fully meet requirements and are extremely well documented.
48. The quality of provision for additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. There are very good procedures in place for the early identification of pupils with SEN and pupils make good progress.
49. The quality of provision for equality of opportunity is good with outstanding features. All learners are well supported and guided regardless of social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background.
50. The school has a comprehensive and well-implemented policy for promoting good race relations. There is good access to the building and grounds for those with physical disabilities.

Leadership and management

51. The quality of leadership and management provided by the head teacher is outstanding and a great strength of the school. The school is successful in raising pupils' standards of achievement and their personal and social skills.
52. There are very clear aims, values and policies, which give a strong, determined, common purpose that drives the school forward and focuses on doing the best for all pupils and the community. This leads to the provision of exemplary care and inclusion, which meets the needs of all pupils.
53. The head teacher provides resolute and highly principled leadership, which ensures a very clear and successful direction for the work of the school. Through her unswerving dedication and skill, the school has become a beacon of outstanding practice in many areas. The deputy head teacher and senior management team (SMT) play a crucial role in the overall leadership of the school and they have been actively involved in all the positive changes made in the school in recent years.
54. All staff members work together as a very effective team and, with the governors, are highly committed to meeting the needs of pupils and the community. Together, they continually strive to provide a recognised haven and a positive turning point for many pupils who have great difficulties in their lives.

55. The highly motivated and enthusiastic governing body (GB) is very effective, well informed and closely involved with the life of the school. The GB is very supportive of the head teacher, staff and pupils and very committed to the aims and objectives of the school. All statutory obligations are met and monitored.
56. The quality of the school's self-evaluation process and its report are first class. The school analyses its performance in line with the seven key questions in the Estyn framework for inspection.
57. In all but one of the key questions, the inspection team's judgements agreed with the school's evaluation of its work and provision. It was in Key Question 1 that the inspection team's judgement differed from the school's evaluation of Grade 1. In arriving at their judgement, the inspection team took particular account of pupils' progress and achievement across time, their overall performance in NC assessments, and pupils' recent attainment in English.
58. Leaders and managers at all levels of the school are very well informed about the areas for which they are responsible, and they have a very strong understanding of performance across the school. The school's development planning provides a very clear rationale and challenging targets.
59. Progress in addressing the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection is good with outstanding features.
60. The well-qualified and experienced teachers and classroom staff have good knowledge and expertise. Teachers are assisted ably by classroom assistants who are fully involved in planning, supporting and assessing learning in a positive manner.
61. The quality and quantity of learning resources are good with outstanding features. Since the last inspection the school has invested in a range of very good ICT facilities. Accommodation provides a very suitable setting for good teaching, learning and support for all learners. The school buildings and grounds are very well maintained by the school caretaker and cleaning staff.
62. The school makes very efficient, effective and economic use of all available resources. The GB is fully involved in financial matters, monitors the school budget regularly and plays a significant role in ensuring that the school acquires the appropriate resources needed to introduce new learning initiatives.
63. Taking into account pupils' overall achievement and attainment, their exemplary behaviour, the very effective quality of education provided and the high quality of leadership and management, the school provides very good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to extend the current good and outstanding practice further, the school should respond to the challenge of targeting excellence by:

R1 continuing to develop pupils' skills in reading and writing through the medium of English;

R2 continuing to raise the standard of pupils' Welsh and bilingual skills;

R3 developing further strategies to improve attendance figures; and

R4 continuing to extend parents' involvement in their children's learning.

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

64. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of Grade 1 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. In arriving at their judgement, the inspection team took particular account of pupils' progress and achievement across time, their overall performance in NC assessments, and pupils' recent attainment in English.
65. Pupils enter Year 3 with levels of attainment that are below average.
66. Inspection evidence shows that well over half of those who complete the national assessments for seven-year olds perform either at the lower end of level 2 or at a lower level.
67. In the 2006 NC assessments at the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4 in English was below national and local averages, while in mathematics and science the proportions were above both the national and local averages. When compared with similar schools (those schools in the same free school meals group), English results were below average, while those in mathematics and science were well above average. When rolling averages are taken into account for the last three years, the performance trend in English is an improving one. Overall, girls performed better than boys in the 2006 assessments.
68. Inspection evidence shows that, during the last three years, there were significant numbers of pupils with SEN in the Year 6 groups. In 2006, for example, 53 per cent of the pupils who sat the assessments were identified as having SEN and 76 per cent of these had MLD.
69. Overall, pupils make good progress with no important shortcomings in the development of their key skills. Their progress in speaking and listening through the medium of English is an outstanding feature of the school. In every class pupils listen very attentively and respond confidently and clearly to adults. They express opinions sensibly and they discuss willingly and purposefully with each other and with their teachers.
70. Pupils' progress in reading and writing through the medium of English, in speaking, listening, reading and writing through the medium of Welsh and in bilingual competence is good with no important shortcomings.
71. Pupils' use of mathematical skills is good with outstanding features. They use co-ordinates successfully in geography when drawing maps of the locality and they draw graphs to record and interpret information they collect. Their data-handling skills are of exceptional quality.

72. Pupils' skills in using ICT are good with outstanding features. In all classes, pupils use computers confidently for a variety of purposes. They construct spreadsheets with ease and prepare Power Point presentations in an unobtrusive and mature fashion. Pupils' work in ICT is a model of good practice.
73. Across the school, pupils' personal and social education skills are good with outstanding features. Pupils show very positive and caring attitudes towards each other and they display a high degree of care for their school and for the values it promotes.
74. Pupils' problem-solving skills are good with no important shortcomings. They regularly take decisions and work things out for themselves. They solve problems effectively in subjects such as mathematics and science.
75. Creative skills are good with no important shortcomings. Pupils express themselves creatively using a wide range of resources and media. Their musical skills develop particularly well during effective choral sessions.
76. Inspection evidence demonstrates that all pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress in attaining their agreed learning goals. They achieve well in relation to their prior attainment on entry and they acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills successfully. An outstanding feature of the school is that learners succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. Another outstanding feature is that learners understand what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve their work.
77. Overall, the development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills is good with no important shortcomings. Children are happy and enthusiastic and have a positive disposition to learning. In all classes, pupils pay attention and apply themselves to their tasks conscientiously. Invariably, they sustain concentration and work quietly and industriously. They co-operate enthusiastically and work well in groups and with a partner.
78. Pupils make very good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Relationships are very strong throughout the school. A particular strength is the way in which pupils listen to, and value, the opinions of others even when they do not share these. Through participation in lessons, assemblies, the school council and extra-curricular activities, pupils successfully develop skills to work as part of a team and as members of the school community. They take responsibility for their actions and they demonstrate a high degree of maturity, honesty and fairness in their dealings with others.
79. Pupils' behaviour and respect for others is exemplary. They have a very clear understanding of what the school expects of them and they conduct themselves very sensibly both in lessons and around the school. Pupils get on very well with each other and with adults. They are extremely courteous to visitors and support each other very well. Pupils who have emotional and

additional educational needs respond very well to the support that the school provides.

80. Pupils have a very good understanding of equal opportunity issues and they show a mature level of respect for diversity. As they progress through the school, pupils gain increasing respect for the many and varied cultural traditions, diverse beliefs, attitudes and values in society.
81. Pupils prepare well for effective participation in the workplace and the community, and they enjoy learning about the world of work when visitors come to the school to talk about their work.
82. There are good features that outweigh shortcomings in relation to the overall attendance patterns. The average attendance figure for the three terms preceding the inspection was 92.1 per cent. The education welfare service supports a small number of pupils, who are absent more frequently than expected, to help improve their attendance. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and arrive punctually at the beginning of the school day.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

83. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
84. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 37% | 60% | 3% | 0% | 0% |

85. This compares well with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in her annual report 2004-2005. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 79% of lessons, with 18% of lessons having outstanding features (grade 1).
86. Where the teaching was judged to be good with outstanding features, the outstanding features include:
 - teachers having very good knowledge of individual pupils' learning needs;
 - teachers managing the behaviour of pupils very well and using support staff very effectively;
 - relationships of the highest quality;
 - innovative and imaginative strategies used very effectively to develop pupils' skills and knowledge; and

- staff making highly original use of the interactive whiteboards to improve the quality of lessons and to enthuse pupils.
87. Where the teaching was judged to be good with no important shortcomings, the good features include:
- clear presentation of aims and objectives at the beginning of lessons;
 - effective revision at the end of lessons;
 - detailed knowledge and understanding of the subjects being taught; and
 - an effective pace of learning, with challenging questions by the teachers.
88. In lessons where teaching was judged to have shortcomings these include:
- teachers not planning well enough for the lessons;
 - expectations not being sufficiently ambitious nor the work sufficiently challenging; and
 - at times, the pace of the lesson is slow.
89. The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good with outstanding features. It is an integral part of the teaching and learning process in the school. The school meets all statutory requirements.
90. The school has developed a comprehensive, rigorous and very manageable system of assessment that is used extremely well to match activities to individual pupils' needs. This very effective use of assessment to inform learning is an outstanding feature of the provision.
91. NC assessments and other test results are carefully analysed to set realistic, yet challenging targets. Assessment is accurate and consistent and records are clear and purposeful. Detailed records are kept of the progress of pupils with SEN, and targets clearly noted in the Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
92. An outstanding feature of the assessment process is the way in which pupils are given opportunities to be involved in evaluating their own learning. They respond extremely well to target-setting systems and acquire a very good understanding of what they have to do to improve. Pupils play an active role in setting their individual targets in language and mathematics.
93. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers make positive comments on the work. Teachers offer constructive guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
94. Teachers inform parents and carers about their children's progress at parents' evenings and through written annual reports. The end-of-year reports for pupils are comprehensive, clear and informative. They provide parents and carers with appropriate opportunities to recognise and encourage their children's success. Reports give an informed personal overview, suggest guidance for improvement and note targets for the next stage of learning.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

95. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
96. The school responds very well to pupils' learning needs and provides them with equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and interesting curriculum. As pupils move through the school, the curriculum builds systematically on existing knowledge, understanding and skills. Those with SEN are very well included and involved in all activities. The curriculum fully meets NC and legal requirements.
97. The curriculum is very well supported by comprehensive schemes of work that provide very clear progression and continuity in pupils' learning. The provision for the development of key skills is good. Detailed curriculum maps and plans ensure that this provision is becoming more embedded in the school's practice.
98. The school makes outstanding provision for the development of pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils have a clear sense of ownership and responsibility for the school, its environment, their community and the outside world. The school has a very strong sense of 'family' and its ethos encourages pupils to care for individuals and to appreciate other people's values.
99. Very effective opportunities to further pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures and faiths are clearly planned. Collective worship, religious education and geography lessons all contribute very well to pupils' awareness of diversity within society.
100. Pupils' spiritual development is very well promoted and they have experiences of a high standard in whole-school acts of collective worship. Pupils have very good opportunities to offer their opinions and to reflect on the themes of awe and wonder. Assemblies and various subjects, such as music, provide excellent opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually.
101. The promotion of pupils' moral and social development is also very good. The strong emphasis placed upon ensuring that pupils are polite to one another, to staff and visitors is very successful. There is also constant encouragement to help others throughout the school. Class discussions are used very effectively across the school to help pupils gain confidence in sharing and dealing with issues that affect them. This further enhances pupils' very good social and moral development, which is evident in pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
102. There are very good opportunities to promote co-operation and decision-making. Older pupils accept responsibilities to look after younger pupils, and prefects perform their duties in a mature and very sensible manner. Pupils'

awareness of those less fortunate than themselves is raised very effectively and they make considerable efforts to collect money and contribute to worthy causes.

103. The policy for PSE closely follows national guidelines and provides pupils with a wide range of learning opportunities. Visitors and local agencies make a very good contribution to the delivery of various aspects of PSE.
104. There is an outstanding number of extra-curricular clubs in school. Pupils clearly enjoy these and many participate in the out-of-school provision. Pupils express their appreciation of the various sporting and cultural clubs which are available. The school plans a very good range of educational visits to many places of interest, such as Big Pit in Blaenavon, the Museum of Welsh Life in St Fagans, Llancaiach Fawr and the Roman site at Caerleon; and these greatly enhance and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.
105. The school has strong and very effective partnerships with many other providers and interested parties. Links with teacher training institutions are strong, as are links with social and health services and child protection agencies. There are also notable links with other local infant, primary and secondary schools.
106. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are promoted very well through a wide range of stimulating activities. Pupils are actively involved in creating many projects such as the Second World War garden, the mini enterprise scheme and various problem-solving ventures. These are outstanding features of the school.
107. The promotion of pupils' bilingual skills is generally good. Pupils respond well to the use of Welsh in daily routines and they are eager to share their knowledge of Welsh phrases with visitors. Study of the culture and heritage of Wales through Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is well established in practice, especially in areas such as history and geography.
108. An outstanding feature of the school is its commitment to equality of opportunity and access to all school activities, regardless of background or circumstance. Pupils confirm that, whatever the occasion, whether games, clubs or other extra-curricular activities, such as educational visits, all are actively encouraged to take part.
109. The head teacher and staff are highly successful in tackling social disadvantage, challenging stereotyping and in promoting equal opportunities for all pupils. High expectations of pupils with regard to behaviour and achievement, coupled with opportunities to develop pupils' independence, ensure that all pupils know they are valued equally and as individuals. The school's commitment to equality and social inclusion is exemplary.
110. The whole school community actively promotes sustainable development. The school has recently been involved with the 'Schools in Bloom' and Forest School project and it has won prizes for its many recycling efforts, particularly

with regard to the collection of 'Yellow Pages'. School Council representatives swiftly identify this aspect as one of the strengths of the school. The school was the first in south Wales to be awarded the ECO status. This area represents an outstanding feature of the work of the school.

111. The school attends well to national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. It hosts an adult computer club and language and numeracy courses.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

112. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
113. The quality of care, support and guidance provided by the school is good with outstanding features. Penygarn Junior School is an extremely happy community where all pupils work and play in a safe and secure environment. An exceptional feature is the school's strong involvement with many outside agencies, which work for the benefit of children and families alike.
114. The school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and employers and takes good account of their views. The majority of parents respond positively to questionnaires about the quality of education and the care provided by the school. However, there is scope to involve parents more in their children's learning.
115. Very good induction programmes are in place to familiarise new pupils with the school and to ensure that older pupils transfer smoothly to their new secondary school. The 'buddy' scheme, which begins in Year 3, is an outstanding example of pupils taking responsibility for others and helping younger pupils in the school.
116. Children's self-esteem is raised very effectively by the Pyramid Project, which is run by support staff and by recently appointed pastoral workers. An outstanding feature is the school's very successful 'Assertive Discipline' strategy, which very effectively encourages consistent management of behaviour throughout the school. The school's policies and procedures to promote very good behaviour are exemplary.
117. The school makes very good use of the expertise and guidance provided by specialist agencies, such as the police, health and social services. The Healthy Schools Initiative is embedded very well in school routines. An outstanding feature is the involvement of older pupils in the preparation and cultivation of the school garden; they successfully grow vegetables, which they use when helping the school cook to prepare school lunches.
118. The school monitors attendance and punctuality thoroughly and vigilantly, with any unexplained absence followed up immediately. Parents are informed of

their children's attendance record and of attendance targets set by the school. They are actively discouraged from taking holidays in term time. Registration periods are well structured and comply with current requirements.

119. The welfare and safety of all is of paramount importance and day-to-day arrangements for the well-being of pupils and staff are very thorough. The school building is safe and secure. Staff know pupils exceedingly well and provide pastoral care of the highest order. Policies and procedures are of high quality. Arrangements for pupils who become unwell, injure themselves or have specific medical needs are first-class.
120. Child protection procedures fully meet requirements and are extremely well documented. A designated child protection officer leads in this area, ensuring that all staff and appropriate governors receive training in child protection matters and are well aware of protocols to follow.
121. The quality of provision for additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. There are very good procedures in place for the early identification of pupils with SEN and pupils make good progress. The quality of support provided for pupils and the liaison between staff is very good.
122. The school makes excellent use of standardised tests to monitor and assess pupils' achievements. The school uses these results very successfully to identify pupils who underachieve and to establish teaching groups. The application of appropriate strategies to meet the identified needs of each pupil is an outstanding feature within the school's SEN provision.
123. Learning activities for pupils with SEN are carefully adapted to suit different needs within the lessons and this aspect is very well developed throughout the school. Pupils benefit from suitably adapted learning resources and excellent support from teaching assistants. Teachers also break down tasks into smaller units of learning in order to meet pupils' levels of development and to aid their concentration.
124. The special education needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and class teachers work very effectively together to ensure that pupils with SEN are fully included in the school's curricular and extra-curricular provision. IEPs are very well planned and implemented. Pupils' understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses is an outstanding feature of the school's SEN provision.
125. The quality of provision for equality of opportunity is good with outstanding features. All learners are well supported and guided regardless of social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background. Fairness, tolerance, equality and respect for different views and values are clearly promoted and are outstanding features of the provision. These are displayed clearly in the well established and very effective school council.
126. The school provides very effective support for pupils whose behaviour could impede their own progress and that of others. The school has agreed strategies to deal with any such incidents. These are, however, very rare,

because staff are alert to the early signs of problems and act purposefully to dissipate effectively any such difficulties. Weekly monitoring of the 'class consequence sheets' is undertaken by the deputy head teacher and this has proved very successful in maintaining and improving standards of behaviour throughout the school.

127. The school has a comprehensive and well-implemented policy for promoting good race relations. The school's procedures to ensure that all pupils are free from all forms of harassment and discrimination are excellent. The school's policy is regularly monitored and there is appropriate training for staff.
128. There is good access to the building and grounds for those with physical disabilities. The school has made a thorough assessment of the accessibility of the building and grounds, and staff work hard to ensure that no pupil is put at a disadvantage.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

129. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
130. The quality of leadership and management provided by the head teacher is outstanding and a great strength of the school. The school is successful in raising pupils' standards of achievement and their personal and social skills. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well, particularly in mathematics, science and ICT. These factors explain the apparent mismatch between the grades for key questions 1 and 5.
131. There are very clear aims, values and policies, which give a strong, determined, common purpose that drives the school forward and focuses on doing the best for all pupils and the community. This leads to the provision of exemplary care and inclusion, which meets the needs of all pupils.
132. The head teacher provides resolute and highly principled leadership, which ensures a very clear and successful direction for the work of the school. Through her unswerving dedication and skill, the school has become a beacon of outstanding practice in many areas. The deputy head teacher and SMT play a crucial role in the overall leadership of the school and they have been actively involved in all the positive changes made in the school in recent years. The head teacher and the deputy head are very successful role models and practitioners.
133. All staff members work together as a very effective team and, with the governors, are highly committed to meeting the needs of pupils and the community. Together, they continually strive to provide a recognised haven

and a positive turning point for many pupils who have great difficulties in their lives. All members of staff have a clear understanding of their duties and their appropriate roles. Subject leaders play an important part in promoting improved educational provision and higher standards.

134. There are very well established performance management systems, which directly influence the continuing professional development of all teaching and support staff. Regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning contributes successfully to this process. There are very clear and strong links forged between the development of individuals and the school's priorities. The provision for newly qualified teachers is very well matched to their needs and fully meets requirements.
135. The school takes very effective account of national and local priorities. Many successful initiatives, such as 'assertive discipline' and assessment strategies, have been developed by the school and shared with other providers in the area. The school attaches great importance to the continual improvement of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, their healthy eating practices, their understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship.
136. The highly motivated and enthusiastic GB is very effective, well informed and closely involved with the life of the school. The GB is very supportive of the head teacher, staff and pupils and very committed to the aims and objectives of the school. Governors meet regularly and are supplied with detailed information about the work of the school through the head teacher's reports. A very effective committee system is in place that plays a significant part in reviewing policies and practice. Governors successfully link up with subject leaders. All statutory obligations are met and monitored.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

137. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
138. The quality of the school's self-evaluation process and its report are first class. The school analyses its performance in line with the seven key questions in the Estyn framework for inspection.
139. In all but one of the key questions, the inspection team's judgements agreed with the school's evaluation of its work and provision. It was in Key Question 1 that the inspection team's judgement differed from the school's evaluation. In arriving at their judgement, the inspection team took particular account of pupils' progress and achievement across time, their overall performance in NC assessments, and pupils' recent attainment in English.
140. The process the school has undertaken to produce its report has been very thorough. Staff members say that the process itself has been of significant help

in shaping their thinking and forward planning and has focused their attention well on strategies for bringing about further improvement. Indeed, the school is able to demonstrate clearly many areas in which its practice and provision have already moved forward as a result of the very effective self-evaluation process which is already very well embedded in the school.

141. Leaders and managers at all levels of the school are very well informed about the areas for which they are responsible, and they have a very strong understanding of performance across the school. The school's outstanding self-evaluation arrangements draw very well on first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning and the evaluation of the standards pupils achieve. The school has developed arrangements for monitoring its provision very well and it undertakes very effective analyses of assessment information to predict pupils' performance at the end of the key stage. A particular strength in the school's self-evaluation is the way in which leaders readily and sensitively respond to emerging issues.
142. The school works hard to involve all members of the school community in its self-evaluation process. It canvasses the views of parents, both formally and informally, and the school council provides a regular input.
143. The school's priorities for improvement are very well grounded in the outcomes of its self-evaluation process. The school's development planning provides a very clear rationale and challenging targets. Success criteria are sharply focused, responsibilities are clear and there are very effective arrangements in place to monitor and evaluate success.
144. Progress in addressing the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection is good with outstanding features.

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

Grade1: Good with outstanding features

145. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
146. The well-qualified and experienced teachers and classroom staff have good knowledge and expertise. Peripatetic teachers provide specialist teaching in music, speech and language and in Welsh. All members of staff have appropriate job descriptions and are very well aware of their individual roles. Teachers are assisted ably by classroom assistants who are fully involved in planning, supporting and assessing learning in a positive manner. Strong team spirit within the school is an outstanding feature. Good arrangements are in place to provide the head teacher and deputy with management time and all members of the teaching staff with the required Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time.
147. The school administration and management is supported very effectively by the school clerk and there are very good systems in place to ensure that the school

runs smoothly and efficiently. Mid-day supervisors and kitchen staff make invaluable contributions to school life.

148. The quality and quantity of learning resources are good with outstanding features. The well-stocked library provides good facilities for independent research. External resources, such as local libraries and museums, are used to good effect. Since the last inspection the school has invested in a range of very good ICT facilities, which include a fully networked computer suite, interactive whiteboards in each classroom and laptop computers that are used by staff and pupils alike. The strategies to develop this aspect of the school's provision, to train all members of staff and to ensure that ICT resources are fully utilised as teaching and learning resources are outstanding features.
149. Accommodation provides a very suitable setting for good teaching, learning and support for all learners. The school buildings and grounds are very well maintained by the school caretaker and cleaning staff. The spacious interior is comfortably furnished, attractively decorated and enhanced by effective displays of information, awards and pupils' work. An outstanding feature is the development of the school garden, which greatly enhances pupils' understanding of the environment and of the advantages of a self-sufficient style of life. Innovative and imaginative improvements both inside and outside the school provide pupils with stimulating, recreational and educational activities that are popular with groups at play times. Good use is made of the school buildings by adult education and community groups.
150. The school makes very efficient, effective and economic use of all available resources. Governors have very good regard for the principles of 'best value'. Budgeting is closely linked to the learning needs of the pupils. Staff members are very well deployed, managed and very effectively developed and resources are very well matched to the school's priorities and objectives. An outstanding feature is the way in which the school, through its self-evaluation process, targets its spending on the needs and development of its pupils.
151. The GB is fully involved in financial matters, monitors the school budget regularly and plays a significant role in ensuring that the school acquires the appropriate resources needed to introduce new learning initiatives.
152. Taking into account pupils' overall achievement and attainment, their exemplary behaviour, the very effective quality of education provided and the high quality of leadership and management, the school provides very good value for money.

The School's Response to the Inspection:

153. The head teacher, staff, governing body and pupils are delighted that the inspectors found Penygarn Junior to be a good school with many outstanding features and that it provides very good value for money. The award of the highest grade in six out of the seven key questions and grade 2 in the other key question is testimony to the strategies that have been consistently implemented by all staff. We are delighted that our own self-evaluation procedures and report were judged to be first class.
154. We are thrilled that the quality of teaching was judged to be good or better in 97 per cent of the lessons, with 37 per cent achieving grade 1. Pupils' levels of achievement are at least good in all areas with many having outstanding features. It is particularly gratifying that ICT is considered to be a model of good practice. We are also delighted to read that an outstanding feature of the school is that learners succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background and also that pupils understand what they need to do to improve their own work.
155. The good behaviour and courtesy of our pupils has always been a source of pride. It is gratifying to read that the inspectors consider pupils' behaviour and respect for others to be exemplary.
156. In addition, we note that the inspectors appreciate the strength of leadership and management at all levels in the school and that a strong team spirit in the school is an outstanding feature.
157. Where necessary, we will amend our SSP to include recommendations made by the inspection team. In addition, we will continue to maintain our own self-evaluation procedures.
158. Governors and staff at Penygarn Junior school wish to express their thanks to the inspection team for their professionalism and sensitivity throughout the inspection.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Name of school | Penygarn School |
| School type | Junior |
| Age-range of pupils | 7-11 |
| Address of school | Penygarn Road, Pontypool, Torfaen. |
| Postcode | NP4 8JR |
| Telephone number | 01495 763607 |

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Headteacher | Mrs J Hillier |
| Date of appointment | January, 1994 |
| Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority | Mr A Attwood |
| Registered inspector | Dr David G Evans |
| Dates of inspection | 23-25 th October, 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 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 53 | 42 | 57 | 54 | 206 |

| Total number of teachers | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time equivalent (fte) |
| Number of teachers | 9 | 0 | 9 |

| Staffing information | |
|--|------|
| Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes) | 26:1 |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes | N/A |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes | N/A |
| Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes | 26 |
| Teacher (fte): class ratio | 1:1 |

| Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection | | | |
|--|-----|-----|----------------|
| Term | N | R | Rest of School |
| Summer 2006 | N/A | N/A | 92.1% |
| Spring 2006 | N/A | N/A | 91.9% |
| Autumn 2005 | N/A | N/A | 93.3% |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 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 2:

| National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006_ | | | Number of pupils in Y6 | | | | | 47 | | | | |
|--|--------------------|----------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|--|
| Percentage of pupils at each level | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | D | A | F | W | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| English | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 38 | 38 | 24 | |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 15 | 47 | 32 | |
| Welsh | Teacher assessment | School | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | National | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mathematics | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 41 | 40 | |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 47 | 32 | |
| Science | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 38 | 51 | |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 51 | 35 | |

| Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) | | | |
|---|-----|---------------|-----|
| by Teacher Assessment | | by Test | |
| In the school | 62% | In the school | N/A |
| In Wales | 74% | In Wales | N/A |

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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection:

Four inspectors spent a total of seven inspector days in the school. A team meeting was held prior to the inspection. There was a nominee, who was the head teacher, and a peer assessor.

The inspection team visited:

- 30 lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship; and
- extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team held meetings with:

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

The inspection team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 66 responses to the parents' questionnaires; of which around 95.9% of answers were positive;
- a comprehensive range of documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- a variety of pupils' current and past work.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

| Team member | Responsibilities |
|--|---|
| Dr David G Evans Registered Inspector | Context, Summary and Recommendations Key Questions 1, 2, 5 and 6 |
| Mrs M Hanney Team Inspector | Key Questions 4 and 7 |
| Mr P Fisher Team Inspector | Key Question 3 |
| Mrs R Boardman Lay Inspector | Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, 4 and 7 |
| Ms A Williams Peer Assessor | Contributions to all the Key Questions |
| Mrs J Hillier Nominee | Contributions to all the Key Questions |

Acknowledgement:

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

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