

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

**Plasnewydd Primary School**

**Castle Street,  
Maesteg  
CF34 9UN**

**School Number: 672/2232**

**Date of Inspection: 18 April – 20 April 2005**

**by**

**Allan Fear  
WO/15698**

**Date: 23 June 2005  
Under Estyn contract number T/246/04P**

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Plasnewydd Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The school was inspected under new arrangements, which include:

- The use of a new inspection framework;
- An emphasis on the school's own evaluation of its work; and
- A representative of the school staff, in this case the headteacher, who worked with the inspection team as a nominee.

Before the inspection, governors and staff produced a self-evaluation report that included their judgements on the work of the school. Inspectors used this report to choose areas to examine in order to confirm the accuracy of the school's judgements.

The inspection of Plasnewydd Primary School took place between 18th April – 20th April 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Allan Fear 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

## Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years 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 (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who attain the age of 18 during the academic year.

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key Stage 1 of the national curriculum consists of Year 1 and Year 2: key stage 2 of Year 3 to Year 6: key stage 3 of Year 7 to Year 9: key stage 4 of Year 10 and Year 11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

- 1 Plasnewydd Primary School with 357 pupils aged 4 to 11 years of age and 43 nursery children, is situated in the centre of the town of Maesteg in the Llynfi Valley. The school serves the local community that is varied in nature incorporating areas of relative prosperity and those with levels of social deprivation. Overall 22% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is higher than the all-Wales and local authority average of pupils entitled to free meals. The school intake covers the full range of ability. Around 23% of pupils have special educational needs (SEN); this includes pupils who are enrolled in a KS2 moderate learning difficulties class, which includes pupils drawn from outside the normal catchment area. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. The home language of nearly all the pupils is English. The entry of children into the nursery is controlled by Bridgend County Borough Council.
- 2 Plasnewydd Primary School was formed in January 1998 from the amalgamation of the infant and junior school and was last inspected in May 1999. Since that time extensive improvements have been made in the provision of a new canteen facility and extensive improvements to the school grounds, including large, new playground facilities and a soft surface early years outdoor area. Changes have occurred in the senior management of the school since the last inspection with the appointment of a new headteacher in September 2002 and deputy headteacher in January 2004. At the time of the inspection, two of the teaching staff were on short-term contracts to cover for colleagues on maternity and ill-health leave.

### The school's priorities and targets

- 3 The school's mission statement is 'to achieve excellence' The school aims to provide a secure, stimulating and caring environment in which each person is valued as an individual and encouraged to strive for self-improvement, where self-esteem is nurtured alongside self-respect. Working with parents to ensure that every child engages in the learning process and is supported to develop as fully as possible socially, morally, emotionally, physically and intellectually, so as to become a responsible citizen, appropriately equipped for lifelong learning.
- 4 The school's major priorities and targets for 2004/2005 include:
  - a. raise attainment in literacy and numeracy;
  - b. to create an ethos that effectively promotes inclusion, responsibility, independence and involvement;
  - c. to institute assessment procedures that enable pupils' progress to be monitored effectively and the needs of individual pupils to be addressed;
  - d. to develop teaching and learning strategies that are effective and follow best practice;
  - e. to provide effectively for the welfare of, and the facilities for, pupils and staff.

## Summary and recommendations

- 5 Plasnewydd Primary School is a good school, with many strengths, in which there is a feeling of purpose and commitment. The school has made good progress since the last inspection.
- 6 The inspection team agree with the large majority of strengths and weaknesses identified by the school in its self-evaluation report, which is a very full and accurate document.

Table of grades awarded

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

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

## Standards

Pupils' Standards of achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	6%	65%	26%	3%	0%

- 8 The pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects observed are as follows.

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 3
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 3

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

- 10 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
- 11 Children in the early years make good progress in the key skills of language, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT) and in the reception classes show good development in their bilingual skills.
- 12 Standards in the key skills across the curriculum and bilingualism are as follows:

<b>Key Skill</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
Speaking and listening	Grade 3	Grade 3
Reading	Grade 2	Grade 2
Writing	Grade 3	Grade 3
Numeracy	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Grade 2	Grade 2
Bilingualism	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 13 In both key stages 1 and 2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of Listening, reading, numeracy, and using information and communications technology (ICT), across the curriculum are good. Those in speaking and writing across the curriculum are judged as grade 3. Opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills across the curriculum are not yet fully developed and many pupils have difficulty in explaining reasons for their answers to specific questions. Pupils' writing skills across the curriculum are similarly insufficiently developed throughout the foundation subjects. The overuse of printed worksheets as a vehicle for pupils to record their responses often hinders the development of pupils' skills to write extensively using their own words.
- 14 Pupils make good progress in the development of their bilingual skills. They are able to respond to commands and simple questions and the use of incidental Welsh is a developing feature of the school.
- 15 Overall pupils make good progress in their acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding and in their creative skills. The school plans delivery of the curriculum, owing to the presence of mixed aged classes, through a rolling programme of work operating over a two year cycle; this is particularly the case for foundation subjects. This results in pupils from two years, for example year 5 and year 6 working on similar material. Too often the demands and expectations placed upon pupils are insufficiently matched to the age and ability of the child resulting in a lack of progression between year groups.
- 16 At the end of KS1, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were above those of the local and national averages. When compared to similar schools in Wales, in English, mathematics and science results were above average; between the median and upper quartile values. The performance of girls was better than boys though this is a declining pattern and is mainly apparent in English.

- 17 At the end of KS2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English and mathematics were below those of the local and national averages and above in science. When compared to similar schools in Wales, in English results were similar to the average for the group. In mathematics they were slightly below average, and in science, slightly above. There was a significant gender difference in performance with girls significantly outperforming boys in all three core subjects.
- 18 When compared with performances over the previous four years, in both key stages there is an improvement in results but significantly a reduction in boys' performance in KS2 over the last year after a period of small improvement.
- 19 While the school has introduced a series of measures, to increase pupils' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in their work and what they need to improve, this is still an area for further development.
- 20 The average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection was 92%. Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual.
- 21 Pupils' attitude to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are very good features. Pupils work hard in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously; they readily join in the range of activities provided, and show enthusiasm for their work.
- 22 Pupils are well behaved, understand what is expected of them and are considerate, courteous to each other and adults and visitors. Older pupils show a high level of maturity and responsibility, which enhances the quality of life and the range of educational experiences provided by the school. Pupils show respect towards their peers and adults and the quality of relationships within the school is very good.
- 23 The school provides very effective personal and social education that helps to create a good learning ethos and enhances pupils' self esteem. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school.
- 24 Pupils take an active part in the life and work of the school and show by their attitudes that they see themselves as part of a community in which they support each other and of which they taken great pride; this is a strong feature of the school. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of matters relating to equal opportunities is good. They respect diversity in faith, attitudes and cultural traditions in society.
- 25 Pupils make very good progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development in their ability to work with others, show concern, take responsibility for their actions and show honesty and fairness.

## The quality of education and training

26 The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the judgement of Grade 2 made by the school in the self-evaluation report. Improvements to assessment arrangements are not yet fully informing the teaching and learning process.

27 In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

The quality of teaching in the subjects and area of learning inspected	Grade				
	1	2	3	4	5
	20%	45%	30%	5%	0%

28 The percentage of lessons judged at least 2 is above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of teaching being good or better and above the WAG target of 95% satisfactory or better. **N.B.** satisfactory equates to grade 3 for the purpose of the target.

29 The quality of relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils is good and often very good. In all classes a positive and productive working environment supports pupils' learning. Systems for induction to new classes are effective. Teachers establish class rules and routines and pupils respond very well. Teachers manage classes well; there are clear class rules and established parameters for acceptable behaviour. Teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies and systems for organising pupils as they work.

30 Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subjects they teach; however, at times the content of lessons in the reception classes is more suited to KS1. The quality of schemes of work is good, however teachers' fortnightly planning often lacks sufficient detail, particularly for literacy and numeracy. Planning for Key Skills has been implemented, but is at an early stage of development. There is insufficient evidence of learning objectives being identified for play activities in the Early Years. Opportunities for assessing learning outcomes are not clearly identified in fortnightly plans.

31 Liaison between class teachers, the SENCO and support staff is good. Support staff contribute very well to class lessons, working unobtrusively and sensitively within the class setting and in withdrawal sessions to assist pupils.

32 Teachers clearly identify learning objectives for pupils at the start of each lesson, either orally or in writing. These are often referred to as the lesson progresses. Lessons are well structured, with clear and often stimulating introductions, a good range of tasks for pupils and plenary sessions where the learning objective is revisited. Most teachers use time efficiently; lessons have a good pace. In the best cases teachers set timed targets for pupils to ensure they remain purposefully engaged. However, a small minority of lessons lack challenge and rigour and there is an impact on progression in learning.

33 Teachers use resources effectively to support teaching and learning. Very good use is often made of varied resources to stimulate pupils' interest and motivate

them to learn. In all classes teachers provide an attractive learning environment where pupils' work is celebrated.

- 34 The school's assessment and marking policies are thorough, well explained documents, which offer clear guidelines for teachers on aspects of marking and assessment. These policies have yet to be fully implemented, although progress has been made in the use of standardised assessment strategies throughout the school. In all classes work is marked regularly and in many cases feedback to pupils through written or oral dialogue is generally helpful and informative. In some classes, however, the comments made do not offer clear targets for improvement.
- 35 Assessment information is not always used effectively to inform the planning of future work.
- 36 The school has begun to involve pupils in the assessment and target setting process; individual targets are set for literacy but this process is not yet consistently employed throughout the school or used for other subjects.
- 37 Reports to parents comply with statutory requirements; brief reports are issued at the end of the autumn and spring terms and full written reports at the end of the summer term. Parents are invited to attend formal meeting with class teachers. In the best examples full written reports provide good detail about achievement in core curriculum subjects and indicate awareness of pupils' personalities and attitudes to work. The quality of reports, however, is inconsistent; some are descriptive or do not give sufficient detail on the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In the reports for one class there were no written comments, only numeric grades; owing to the long term absence of a member of staff.
- 38 The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Schemes of work are in place for all N.C. subjects and religious education, which is taught in agreement with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. These continue to be updated and modified in the light of discussion, classroom practice and teachers' own evaluation.
- 39 Children in the early years have access to a broad spectrum of experiences. Teachers in nursery and reception work co-operatively to review provision and ensure continuity and progression in children's learning across the six areas of the curriculum. Further work needs to be undertaken, however, to more effectively plan for children's play and adult intervention in play activities.
- 40 Arrangements for learning support are a strong feature of the school's provision. Small group withdrawal sessions and well directed in-class support effectively meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs.
- 41 Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities and learning experiences outside the classroom.
- 42 Learning experiences effectively promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a clear sense of truth and justice and responsibility to the school and its environment. Daily acts of collective worship effectively promote

pupils' spiritual and moral development. Knowledge and understanding of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is developed through many aspects of the curriculum. Teachers use incidental Welsh effectively to develop pupils' bilingual skills, however, further opportunities could be given for pupils to use Welsh throughout the school day.

- 43 The school has a range of clear, pertinent policies to support pupils' learning needs including a policy for the promotion of race equality. The school is beginning to raise pupils' awareness of sustainable development, but this aspect is at an early stage of development.
- 44 The quality of partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents fully meet requirements. A significant number of parents provide good quality assistance, in the classroom and with educational visits, that is highly valued by the school.
- 45 Educational visits and visitors from the community together with the school's involvement with local initiatives and associations, help to raise the pupils' awareness of the world of work and strengthen the links with the community.
- 46 The school attends well to national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. It runs family literacy and numeracy courses to enable parents to help their children with their learning.
- 47 Pupils work within an orderly, welcoming and secure school community in which they are enabled to experience a range of learning opportunities. In response to the sensitive encouragement of teachers, support staff and adult helpers, pupils develop self confidence and independence in their learning. All staff understand the needs of the pupils in their care and ensure that the support afforded them enables them to cope with new challenges and contributes to the progress they make.
- 48 Effective links are established with local nurseries and parents prior to admission, and the induction programme for early years pupils provides positive support for their introduction to school life.
- 49 There are well-documented and appropriately implemented procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and general well being. Accident and emergency procedures are addressed in the appropriate policies and risk assessments. All staff have received updated training in first aid.
- 50 The school has appropriate policies and procedures to monitor inappropriate behaviour, including the development of effective anger management programmes. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or any other forms of unacceptable behaviour. The school takes very seriously its responsibility for the general safety and well being of pupils.
- 51 The school's personal, social and health programme successfully focuses on the development of a healthy school and life-style with appropriate emphasis being placed on healthy eating issues. Community facilities are utilised to support the

school's fitness programme and a number of initiatives are prioritised for further development.

- 52 Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. Careful consideration is given to the requirements of pupils and under the clear and positive guidance of the SENCO, staff effectively implement procedures for early identification and subsequent monitoring of pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning. The school is sensitive to issues of inclusion and this enables learning support assistants and adult helpers to assist staff in providing good quality support for pupils in mainstream classes and in the moderate learning difficulties (MLD) class; this allows pupils with special needs to fully access the curriculum.
- 53 Individual education plans (IEP's) are drawn up by teachers to form the basis of the learning programme. The school acknowledges the need to ensure that identified targets are specific and realistic to enable pupils to succeed. A 'Nurture' class run by 'Ontrack' effectively provides positive reinforcement strategies to guide and support pupils within the learning environment.
- 54 The school has very good links with the police, educational welfare officer and social services. It also receives regular support from a range of highly skilled specialist teachers and support staff. The work of these specialist staff is highly valued and helps ensure that pupils with SEN make good progress throughout the school.
- 55 The school has a policy supported by good clearly defined procedures for promoting racial equality and dealing with all forms of racial discrimination and harassment.

## **Leadership and management**

- 56 The school has clear aims and objectives, which reflect equality for all. The Headteacher and senior management sets a clear direction for the school's development that is fully understood by all those involved at the school.
- 57 The headteacher and staff are hard working and very committed to the school and the pupils in their care. There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. Staff are very supportive of each other and the good relationships that exist among the staff influence positively the pupils' personal, social and educational development.
- 58 The quality of leadership shown by the headteacher is good. His management is very positive and purposeful and has ensured that the school has moved forward with a clear sense of direction. A particularly strong feature is the headteacher's capacity to build and co-ordinate a team of staff, who all have a common purpose and the encouragement of staff towards that common goal. The school operates in an environment based on mutual trust and understanding; staff feel valued and are encouraged to give of their best.
- 59 There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. Staff, both teaching, support and non-teaching, are very supportive of each other and the good relationships that exist

among the staff influence positively the pupils' personal, social and educational development.

- 60 The headteacher is ably assisted by an effective deputy headteacher who has been instrumental in a number of initiatives for improvement. She leads by example, establishing a very good role model, both in and out of the classroom. The special needs coordinator (SENCO) works very effectively, managing support staff in an effective and efficient way and ensuring that in her own teaching she exemplifies best standards.
- 61 The school senior management team (SMT) have a clear strategic view for the development of the school and, in their individual roles as departmental heads of early years/KS1, lower KS1 and upper KS1, ensure that communication and decision making throughout the school is swift and responsive. Good administration procedures ensure the smooth running of the school. The role of the subject leader is continuing to develop. The school recognises the need to further develop their leadership role in focussing on the standards pupils achieve.
- 62 There are good policies and procedures in place to ensure equality of opportunity for staff and pupil alike. Teachers have contributed to formulating policies that are reviewed regularly. The headteacher and senior management have ensured that the school has developed a capacity to reflect critically on what is being done and how it can be improved.
- 63 The school takes good account of national priorities and these are integrated into its strategic development of the school.
- 64 The school maintains a system of assessment and record keeping and this information is used to inform and set targets for improvement for year groups and groups of pupils. Challenging, yet realistic targets and goals are established and regularly reviewed to assess progress attained.
- 65 The effective performance management initiative promotes teachers' professional development and helps to improve the quality of the school's provision. Individual staff are set clear objectives towards improved performance, are supported and receive appropriate training and receive feedback on their performance. The promotion of staff professional development, including that of support staff is one of the key strengths of the school.
- 66 The governing body is very supportive, well informed and fully involved in the life of the school. They work very closely with the headteacher and are very active in the development of the school. They have a clear understanding of their role and make a good contribution to the strategic direction of the school. They evaluate their decisions well in order to monitor effectiveness and to give the best value for money. The governing body fully meet all regulatory and legal requirements.
- 67 The school takes note of Wales Assembly Government guidelines and complies fully with statutory requirements.

- 68 The headteacher, staff and governors are fully committed to improving the quality of education provided by the school. The senior management team has a good knowledge of the overall performance of the school based on the monitoring and evaluation carried out together with the analysis of internal and external assessment data. This information is disseminated to curriculum co-ordinators and class teachers and is used to set priorities and inform the action plans contained in the school improvement plan.
- 69 The improvement plan directly focuses upon the raising of standards of teaching and learning. The action plans are specifically related to these goals; they include clear, specific objectives, state who is responsible for the action and are broken down into a sequence of manageable targets. Governors are given regular reports on the plans and they monitor the implementation effectively.
- 70 The school takes good account of the views of all those concerned with the success of the school. Staff and governors meet regularly for the programme of focussed meetings, parents and pupils complete questionnaires as part of the school development planning cycle and LEA advisers regularly monitor standards at the school.
- 71 The self-evaluation document produced by the school before the inspection is a generally accurate report which reflects the way forward. Evaluation of the key questions are comprehensive and give details of the evaluation carried out, the evidence base and what needs to be done next for the school to improve. Each curriculum subject inspected has undergone a similar evaluation process. Sufficient resources are provided to meet the priorities; actions already taken have resulted in measurable improvement. The inspection team agreed with the judgements given in the school's self-evaluation report in six of the seven key questions.
- 72 The school is appropriately staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Teachers are sufficiently well qualified and are effectively deployed to provide the school with a range of skills and experience.
- 73 Learning support staff have a clear understanding of their roles. They work purposefully in partnership with class teachers to target individual learning needs. Teachers, support staff and adult helpers work as an integrated team to enhance the quality of education for all pupils. This aspect is a strength of the school.
- 74 Overall, the accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. However, a number of the classrooms are small and accommodation facilities, particularly in the reception classes are restricted and do not always facilitate the demands of children's learning experiences. This aspect has been identified by the school for further consideration.
- 75 Learning resources and materials are good. Books and other resources are well organised, easily accessible and deployed effectively by staff to support teaching and learning and provide pupils with appropriate experiences. Children in the early years have access to a new safe soft surface outdoor area that contributes to promoting their physical development. Accessibility to outdoor areas and resources in the early years need to be further reviewed.

- 76 The quality and quantity of resources for subjects is good overall. Teachers regularly review the sufficiency of resources and these are deployed effectively during lessons to advance pupils' knowledge and understanding. The Governing Body and Headteacher review and prioritise resource needs in line with the SIP. Spending decisions are appropriately matched to the school's priorities and overall the school provides good value for money.
- 77 The school has made good progress since the last inspection, in particular, with improving standards in Welsh Second Language and in the improved provision of learning resources.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the school needs to:

- R1 raise standards in geography and religious education and the key skills of speaking and writing across the curriculum in key stage 2;
- R2 improve the quality of short term planning throughout the school, in particular in identifying:
- assessment opportunities and tasks;
  - key skills;
  - specific learning objectives for play activities in the early years;
- R3 more fully engage pupils in an assessment of their strengths and areas for development and for teachers to use more effectively information gained from assessment in the planning of new work;
- R4 continue to address the disparity in performance between boys and girls, especially in KS2;
- R5 continue to develop the monitoring role of the subject leader to ensure challenge and progression in standards throughout the school, particularly in the foundation subjects;
- R6 ensure greater consistency in the quality of information given to parents in written reports on pupil achievements.

The school self-evaluation report clearly highlights the above and additional aspects as key areas for improvement.

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. The 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 with no important shortcomings

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

Pupils' Standards of achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	6%	65%	26%	3%	0%

- 79 These judgements only apply to the particular subjects inspected.

In the subjects inspected, the standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 3
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 3

- 80 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under- fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's learning.
- 81 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
- 82 Children in the nursery and reception make good progress in the key skills of language, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT) and show good development in their bilingual skills.
- 83 In both key stages 1 and 2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of listening, reading, numeracy, and using information and communications technology (ICT), across the curriculum are good. Those in speaking and writing across the curriculum are judged as grade 3. Opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills across the curriculum are not yet fully developed and many pupils have difficulty in explaining reasons for their answers to specific questions. Pupils' writing skills across the curriculum are similarly insufficiently developed throughout the foundation subjects. The overuse of printed worksheets as a vehicle for pupils to record their responses often hinders the development of pupils' skills to write extensively using their own words.

- 84 Pupils make good progress in the development of their bilingual skills. They are able to respond to commands and simple questions and the use of incidental Welsh is a developing feature of the school.
- 85 Overall pupils make good progress in their acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding and in their creative skills. The school plans delivery of the curriculum, owing to the presence of mixed aged classes, through a rolling programme of work operating over a two year cycle; this is particularly the case for foundation subjects. This results in pupils from two years, for example year 5 and year 6 working on similar material. Too often the demands and expectations placed upon pupils are insufficiently matched to the age and ability of the child resulting in a lack of progression between year groups.
- 86 At the end of KS1, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were above those of the local and national averages. When compared to similar schools in Wales, in English, mathematics and science results were above average; between the median and upper quartile values. The performance of girls was better than boys though this is a declining pattern and is mainly apparent in English.
- 87 At the end of KS2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English and mathematics were below those of the local and national averages and above in science. When compared to similar schools in Wales, in English results were similar to the average for the group. In mathematics they were slightly below average, and in science, slightly above. There was a significant gender difference in performance with girls significantly outperforming boys in all three core subjects.
- 88 When compared with performances over the previous four years, in both key stages there is an improvement in results but significantly a reduction in boys' performance in KS2 over the last year after a period of small improvement.
- 89 A key strength of the school is that pupils succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
- 90 While the school has introduced a series of measures to increase pupils' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in their work and what they need do to improve, this is still an area for further development. While pupils are aware of targets for improvement that have been set for them, they are insufficiently involved in assessing their own work. There is some self-evaluation, but mainly as a whole class activity at the expense of individual tasks. Pupils with SEN are aware of their personal targets and work hard to achieve them.
- 91 The average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection was 92%. Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. However although the school regularly reminds parents of the need of regular attendance an increasing number of families take holidays in term time.
- 92 Pupils' attitude to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are very good features. Pupils work hard in lessons and

apply themselves conscientiously; they readily join in the range of activities provided and show enthusiasm for their work. Working in pairs or in groups, pupils co-operate effectively, and standards in their work benefit from well-focussed discussions. While pupils enthusiastically engage in problem-solving activities and make good progress there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to be engaged in self-generated investigations.

- 93 Pupils are well behaved, understand what is expected of them and are considerate, courteous to each other and adults and visitors. Older pupils show a high level of maturity and responsibility, which enhances the quality of life and the range of educational experiences provided by the school. Pupils show respect towards their peers and adults and the quality of relationships within the school is very good.
- 94 The school provides very effective personal and social education that helps to create a good learning ethos and enhances pupils' self esteem. Pupils develop mature attitudes and demonstrate high degrees of self-discipline; Trained Playground Peacemakers help to resolve conflicts and ensure that no one is friendless at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- 95 Pupils take an active part in the life and work of the school and show by their attitudes that they see themselves as part of a community in which they support each other and in which they take great pride; this is a strong feature of the school. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of matters relating to equal opportunities is good. They respect diversity in faith, attitudes and cultural traditions in society.
- 96 Through visits into the local community and involvement in community activities in the school, pupils show a good understanding of their community and the world of work.
- 97 Pupils make very good progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development in their ability to work with others, show concern, take responsibility for their actions and show honesty and fairness.

**The quality of education and training**

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

**Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

98 The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the judgement of Grade 2 made by the school in the self-evaluation report. Improvements to assessment arrangements are not yet fully informing the teaching and learning process.

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

The quality of teaching in the subjects and area of learning inspected	Grade				
	1	2	3	4	5
	20%	45%	30%	5%	0%

99 The percentage of lessons judged at least 2 is above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of teaching being good or better and above the WAG target of 95% satisfactory or better. **N.B.** satisfactory equates to grade 3 for the purpose of the target.

100 The quality of relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils is good and often very good. In all classes a positive and productive working environment supports pupils' learning. Systems for induction to new classes are effective. Teachers establish class rules and routines and pupils respond very well.

101 Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subjects they teach; however, at times the content of lessons in the reception classes is more suited to KS1. The quality of schemes of work are good, however teachers' fortnightly planning often lacks sufficient detail, particularly for literacy and numeracy. Planning for Key Skills has been implemented, but is at an early stage of development; numeric references are made but there is no detail as to what exactly is to be taught and how. There is insufficient evidence of learning objectives being identified for play activities in the Early Years. Opportunities for assessing learning outcomes are not identified in fortnightly plans.

102 Liaison between class teachers, the SENCO and support staff is good. Support staff contribute very well to class lessons, working unobtrusively and sensitively within the class setting and in withdrawal sessions to assist pupils.

103 Teachers clearly identify learning objectives for pupils at the start of each lesson, either orally or in writing. These are often referred to as the lesson progresses.

104 In many classes lessons are well structured with clear and often stimulating introductions, a good range of tasks for pupils and plenary sessions where the learning objective is revisited. In some classes, however, the plenary session is merely used to allow pupils to read the work they have completed. Most teachers use time efficiently; lessons have a good pace. In the best cases teachers set

timed targets for pupils to ensure they remain purposefully engaged. In a small minority, however, lessons lack challenge and rigour; there is an impact on progression in learning.

- 105 The majority of teachers use resources effectively to support teaching and learning. Very good use is often made of varied resources to stimulate pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. In all classes teachers provide an attractive learning environment where pupils' work is celebrated.
- 106 Teachers generally manage classes well; there are clear class rules and established parameters for acceptable behaviour. Most teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies and systems for organising pupils as they work.
- 107 There are very good examples of questioning of pupils in some classes; teachers use thought-provoking questions, which require pupils to recall or apply knowledge and justify their answers. In some lessons, however, there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to extend their answers or offer opinions in any depth.
- 108 The school's assessment and marking policies are thorough, well explained documents, which offer clear guidelines for teachers on aspects of marking and assessment. These policies are yet to be fully implemented, although progress has been made in the use of standardised assessment strategies throughout the school. In all classes work is marked regularly and in many cases feedback to pupils through written or oral dialogue is generally helpful and informative. In some classes, however, the comments made do not offer clear targets for improvement based on the task.
- 109 Assessment information is not always used effectively to inform the planning of future work.
- 110 The school has begun to involve pupils in the assessment and target setting process; individual targets are set for literacy but this process is not yet consistently employed throughout the school or used for other subjects.
- 111 Reports to parents comply with statutory requirements; brief reports are issued at the end of the autumn and spring terms and full written reports at the end of the summer term. Parents are invited to attend formal meetings with class teachers. In the best examples full written reports provide good detail about achievement in core curriculum subjects and indicate awareness of pupils' personalities and attitudes to work. The quality of reports, however, is inconsistent; some are descriptive or do not give sufficient detail on the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In the reports for one class there were no written comments, only numeric grades; owing to the long term absence of a member of staff.

**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**

- 112 Overall, the findings of the inspection team match with the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 113 The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 114 Schemes of work are in place for all N.C. subjects and religious education, which is taught in agreement with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. These continue to be updated and modified in the light of discussion, classroom practice and teachers' own evaluation.
- 115 Curriculum maps provide a useful overview for identifying continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Planning for the key skills is identified at this stage but is not fully embedded in teachers' short term planning.
- 116 Children in the early years have access to a broad spectrum of experiences. Teachers in nursery and reception work co-operatively to review provision and ensure continuity and progression in children's learning across the six areas of the curriculum. Further work needs to be undertaken, however, to more effectively plan for children's play and adult intervention in play activities.
- 117 Arrangements for learning support are a strong feature of the school's provision. Small group withdrawal sessions and well directed in-class support effectively meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs.
- 118 Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities including football, rugby, and choir. The school provides a wide range of learning experiences outside the classroom. Out of hours clubs, run by staff and volunteers, are open to both boys and girls and are very well attended by a large number of pupils.
- 119 Good provision is made for pupils' personal and social development. The school's personal, social and health programme successfully focuses on the development of a healthy school and life-style with appropriate emphasis being placed on healthy eating issues. Community facilities are utilised to support the school's fitness programme and a number of initiatives are prioritised for further development.
- 120 A wide range of educational visits and visitors to the school support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- 121 Learning experiences effectively promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a clear sense of truth and justice and responsibility to the school and its environment. Daily acts of collective worship effectively promote pupils' spiritual and moral development. Knowledge and understanding of Y

Cwricwlwm Cymreig is developed through many aspects of the curriculum; pupils study the work of Welsh artists, writers and musicians. Pupils regularly compete in the Urdd eisteddfod. Teachers use incidental Welsh effectively to pupils' bilingual skills, however, further opportunities could be given for pupils to use Welsh throughout the school day.

- 122 The school has a range of clear, pertinent policies to support pupils' learning needs including a policy for the promotion of race equality. The school is beginning to raise pupils' awareness of sustainable development, but this aspect is at an early stage of development.
- 123 The quality of partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed. Termly curriculum information sheets provide useful information about topics being taught. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents fully meet requirements. A significant number of parents provide good quality assistance in the classroom and with educational visits that is highly valued by the school. The recently re established Parent Teacher Association is very active. Fundraising and social events for adults and pupils are well supported and provide generous financial support.
- 124 There are close links with colleges of further education. The school provides good quality training and work experience for child care and secondary school students but is not currently in partnership with an initial teacher training university.
- 125 Educational visits and visitors from the community together with the school's involvement local initiatives and associations help to raise the pupils' awareness of the world of work and strengthen the links with the community. Older pupils develop a good understanding of business through their involvement in KS2/KS3 mini enterprise initiatives. Throughout the year they independently set up and run jumble sales to raise funds for charities. They make formal applications for posts as Playground Peacemakers and prefects and are interviewed by the School Council.
- 126 The school attends well to national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. It runs family literacy and numeracy courses to enable parents to help their children with their learning. Pupils in turn see adults as life long learners. The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004.

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

##### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 127 Overall the findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 128 Pupils work within an orderly, welcoming and secure school community in which they are enabled to experience a range of learning opportunities. In response to the sensitive encouragement of teachers, support staff and adult helpers, pupils develop self confidence and independence in their learning. All staff understand the needs of the pupils in their care and ensure that the support afforded them enables them to cope with new challenges and contributes to the progress they make.
- 129 Effective links are established with local nurseries and parents prior to admission, and the induction programme for early years pupils provides positive support for their introduction to school life. The personal sense of care afforded to children in the early years is enhanced by the hand to hand transfer at the start and end of school sessions.
- 130 Relationships with parents are very good, and pre-inspection questionnaires indicate that parents are appreciative that any concerns brought to the attention of the school are dealt with effectively and promptly. There is an established PTA and Link group and parental opinions are valued; consideration and due emphasis is given by the school to questionnaires issued to parents and Y6 pupils annually. Regular meetings and daily informal contact helps parents to support their children and become an integral part of the learning process.
- 131 Pupils are encouraged and enabled to develop a tolerance and understanding of the needs of others through a variety of initiatives. Older pupils are caring of younger pupils and the 'friendship post' and quiet areas on the playground ensure the well being and security of pupils. Pupils on the School Council value being able to take part in decision making that benefit the school.
- 132 There are well-documented and appropriately implemented procedures for ensuring pupils health, safety and general well being. Accident and emergency procedures are addressed in the appropriate policies and risk assessments. All staff have received updated training in first aid.
- 133 The school has appropriate policies and procedures to monitor inappropriate behaviour, including the development of effective anger management programmes. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or any other forms of unacceptable behaviour. The school takes very seriously its responsibility for the general safety and well being of pupils.
- 134 Absences are very carefully monitored and the school has an effective system in place to identify and follow up on pupils whose attendance is giving cause for concern. Parents are regularly reminded of the detrimental effects of non-

attendance on their children's education. Registers are completed at the beginning and end of each session and comply with regulations.

- 135 There are effective procedures in place for the protection of children and for safeguarding their welfare. The headteacher has overall responsibility and works closely with relevant external agencies. All staff have received training and are fully aware of the correct procedures.
- 136 Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. Careful consideration is given to the requirements of pupils and under the clear and positive guidance of the SENCO, staff effectively implement procedures for early identification and subsequent monitoring of pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning. The school is sensitive to issues of inclusion and this enables learning support assistants and adult helpers to assist staff in providing good quality support for pupils in mainstream classes and in the moderate learning difficulties (MLD) class; this allows pupils with special needs to fully access the curriculum.
- 137 Individual education plans (IEP's) are drawn up by teachers to form the basis of the learning programme. They are reviewed three times during the year and parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress. The school acknowledges the need to ensure that identified targets are specific and realistic to enable pupils to succeed. A 'Nurture' class run by 'Ontrack' effectively provides positive reinforcement strategies to guide and support pupils within the learning environment.
- 138 The school has very good links with the police, educational welfare officer and social services. It also receives regular support from a range of highly skilled specialist teachers and support staff. The work of these specialist staff is highly valued and helps ensure that pupils with SEN make good progress throughout the school.
- 139 Through their support of charitable causes pupils are enabled to develop an understanding of others less fortunate than themselves. Aspects of cultural diversity are positively addressed and celebrated through cross-curricular topics and input by visitors; this aspect is supported by the relevant policies to ensure pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural nature of society.
- 140 The school has set of policies supported by good clearly defined procedures for promoting racial equality and dealing with all forms of racial discrimination and harassment and in ensuring that the needs of disabled pupils are fully considered.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 141 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self evaluation report.
- 142 The school has clear aims and objectives, which reflect equality for all. The Headteacher and senior management sets a clear direction for the school's development that is fully understood by all those involved at the school.
- 143 The headteacher and staff are hard working and very committed to the school and the pupils in their care. There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. Staff are very supportive of each other and the good relationships that exist among the staff influence positively the pupils' personal, social and educational development.
- 144 The quality of leadership shown by the headteacher is good. His management is very positive and purposeful and has ensured that the school has moved forward with a clear sense of direction. A particularly strong feature is the headteacher's capacity to build and co-ordinate a team of staff, who all have a common purpose and the encouragement of staff towards that common goal. The school operates in an environment based on mutual trust and understanding; staff feel valued and are encouraged to give of their best.
- 145 There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. Staff, both teaching, support and non-teaching, are very supportive of each other and the good relationships that exist among the staff influence positively the pupils' personal, social and educational development.
- 146 The headteacher is ably assisted by an effective deputy headteacher who has been instrumental in a number of initiatives for improvement. She leads by example, establishing a very good role model, both in and out of the classroom. The special needs coordinator (SENCO) works very effectively, managing support staff in an effective and efficient way and ensuring that in her own teaching she exemplifies best standards.
- 147 The school senior management team (SMT) have a clear strategic view for the development of the school and in their individual roles as departmental heads of early years/KS1 lower KS1 and upper KS1, ensure that communication and decision making throughout the school is swift and responsive. Good administration procedures ensure the smooth running of the school.
- 148 The role of the subject leader is continuing to develop. All have reviewed schemes of work and teacher plans. Some are engaged in subject evaluation and the production of action plans for improvement. They are beginning to sample work in pupils' books and senior management staff observe colleagues teaching. However, their impact on standards and the quality of teaching and learning is

variable. The school recognises the need to further develop their leadership role in focussing on the standards pupils achieve.

- 149 There are good policies and procedures in place to ensure equality of opportunity for staff and pupil alike. Teachers have contributed to formulating policies that are reviewed regularly. The headteacher and senior management have ensured that the school has developed a capacity to reflect critically on what is being done and how it can be improved.
- 150 The school takes good account of national priorities and these are integrated into its strategic development of the school.
- 151 The school maintains a system of assessment and record keeping and this information is used to inform and set targets for improvement for year groups and groups of pupils. Challenging, yet realistic targets and goals are established and regularly reviewed to assess progress attained.
- 152 The effective performance management initiative promotes teachers' professional development and helps to improve the quality of the school's provision. Individual staff are set clear objectives towards improved performance, are supported and receive appropriate training and receive feedback on their performance. The promotion of staffs professional development, including that of support staff is one of the key strengths of the school.
- 153 The governing body is very supportive, well informed and fully involved in the life of the school. They work very closely with the headteacher and are very active in the development of the school. They have a clear understanding of their role and make a good contribution to the strategic direction of the school. They evaluate their decisions well in order to monitor effectiveness and to give the best value for money. The governing body fully meet all regulatory and legal requirements.

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

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

154. The findings of the inspection team agree with the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
155. The headteacher, staff and governors are fully committed to improving the quality of education provided by the school. The senior management team has a good knowledge of the overall performance of the school based on the monitoring and evaluation carried out together with the analysis of internal and external assessment data. This information is disseminated to curriculum co-ordinators and class teachers and is used to set the priorities and inform the action plans contained in the school improvement plan.
156. Planning for school improvement and the implementation of agreed policy is carried out by a process which involves consultation throughout the new management structure. The senior management team, departmental heads and curriculum co-ordinators all contribute to and carry out school policy.
157. The improvement plan has six overriding goals which directly focus upon the raising of standards of teaching and learning. The action plans are specifically related to these goals; they include clear, specific objectives, state who is responsible for the action and are broken down into a sequence of manageable targets. Governors are given regular reports on the plans and they monitor the implementation effectively.
158. Curriculum co-ordinators are increasingly directly responsible for standards in their subjects. There are examples of good practice where first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning, and evaluation of the standards that pupils achieve is firmly embedded in the strategic planning process. This is evident in the leadership provided by co-ordinators in Mathematics and English. In Mathematics, for example, targets and strategies have been put in place which address a wide range of issues identified through systematic evaluation and analysis of the subject. These initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and learning through providing a positive focus to issues such as good teaching strategies, gender imbalance and challenge for the more able. This good practice has yet to impact across the whole curriculum.
159. The performance management process involves staff at all levels in assessing their own performance and the learning outcomes of their pupils. This initiative is beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and learning through the setting of agreed targets which encourage the raising of standards.
160. The school takes good account of the views of all those concerned with the success of the school. Staff and governors meet regularly for the programme of focussed meetings, parents and pupils complete questionnaires as part of the

school development planning cycle and LEA advisers regularly monitor standards at the school.

161. Individual pupils and end of key stage cohorts are set appropriately challenging targets using the national curriculum levels. Short term targets which are easily measurable are set in English for individual pupils; these begin to enable pupils to evaluate their success and motivate them to improve their learning. There are plans for this good practice to become a positive feature for the raising of standards in other subjects.
162. The self-evaluation document produced by the school before the inspection is a generally accurate report which reflects the way forward. Evaluation of the key questions are comprehensive and give details of the evaluation carried out, the evidence base and what needs to be done next for the school to improve. Each curriculum subject inspected has undergone a similar evaluation process. Sufficient resources are provided to meet the priorities; actions already taken have resulted in measurable improvement. The inspection team agreed with the judgements given in the school's self-evaluation report in six of the seven key questions.
163. The school has made good progress since the last inspection.

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

<b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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164. The findings of the inspection team agree with the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
165. The school is appropriately staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Teachers are sufficiently well qualified and are effectively deployed to provide the school with a range of skills and experience. Staff teams work positively to develop their roles and responsibilities and are appropriately involved in the planning and implementation of the curriculum. Subject expertise is readily shared and disseminated; the role of the subject leader in the monitoring process, particularly in the foundation subjects is in the process of being further developed.
166. Staff development is well organised and focused. Systems to support, develop and improve the performance of individual staff members and key stage teams are effective. Training in the form of in-service courses is appropriately linked to priorities within the school improvement plan. There is an ethos of commitment and enthusiasm to undertake continuing professional development.
167. Learning support staff have a clear understanding of their roles. They work purposefully in partnership with class teachers to target individual learning needs. Teachers, support staff and adult helpers work as an integrated team to enhance the quality of education for all pupils. This aspect is a strength of the school.
168. The school administrators carry out responsibilities linked to the daily routines of the school thoroughly and effectively.
169. The school buildings comprising three blocks are bright, clean and provide a welcoming environment. Attractive and informative displays of pupils' work in classrooms and shared areas enhance the school's interior and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Outside classroom areas are well organised and purposefully utilised as communal teaching areas to support the learning programme. Playground improvements such as attractive shaded quiet areas are in the process of development.
170. Overall, the accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. However, a number of the classrooms are small and accommodation facilities, particularly in the reception classes are restricted and do not always facilitate the demands of children's learning experiences. This aspect has been identified by the school for further consideration.
171. Learning resources and materials are good. Books and other resources are well organised, easily accessible and deployed effectively by staff to support teaching and learning and provide pupils with appropriate experiences. Children in the early years have access to a new safe soft surface outdoor area that contributes to promoting their physical development. Accessibility to outdoor areas and resources in the early years need to be further reviewed.

172. There is a well equipped library area which provides opportunities for shared learning and allows pupils to access topic materials. Computers are set aside in specified areas as well as being additionally available in classrooms. They are well utilised to support learning across the curriculum.
173. The community and the local environment are effectively used as extended classrooms to enhance pupils learning. Topic linked visits and visitors reinforce pupils' understanding of the world around them and are delivered through a focused curricular programme.
174. School buildings are well secured with appropriate entry systems and these are in the process of being completed.
175. The quality and quantity of resources for subjects is good overall. Teachers regularly review the sufficiency of resources and these are deployed effectively during lessons to advance pupils' knowledge and understanding. The Governing Body and Headteacher review and prioritise resource needs in line with the SIP. Spending decisions are appropriately matched to the school's priorities and overall the school provides good value for money. Through the diligence and hardwork of the headteacher and governing body the school has, over the last three years, transformed the school finances from a substantial deficit budget to a balanced budget.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### English

#### Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

#### Key stage 2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

#### Good and outstanding features

176. Across both key stages, pupils listen well. They are attentive to teachers' questioning and respond positively in less structured situations during the school day. In KS1, pupils listen carefully to stories and following class discussions can recall appropriate detail in descriptions and explanations. Pupils in KS2 indicate the ability to interact and listen purposefully in collaborative group situations and by the end of the key stage demonstrate more concentrated and sustained listening skills.
177. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their speaking skills. They can discuss their tasks and working in groups, can share their interpretation of ideas with others. Pupils with additional needs are enabled and encouraged to contribute ideas and questions of their own in small group situations, they make good progress relative to their ability. In their geography topic, pupils in Y1 thoughtfully consider the results and consequences of traffic surveys and enjoy reporting their findings to peers.
178. In KS2, pupils engage constructively in class and paired discussions. When given the opportunity they pose questions of their own and offer opinions, as in Y4, when they make perceptive comments in their music lesson evaluations.
179. In both key stages, relative to age and ability, pupils make good progress in the acquisition of reading skills. In KS1, pupils can select appropriate strategies to help them to correctly identify unfamiliar words. They discuss their story books, comment on illustrations and characters in text and convey the content of what they read accurately. Pupils read their own work confidently.
180. In KS2, pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy. They can discuss their own strategies for choosing books and are able to talk about favourite books and authors. Older pupils respond personally to what they have read. They know how to read for research purposes from other sources and more able pupils understand the concept of scanning for specific information.
181. Pupils in both key stages write in a suitable range of forms for different purposes. Pupils in KS1 know how to organise and structure sentences sensibly and apply punctuation in a meaningful way. They use word books to assist them with their writing. In Y1/2, pupils understand the purpose of adjectives in their written work and select appropriate vocabulary to write lively alliterative sentences.

182. In KS2, pupils are developing their writing skills progressively. By the end of KS2, more able pupils achieve good standards of content, style and accuracy in their written work. They organise their work into paragraphs and utilise punctuation appropriately to assist the reader's understanding. They use dictionaries purposefully to support their written work.

### **Shortcomings**

183. Pupils' ability to extend their written responses in a range of contexts across the curriculum needs to be further developed in KS2.
184. Throughout the school a significant number of pupils find difficulty in sustaining discussion and elaborating their ideas through the spoken word. Pupils need to further develop their speaking skills in order to put forward their point of view. This aspect is in the process of being addressed by the school.

## **Mathematics**

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

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

### **Good and outstanding features**

185. By the end of KS1, pupils develop a good understanding of number and calculate with increasing accuracy. They have a sound knowledge of place value and work confidently with numbers up to a hundred. Pupils begin to develop good skills in mental arithmetic; they estimate answers, check their strategies and explain their strategies.
186. In Y1, pupils are confident with number bonds up to twenty. They recognise familiar shapes, measure in non-standard units and begin to develop a mathematical vocabulary using words such as heavier than, lighter than, tall and tallest.
187. Y2 pupils extend their number skills to include working with problems and investigations with number, money and measurement. They begin to understand the concept of multiplication and division, extend their knowledge of 2D and 3D shapes and use standard units confidently. Pupils work with time to the quarter to and past, find half and quarter of numbers up to twenty, learn about odd and even numbers and begin to develop their data handling skills.
188. The setting arrangements for pupils in KS2 have a positive impact upon the standards achieved. As pupils progress through the key stage, they develop a range of strategies when completing work related to number, money and measurement. They begin to apply this knowledge and understanding to real life problems.

189. Lower key stage 2 pupils develop a good understanding of place value to a thousand. They extend their mathematical knowledge and skills well working with the four operations in number, measurement and time.
190. At the end of the key stage, pupils are able to calculate perimeter and area accurately and understand and use the language related to obtuse, acute and reflex angles. Their number skills develop and pupils confidently work with prime numbers, the average, mean and mode of a set of data and use percentages and fractions confidently.

### **Shortcomings**

191. Data handling and graphical representational skills are underdeveloped. Pupils do not fully develop and extend their skills with different types of graphs and their interpretation as they progress through the school.
192. Pupils' investigational skills, particularly for the more able, are insufficiently developed.

## **Design Technology**

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

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

### **Good features**

193. In KS1 pupils develop good investigating and making skills; they make decisions about the most appropriate materials for the task. Pupils in Y2 make simple sliding mechanisms using card, carefully planning and improving their work. They work independently and persevere in solving problems.
194. Younger KS2 pupils make sensible decisions about the suitability of different money containers; they create lists of features needed and discuss and clarify their ideas for their designs. They understand that the design process is a crucial element.
195. Older KS2 pupils record the procedure for designing and making products well and they evaluate their finished article, for example, incorporating electrical circuits with simple switches to make a battery operated car. Y6 pupils can identify the main parts of a cam mechanism and recognise that it changes a rotary movement to a linear movement.
196. In both key stages pupils use tools and equipment with care and increasing skill. They use appropriate subject-specific vocabulary when discussing their work.

## Shortcomings

197. There are no significant shortcomings.

### Geography

#### Key Stage1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

### Good and outstanding features

198. There is a clear progression throughout the school in the development of pupils' mapping skills. Pupils are able to use effectively aerial photographs and maps as sources of information, use maps to illustrate patterns, for example land use, and use atlases to gain a wider geographical understanding. Pupils in KS2 are able to follow directions, use compass directions, estimate and calculate distances using the scale of the map or atlas.
199. In KS1, pupils through their study of a local park are able to make and use maps, to consider the quality of the area and express views on the features found. They show a secure understanding of geographical terms and are able to have a good understanding of different forms of land use.
200. Pupils in KS1, through a good planned programme of field work are developing a good range of geographical skills and have a good awareness of their locality and of the features and services provided. Through their work on traffic surveys pupils are gaining a good understanding of issues that affect the local area.
201. Pupils in Y3 and Y4, through their work on a local authority recycling centre have a good understanding of the ways in which people affect their environment and of the individual's responsibility for the environment. They have a good understanding of the ways in which communities attempt to safeguard the future environment.
202. Through their study of Porthcawl, pupils in Y5 and Y6 are able to identify what the locality is like and what geographical patterns can be identified.

## Shortcomings

203. In KS2 there is insufficient progression of the theme of environmental change. Pupils have a limited understanding of environmental quality, of ways in which the environment is managed and how potential conflict arises out of competing demands for land. Pupils' understanding of how people might begin to safeguard the future environment through sustainable development is limited.
204. Pupils in KS2 have an insufficient knowledge and understanding of the character of Wales, of the geographical issues that predominate and the changes that are taking place in the physical and human environment.

205. In KS2 pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of the location, features and character of a range of places, including their own local area and are unable to recognise the reasons for the similarities and differences between places in a widening range of contexts and scales. There is insufficient progression in much of the work undertaken.

## **Music**

### **Key Stage1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

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

#### **Good and outstanding features**

206. Pupils in both key stages have good vocal skills. They sing in tune, enunciate words clearly and understand the importance of breathing, phrasing and dynamics.
207. Pupils in KS1 know a number of rhymes and songs and vary their voices to emphasise quiet and loud singing. Y1 pupils can clap a steady beat and copy a rhythmic pattern. Y2 pupils can vary pitch following the teacher's lead. They can maintain a steady beat whilst singing and begin to differentiate between beat and rhythm. They can name a range of percussion instruments and use them correctly.
208. Pupils in KS2 use tuned and untuned instruments with increasing confidence and skill. Younger pupils appreciate that music can convey different moods and develop good understanding of dynamics, duration and pitch. They achieve good standards when creating group compositions, using sound cards, on the theme of weather and to accompany a class poem.
209. Older KS2 pupils can identify a range of musical styles and select appropriate body percussion to accompany a traditional Welsh folk song. They create group songs and rhythmic compositions using notation, achieving a good standard.
210. Pupils participate in extra-curricular instrumental tuition and school choir.

#### **Shortcomings**

211. There are no significant shortcomings.

<b>Religious education</b>
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<b>Key Stage1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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<b>Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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### **Good and outstanding features**

- 212. Within a caring school community, pupils demonstrate a sensitive understanding of the needs of others. They appreciate the importance of friendship and willingly share their thoughts and feelings on the importance of being kind and helpful. They are enabled and encouraged to respect other people's beliefs and customs and develop an awareness of Christian practices alongside those of other faiths.
- 213. Pupils in Y1/2, in exploring why the Torah is special to the Jewish people, develop their understanding of what is of value in their own lives and what is special to others. They comment sensitively on the importance of respecting the possessions of others. In Y3, pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of issues related to equality, tolerance and care of the environment when discussing the teachings of Mohammed and their relevance to everyday life. They reflect thoughtfully on what they have learned.
- 214. Throughout both key stages, pupils are aware of the importance of rules in their lives. They understand the consequence of breaking rules and through devising their own within the school context they develop an understanding of right and wrong.
- 215. Pupils have a good understanding of significant stories from the Bible and are able to recall these well; they recognise the importance of the Bible to Christians.
- 216. The good links established with the local Church enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. They recognise related artefacts and can describe what happens inside a church. They understand the role of prayer and demonstrate an appropriately respectful attitude towards worship. Pupils are involved in writing their own prayers.
- 217. A range of resources, visiting clergy, the use of artefacts, reference works, attractive displays, visits to the Church and cross-curricular links in art and design technology enhance pupils' understanding of their religious education topics.

### **Shortcomings**

- 218. Currently, there is a lack of development of the progression of skills which enable pupils, particularly in KS2, to explore, explain and express their own values and individual view points in order to deepen their understanding of the facts they learn.
- 219. Pupils in KS2 do not sufficiently express their understanding of religious themes and concepts in their own words; personal responses are restricted by the over use of worksheets.

## School's response to the inspection

The Governors of Plasnewydd are very pleased to receive this inspection report, confirming as it does the success the school has had, and is having, in constantly improving its provision for our pupils.

The report highlights many strengths and the Governors are very proud of the confirmation that the pupils are so very well guided, cared for and supported, that they achieve good standards and that the quality of teaching is judged good or outstanding in the majority of lessons. We are also very proud of our strong links with parents – judged a particular strength – and our many varied and positive links with the community.

The Governors recognise that the most important resource a school has is the team of staff that provides for pupils' needs in a challenging, secure, caring and happy atmosphere. The work of our staff team comes in for special praise in this report; the development of staff is highlighted as a strength and their teamwork on behalf of the children is celebrated by the inspectors.

The Governors are greatly encouraged to see that the recommendations of the inspection team are clearly highlighted in our own self-evaluation report, indicating that the school itself has a very clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses and where further development is needed. The inspection team also agreed with almost all of the judgements made by the school in its report. This gives Governors great confidence in the ability of the headteacher and senior management team to continue to lead the process of self - evaluation and improvement in the years ahead.

The recommendations of the inspection team will therefore be addressed in our School Development Plan without the need to significantly alter the strategic direction of the school:

- The provision in geography and RE at KS2 will be reviewed and necessary changes made to our planning for, and delivery of, these subjects at KS2. Writing and speaking across the curriculum is already a priority in our School Development Plan and measures are in place to improve these aspects.
- The planning of teaching and learning experiences is a key area of our work and is constantly under review to ensure consistency, focus and clarity of purpose. The school will undertake a further review of planning procedures, ensuring a greater clarity and consistency, in order to address the issues relating to short term planning and assessment.
- The effective engagement of pupils in setting targets for their own improvement is at an early stage of development, having been addressed in the present School Development Plan, and will continue to be a priority in our development planning.

- The disparity between the achievements of boys and girls is of great concern to the school, as it is to many schools across the country. The school has already undertaken various initiatives, through its School Development Plan, to address the issue and will continue to strive to motivate and engage boys more fully in the learning process.
- The further development of the role of subject leaders is an existing, ongoing process in the school and will continue to be addressed through progressive, focussed actions.
- The school is proud of its efforts to report regularly and effectively to parents on pupil progress. The quality of these reports has been judged as good in the main with some exceptions. The weaknesses in some reports last year were caused by circumstances beyond the control of the school, but parents of those pupils were made aware of the situation and the reason for it. The school will review arrangements for reporting to parents and ensure that clear, informative reporting is evident in all classes.

## Appendix A

### Basic information about the school

Name of School	Plasnewydd Primary
School type	Community
Age -range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Castle Street, Maesteg.
Post-Code	CF34 9UN
Telephone Number	01656 732109

Headteacher	Mr. N. A. Watkins
Date of appointment	September 2002
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	C. Buttle
Registered Inspector	Mr. Allan Fear
Dates of inspection	18 April - 21 April 2005

## Appendix B

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	42.5	43	49	52	46	41	62	62	388.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	15	0	15

Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	25.46 :1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	12 : 1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	15 :1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27.58
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.07 :1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection			
	N	R	Rest of school
Autumn 2004	67	93	92
Summer 2004	88	88	91
Spring 2004	91	90	93

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	22%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	2

## Appendix C

### National Curriculum Assessment Results 2004

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2004			Number of pupils in Y2: 46						
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4
English	Teacher Assessment	School				9	86	5	
		National			4	13	63	20	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School				5	88	7	
		National			4	10	62	24	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School				2	91	7	
		National			2	10	65	23	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment

In the school:	91	In Wales:	81
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National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2004			Number of pupils in Y6: 66										
Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School							10	14	45	32	
		National						1	5	16	46	30	
	Test/Task	School							12	12	47	30	
		National		1	1	2			4	13	42	37	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School							6	18	47	29	
		National						1	4	17	46	31	
	Test/Task	School							7	17	49	27	
		National		1	1	1			3	15	43	36	
Science	Teacher assessment	School								6	52	42	
		National							1	11	50	37	
	Test/Task	School								7	50	43	
		National		1					1	8	51	39	

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:	70	In the school:	70
In Wales:	70	In Wales:	68

- D Pupils who are exempted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum  
 A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence  
 N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence  
 B pupils not entered for tests because they are working outside the level of the test  
 W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## Appendix D

### Evidence base of the inspection

- A team of five inspectors who were present at the school for 17 inspector days carried out the inspection.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school.
- 68 questionnaires were completed by parents and carefully analysed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and staff with responsibilities, and support staff.
- School documentation and samples of pupils' work were examined.
- 41 lessons or part sessions were observed.
- A sample of pupils' work from across the ability range in each year group and class was examined.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils from each year group reading.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work and the life of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during break periods, at lunchtime and at the end and beginning of the school sessions.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and observed extra-curricular activities.
- Post inspection meetings were held with the staff and the governing body.

## Appendix E

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr. Allan Fear Registered inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key questions 1 and 5	Geography
Mrs Gwyneth Rees Team inspector	Key questions 4 and 7	English Religious education
Ms Sue Peters Team inspector	Key question 2 and 3	Design and technology Music
Mr Cliff Brace Team inspector	Key question 6	Mathematics
Mrs Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1,3, 4 and 7	

### Acknowledgement

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

The inspection was undertaken by:

ACES School Inspections,  
University of Wales, Newport,  
School of Education,  
Caerleon Campus,  
P.O. Box 179  
Newport.  
NP18 3YG

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

**Plasnewydd Primary School**

***A Summary Report for Parents***

**Date of Inspection: 18 April – 20 April 2005**

**by**

**Allan Fear**

**Registered Inspector No: WO/15698**

**Date: 23 June 2005  
Under Estyn Contract number T/246/04P**

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Plasnewydd Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The school was inspected under new arrangements, which include:

- The use of a new inspection framework;
- An emphasis on the school's own evaluation of its work; and
- A representative of the school staff, in this case the headteacher, who worked with the inspection team as a nominee.

Before the inspection, governors and staff produced a self-evaluation report that included their judgements on the work of the school. Inspectors used this report to choose areas to examine in order to confirm the accuracy of the school's judgements.

The inspection of Plasnewydd Primary School took place between 18th April – 20th April 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Allan Fear 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

## Summary and recommendations

Plasnewydd Primary School is a good school, with many strengths, in which there is a feeling of purpose and commitment. The school has made good progress since the last inspection.

The inspection team agree with the large majority of strengths and weaknesses identified by the school in its self-evaluation report, which is a very full and accurate document.

Table of grades awarded

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

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

## Standards

Pupils' Standards of achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	6%	65%	26%	3%	0%

The pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects observed are as follows.

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 3
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 3

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

Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve the targets set for them.

Children in the early years make good progress in the key skills of language, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT) and in the reception classes show good development in their bilingual skills.

Standards in the key skills across the curriculum and bilingualism are as follows:

<b>Key Skill</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
Speaking and listening	Grade 3	Grade 3
Reading	Grade 2	Grade 2
Writing	Grade 3	Grade 3
Numeracy	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Grade 2	Grade 2
Bilingualism	Grade 2	Grade 2

In both key stages 1 and 2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of Listening, reading, numeracy, and using information and communications technology (ICT), across the curriculum are good. Those in speaking and writing across the curriculum are judged as grade 3. Opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills across the curriculum are not yet fully developed and many pupils have difficulty in explaining reasons for their answers to specific questions. Pupils' writing skills across the curriculum are similarly insufficiently developed throughout the foundation subjects. The overuse of printed worksheets as a vehicle for pupils to record their responses often hinders the development of pupils' skills to write extensively using their own words.

Pupils make good progress in the development of their bilingual skills. They are able to respond to commands and simple questions and the use of incidental Welsh is a developing feature of the school.

Overall pupils make good progress in their acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding and in their creative skills. The school plans delivery of the curriculum, owing to the presence of mixed aged classes, through a rolling programme of work operating over a two year cycle; this is particularly the case for foundation subjects. This results in pupils from two years, for example year 5 and year 6 working on similar material. Too often the demands and expectations placed upon pupils are insufficiently matched to the age and ability of the child resulting in a lack of progression between year groups.

At the end of KS1, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were above those of the local and national averages. When compared to similar schools in Wales, in English, mathematics and science results were above average; between the median and upper quartile values. The performance of girls was better than boys though this is a declining pattern and is mainly apparent in English.

At the end of KS2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English and mathematics were below those of the local and national averages and above in science. When compared to similar schools in Wales, in English results were similar to the average for the group. In mathematics they were slightly below average, and in science, slightly above. There was a significant gender difference in performance with girls significantly outperforming boys in all three core subjects.

When compared with performances over the previous four years, in both key stages there is an improvement in results but significantly a reduction in boys' performance in KS2 over the last year after a period of small improvement.

While the school has introduced a series of measures, to increase pupils' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in their work and what they need to do to improve, this is still an area for further development.

The average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection was 92%. Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual.

Pupils' attitude to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are very good features. Pupils work hard in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously; they readily join in the range of activities provided, and show enthusiasm for their work.

Pupils are well behaved, understand what is expected of them and are considerate, courteous to each other and adults and visitors. Older pupils show a high level of maturity and responsibility, which enhances the quality of life and the range of educational experiences provided by the school. Pupils show respect towards their peers and adults and the quality of relationships within the school is very good.

The school provides very effective personal and social education that helps to create a good learning ethos and enhances pupils' self esteem. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school.

Pupils take an active part in the life and work of the school and show by their attitudes that they see themselves as part of a community in which they support each other and of which they taken great pride; this is a strong feature of the school. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of matters relating to equal opportunities is good. They respect diversity in faith, attitudes and cultural traditions in society.

Pupils make very good progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development in their ability to work with others, show concern, take responsibility for their actions and show honesty and fairness.

## The quality of education and training

The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the judgement of Grade 2 made by the school in the self-evaluation report. Improvements to assessment arrangements are not yet fully informing the teaching and learning process.

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

The quality of teaching in the subjects and area of learning inspected	Grade				
	1	2	3	4	5
	20%	45%	30%	5%	0%

The percentage of lessons judged at least 2 is above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of teaching being good or better and above the WAG target of 95% satisfactory or better. N.B. satisfactory equates to grade 3 for the purpose of the target.

The quality of relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils is good and often very good. In all classes a positive and productive working environment supports pupils' learning. Systems for induction to new classes are effective. Teachers establish class rules and routines and pupils respond very well. Teachers manage classes well; there are clear class rules and established parameters for acceptable behaviour. Teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies and systems for organising pupils as they work.

Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subjects they teach; however, at times the content of lessons in the reception classes is more suited to KS1. The quality of schemes of work is good, however teachers' fortnightly planning often lacks sufficient detail, particularly for literacy and numeracy. Planning for Key Skills has been implemented, but is at an early stage of development. There is insufficient evidence of learning objectives being identified for play activities in the Early Years. Opportunities for assessing learning outcomes are not clearly identified in fortnightly plans.

Liaison between class teachers, the SENCO and support staff is good. Support staff contribute very well to class lessons, working unobtrusively and sensitively within the class setting and in withdrawal sessions to assist pupils.

Teachers clearly identify learning objectives for pupils at the start of each lesson, either orally or in writing. These are often referred to as the lesson progresses. Lessons are well structured, with clear and often stimulating introductions, a good range of tasks for pupils and plenary sessions where the learning objective is revisited. Most teachers use time efficiently; lessons have a good pace. In the best cases teachers set timed targets for pupils to ensure they remain purposefully engaged. However, a small minority of lessons lack challenge and rigour and there is an impact on progression in learning.

Teachers use resources effectively to support teaching and learning. Very good use is often made of varied resources to stimulate pupils' interest and motivate

them to learn. In all classes teachers provide an attractive learning environment where pupils' work is celebrated.

The school's assessment and marking policies are thorough, well explained documents, which offer clear guidelines for teachers on aspects of marking and assessment. These policies have yet to be fully implemented, although progress has been made in the use of standardised assessment strategies throughout the school. In all classes work is marked regularly and in many cases feedback to pupils through written or oral dialogue is generally helpful and informative. In some classes, however, the comments made do not offer clear targets for improvement.

Assessment information is not always used effectively to inform the planning of future work.

The school has begun to involve pupils in the assessment and target setting process; individual targets are set for literacy but this process is not yet consistently employed throughout the school or used for other subjects.

Reports to parents comply with statutory requirements; brief reports are issued at the end of the autumn and spring terms and full written reports at the end of the summer term. Parents are invited to attend formal meeting with class teachers. In the best examples full written reports provide good detail about achievement in core curriculum subjects and indicate awareness of pupils' personalities and attitudes to work. The quality of reports, however, is inconsistent; some are descriptive or do not give sufficient detail on the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In the reports for one class there were no written comments, only numeric grades; owing to the long term absence of a member of staff.

The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Schemes of work are in place for all N.C. subjects and religious education, which is taught in agreement with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. These continue to be updated and modified in the light of discussion, classroom practice and teachers' own evaluation.

Children in the early years have access to a broad spectrum of experiences. Teachers in nursery and reception work co-operatively to review provision and ensure continuity and progression in children's learning across the six areas of the curriculum. Further work needs to be undertaken, however, to more effectively plan for children's play and adult intervention in play activities.

Arrangements for learning support are a strong feature of the school's provision. Small group withdrawal sessions and well directed in-class support effectively meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities and learning experiences outside the classroom.

Learning experiences effectively promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a clear sense of truth and justice and responsibility to the school and its environment. Daily acts of collective worship effectively promote pupils' spiritual and moral development. Knowledge and understanding of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is developed through many aspects of the curriculum. Teachers use incidental Welsh effectively to develop pupils' bilingual skills, however, further opportunities could be given for pupils to use Welsh throughout the school day.

The school has a range of clear, pertinent policies to support pupils' learning needs including a policy for the promotion of race equality. The school is beginning to raise pupils' awareness of sustainable development, but this aspect is at an early stage of development.

The quality of partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents fully meet requirements. A significant number of parents provide good quality assistance, in the classroom and with educational visits, that is highly valued by the school.

Educational visits and visitors from the community together with the school's involvement with local initiatives and associations, help to raise the pupils' awareness of the world of work and strengthen the links with the community.

The school attends well to national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. It runs family literacy and numeracy courses to enable parents to help their children with their learning.

Pupils work within an orderly, welcoming and secure school community in which they are enabled to experience a range of learning opportunities. In response to the sensitive encouragement of teachers, support staff and adult helpers, pupils develop self confidence and independence in their learning. All staff understand the needs of the pupils in their care and ensure that the support afforded them enables them to cope with new challenges and contributes to the progress they make.

Effective links are established with local nurseries and parents prior to admission, and the induction programme for early years pupils provides positive support for their introduction to school life.

There are well-documented and appropriately implemented procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and general well being. Accident and emergency procedures are addressed in the appropriate policies and risk assessments. All staff have received updated training in first aid.

The school has appropriate policies and procedures to monitor inappropriate behaviour, including the development of effective anger management programmes. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or any other forms of unacceptable behaviour. The school takes very seriously its responsibility for the general safety and well being of pupils.

The school's personal, social and health programme successfully focuses on the development of a healthy school and life-style with appropriate emphasis being placed on healthy eating issues. Community facilities are utilised to support the school's fitness programme and a number of initiatives are prioritised for further development.

Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good. Careful consideration is given to the requirements of pupils and under the clear and positive guidance of the SENCO, staff effectively implement procedures for early identification and subsequent monitoring of pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning. The school is sensitive to issues of inclusion and this enables learning support assistants and adult helpers to assist staff in providing good quality support for pupils in mainstream classes and in the moderate learning difficulties (MLD) class; this allows pupils with special needs to fully access the curriculum.

Individual education plans (IEP's) are drawn up by teachers to form the basis of the learning programme. The school acknowledges the need to ensure that identified targets are specific and realistic to enable pupils to succeed. A 'Nurture' class run by 'Ontrack' effectively provides positive reinforcement strategies to guide and support pupils within the learning environment.

The school has very good links with the police, educational welfare officer and social services. It also receives regular support from a range of highly skilled specialist teachers and support staff. The work of these specialist staff is highly valued and helps ensure that pupils with SEN make good progress throughout the school.

The school has a policy supported by good clearly defined procedures for promoting racial equality and dealing with all forms of racial discrimination and harassment.

## **Leadership and management**

The school has clear aims and objectives, which reflect equality for all. The Headteacher and senior management sets a clear direction for the school's development that is fully understood by all those involved at the school.

The headteacher and staff are hard working and very committed to the school and the pupils in their care. There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. Staff are very supportive of each other and the good relationships that exist among the staff influence positively the pupils' personal, social and educational development.

The quality of leadership shown by the headteacher is good. His management is very positive and purposeful and has ensured that the school has moved forward with a clear sense of direction. A particularly strong feature is the headteacher's capacity to build and co-ordinate a team of staff, who all have a common purpose and the encouragement of staff towards that common goal. The school operates

in an environment based on mutual trust and understanding; staff feel valued and are encouraged to give of their best.

There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. Staff, both teaching, support and non-teaching, are very supportive of each other and the good relationships that exist among the staff influence positively the pupils' personal, social and educational development.

The headteacher is ably assisted by an effective deputy headteacher who has been instrumental in a number of initiatives for improvement. She leads by example, establishing a very good role model, both in and out of the classroom. The special needs coordinator (SENCO) works very effectively, managing support staff in an effective and efficient way and ensuring that in her own teaching she exemplifies best standards.

The school senior management team (SMT) have a clear strategic view for the development of the school and, in their individual roles as departmental heads of early years/KS1, lower KS1 and upper KS1, ensure that communication and decision making throughout the school is swift and responsive. Good administration procedures ensure the smooth running of the school. The role of the subject leader is continuing to develop. The school recognises the need to further develop their leadership role in focussing on the standards pupils achieve.

There are good policies and procedures in place to ensure equality of opportunity for staff and pupil alike. Teachers have contributed to formulating policies that are reviewed regularly. The headteacher and senior management have ensured that the school has developed a capacity to reflect critically on what is being done and how it can be improved.

The school takes good account of national priorities and these are integrated into its strategic development of the school.

The school maintains a system of assessment and record keeping and this information is used to inform and set targets for improvement for year groups and groups of pupils. Challenging, yet realistic targets and goals are established and regularly reviewed to assess progress attained.

The effective performance management initiative promotes teachers' professional development and helps to improve the quality of the school's provision. Individual staff are set clear objectives towards improved performance, are supported and receive appropriate training and receive feedback on their performance. The promotion of staff professional development, including that of support staff is one of the key strengths of the school.

The governing body is very supportive, well informed and fully involved in the life of the school. They work very closely with the headteacher and are very active in the development of the school. They have a clear understanding of their role and make a good contribution to the strategic direction of the school. They evaluate their decisions well in order to monitor effectiveness and to give the best value for money. The governing body fully meet all regulatory and legal requirements.

The school takes note of Wales Assembly Government guidelines and complies fully with statutory requirements.

The headteacher, staff and governors are fully committed to improving the quality of education provided by the school. The senior management team has a good knowledge of the overall performance of the school based on the monitoring and evaluation carried out together with the analysis of internal and external assessment data. This information is disseminated to curriculum co-ordinators and class teachers and is used to set priorities and inform the action plans contained in the school improvement plan.

The improvement plan directly focuses upon the raising of standards of teaching and learning. The action plans are specifically related to these goals; they include clear, specific objectives, state who is responsible for the action and are broken down into a sequence of manageable targets. Governors are given regular reports on the plans and they monitor the implementation effectively.

The school takes good account of the views of all those concerned with the success of the school. Staff and governors meet regularly for the programme of focussed meetings, parents and pupils complete questionnaires as part of the school development planning cycle and LEA advisers regularly monitor standards at the school.

The self-evaluation document produced by the school before the inspection is a generally accurate report which reflects the way forward. Evaluation of the key questions are comprehensive and give details of the evaluation carried out, the evidence base and what needs to be done next for the school to improve. Each curriculum subject inspected has undergone a similar evaluation process. Sufficient resources are provided to meet the priorities; actions already taken have resulted in measurable improvement. The inspection team agreed with the judgements given in the school's self-evaluation report in six of the seven key questions.

The school is appropriately staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Teachers are sufficiently well qualified and are effectively deployed to provide the school with a range of skills and experience.

Learning support staff have a clear understanding of their roles. They work purposefully in partnership with class teachers to target individual learning needs. Teachers, support staff and adult helpers work as an integrated team to enhance the quality of education for all pupils. This aspect is a strength of the school.

Overall, the accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. However, a number of the classrooms are small and accommodation facilities, particularly in the reception classes are restricted and do not always facilitate the demands of children's learning experiences. This aspect has been identified by the school for further consideration.

Learning resources and materials are good. Books and other resources are well organised, easily accessible and deployed effectively by staff to support teaching and learning and provide pupils with appropriate experiences. Children in the early years have access to a new safe soft surface outdoor area that contributes to promoting their physical development. Accessibility to outdoor areas and resources in the early years need to be further reviewed.

The quality and quantity of resources for subjects is good overall. Teachers regularly review the sufficiency of resources and these are deployed effectively during lessons to advance pupils' knowledge and understanding. The Governing Body and Headteacher review and prioritise resource needs in line with the SIP. Spending decisions are appropriately matched to the school's priorities and overall the school provides good value for money.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection, in particular, with improving standards in Welsh Second Language and in the improved provision of learning resources.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the school needs to:

- R1 raise standards in geography and religious education and the key skills of speaking and writing across the curriculum in key stage 2;
- R2 improve the quality of short term planning throughout the school, in particular in identifying:
  - assessment opportunities and tasks;
  - key skills;
  - specific learning objectives for play activities in the early years;
- R3 more fully engage pupils in an assessment of their strengths and areas for development and for teachers to use more effectively information gained from assessment in the planning of new work;
- R4 continue to address the disparity in performance between boys and girls, especially in KS2;
- R5 continue to develop the monitoring role of the subject leader to ensure challenge and progression in standards throughout the school, particularly in the foundation subjects;
- R6 ensure greater consistency in the quality of information given to parents in written reports on pupil achievements.

The school self-evaluation report clearly highlights the above and additional aspects as key areas for improvement.

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. The plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.