

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF
THE EDUCATION (SCHOOLS) ACT 1996**

**PONTNEWYDD
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Bryn Celyn Road
Pontnewydd
Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP44 1JW**

SCHOOL NUMBER: 678/2211

DATE OF INSPECTION: 30 September – 3 October 2002

BY

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REGISTERED INSPECTOR No: W086/16177

DATE: 15th November 2002

Under Estyn contract number C/T/84/02P

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

A new nomenclature to describe pupils progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to age 18 is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term “Reception” (R) is applied 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” (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13 the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	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 Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The five-point grading scale used to represent the main judgements in this report is as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some of them outstanding.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features outweigh some shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Pontnewydd Primary School is situated in the small town of Cwmbran. Pupils are taught in a two-storey, split level block for KS2 pupils and the Special Needs Resource Base, and a separate single-storey block for reception and KS1 pupils. The school has three hard-surface areas and an adjoining playing field. At the time of the inspection there were 370 pupils in the school, of whom 40 were in special needs groups. The number of pupils on roll has fallen in the last four years. There are seventeen classes in the school, some of which have mixed age groups.

Pupils are drawn from a well-established residential area which is identified as being economically disadvantaged: 35% of pupils are registered as being eligible for free school meals and this is higher than the all Wales average. The intake consists of many less able and few able pupils: 35% of pupils are on the special needs register, with 35 pupils carrying a statement of special educational needs for moderate learning difficulties. The school has an integral special needs resource base. Two pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority. English is the first language of the large majority of pupils and there are no natural Welsh speakers.

The school has an appropriate statement of educational aims which stresses the importance of pupils achieving their full potential within a caring and stimulating environment. There is a detailed school development plan (SDP) which identifies the need to develop behaviour management strategies, literacy and numeracy as the major focus for this year.

The school was last inspected in November 1996. There have been several staff changes including the very recent appointment of a new deputy headteacher.

The current inspection was undertaken very early in the school year. All teachers were familiarising themselves with new classes and reception children had only just begun to be in the classes all day. Work from the previous academic year and discussions with pupils formed an important part of the evidential base for the judgements on standards of achievement.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

- Pontnewydd Primary School has many strengths and has made significant progress since the last inspection. It provides a wide range of high quality experiences for its pupils in a strong and caring ethos. Pupils are receiving good quality education and respond positively to it.
- Standards of achievement were at least satisfactory in all lessons and sessions observed. In 75% they were good, and in just under 10% very good standards were achieved.

- The educational provision for the under fives, taken overall, is appropriate and promotes the desirable outcomes for children’s learning. Standards achieved are:

Desirable Outcomes	Reception
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Good
Personal and Social Development	Very Good
Mathematical Development	Good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Good
Creative Development	Good
Physical Development	Very Good

- In Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2), standards of achievement are:

Subject	KS1	KS2
English	Good	Good
Welsh (second language)	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Design & Technology	Good	Good
Information Technology	Very Good	Very Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Music	Good	Very Good
Art	Very Good	Good
Physical Education	Good	Good
Religious Education	Good	Good

- Overall, standards of achievement are at least good and some are very good.
- The overall quality of provision in the early years is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the desirable outcomes for children’s learning in language, literacy and communication skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In personal and social development and physical development, they make very good progress.
- Standards in English are good in both key stages. Pupils listen attentively and are able to ask and answer questions effectively. They make good progress in their reading, but there is a need to improve the presentation of written work at the end of KS2.
- Standards in mathematics are good in both key stages. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of number, shape and data handling. Pupils are able to present and interpret data using diagrams, tables and graphs appropriate to their age and ability.

- Standards in science are good in both key stages. Pupils have a good recall of previous learning and are able to use appropriate equipment during their investigative work.
- Pupils in the SNRB make good progress in relation to their age and ability. Their results are included in the annual standard assessment tests and match the mean for the all Wales schools.
- The school's results in the national standardised tests show that the school raises standards of achievement from a low baseline on entry to being in line with the all Wales average in specific subject areas. In the core subject indicator, the school's result is slightly lower than the average, but this figure includes all the pupils in the SNRB.
- In KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the key skills across the curriculum are:

Key Skill	KS1 and KS2
Speaking	Very Good
Listening	Good
Reading	Good
Writing	Good
Numeracy	Good
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	Good

- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, and for moral, social and cultural development, very good. Respect for oneself and others is embedded in the daily life of the school, and pupils feel valued and confident. Acts of collective worship are varied and pupils contribute through singing and playing instruments. Welsh culture and heritage has a secure place in the curriculum, and initiatives such as the Comenius project enhance pupils' understanding of other people's lives, beliefs and traditions.
- Standards of behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and are a major strength of the school. The school is a caring community with an atmosphere of mutual respect: staff have high expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements and these expectations are fulfilled. The standard of behaviour has a particular impact on the levels of achievement and quality of life in the school.
- Attendance levels are good: pupils arrive punctually and most lessons start promptly.
- The quality of teaching was good overall. In reception and KS1, the teaching was good or better in 88% of lessons, and very good in 36%. In KS2, it was good or better in 73% of lessons observed, and very good in 15%. For younger pupils, routines are well established and there is a clear focus on learning in a stimulating environment.

- Planning in KS1 and KS2 shows continuity and progression in all subjects of the national curriculum. Teachers plan together in year groups to ensure that all pupils, including those in the special needs resource base, experience a similar curriculum. In the best practice, lessons are carefully planned, anticipated learning is shared with the class and lessons proceed at a good pace which keeps pupils involved and interested.
- Opportunities for the development of key skills often occur through the expertise of the teacher and links between subjects are well developed. However, planning for key skills is at a very early stage of development.
- Classroom assistants and support staff work efficiently and conscientiously alongside the teacher and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and welfare.
- The arrangements for the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' learning are good overall. School policies provide an effective framework for the school. Assessment data is used to evaluate pupils' progress, and the co-ordinator provides good support for teachers by his thorough and careful analysis and dissemination of pupils' performance. Individual pupil portfolios contain evidence of their work, but currently the subject portfolios require further development. In some classes, marking is positive and supportive, but there are examples where it is cursory and uninformative, and this needs further work. Reports to parents are of good quality, providing information on standards achieved and progress made.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum of good quality, which meets the requirements of the NC and the agreed syllabus for religious education. Schemes of work and policy documents are in place for all subjects, and teaching is based on a two year programme of topics, which ensures coverage of all areas of learning. The curriculum for children under five is well planned to ensure continuity and progression in all six areas of learning and successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- Support and guidance for pupils is very good, and provision for ensuring pupils' welfare is good. Planning for personal and social education is included in cross-curricular links. The new School Council is well supported by pupils who value the opportunity to take part in decision-making.
- The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream classes is very good. Pupils have good individual education plans based on thorough assessment of their needs. Pupils with SEN make good progress throughout the school, and are very well supported by assistants who are sensitive to the need to allow pupils to work as independently as possible.
- Provision for pupils in the Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB) in KS2 is very good. The SNRB is led effectively and has very good procedures in place for diagnostic assessment, educational planning and monitoring individuals' needs and progress. Support assistants work effectively with class teachers and play a significant role in supporting pupils' learning and behaviour. Whilst they have

complex needs, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils in the Base are very good. All staff are committed to the inclusion of pupils placed in the SNRB and they are encouraged to take a full part in the life and activities of the school.

- The school's partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is very good. The parental questionnaire and meeting with parents indicated that most parents were appreciative of the work of the school. They are involved in classes and there is an active Friends of Pontnewydd association. The school has very good relationships with the local community, and pupils have a very good understanding of the wider community, which has been enhanced by links with schools overseas.
- Partnership with industry is very good, and is the foundation of much of the topic work for the autumn term. Most staff have had placements which have enabled them to enrich the curriculum overall.
- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good. Staff and governors are aware of the school's strengths and areas for development, and a self-critical ethos is evident. All are keen to further raise the standards of pupils' achievements.
- The leadership and efficiency of the school are of very good quality. The school has a strong sense of purpose, appropriate aims and a firm commitment to equality for all. The orderliness of daily routines and quality of relationships is evidence of the hard work put in by all members of the school community.
- The governors, head teacher and senior staff provide positive leadership which gives clear direction to the work of the school. The head teacher has a clear vision for the further development of the school and is well supported by the senior staff.
- The budget is well managed and appropriate financial priorities identified. The school budgets systematically for new expenditure and uses appropriate methods of evaluating its effects. Overall, the school is providing very good value for money.
- Administrative procedures are clear and operate effectively and efficiently, due in large measure to the successful operation of the school office.
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good overall. Teaching and learning are supported by a good range of resources which are used well to enhance pupils' standards of achievement.
- The school has made good progress since the last inspection in November 1996.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY THE PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Overall, standards of achievement are at least good and some are very good.

- The overall quality of provision in the early years is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the desirable outcomes for children's learning in language, literacy and communication skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In personal and social development and physical development, they make very good progress.
- Standards in English are good in both key stages. Pupils listen attentively and are able to ask and answer questions effectively. They make good progress in their reading, but there is a need to improve the presentation of written work at the end of KS2.
- Standards in mathematics are good in both key stages. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of number, shape and data handling. Pupils are able to present and interpret data using diagrams, tables and graphs appropriate to their age and ability.
- Standards in science are good in both key stages. Pupils have a good recall of previous learning and are able to use appropriate equipment during their investigative work.
- Standards in information technology are very good in both key stages. In design and technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education, standards are good. In music, standards are good in KS1 and very good in KS2. In art, standards are very good in KS1 and good in KS2.
- Pupils in the SNRB make good progress in relation to their age and ability. Their results are included in the annual standard assessment tests and match the mean for the all Wales schools.
- The school's results in the national standardised tests show that the school raises standards of achievement from a low baseline on entry to being in line with the all Wales average in specific subject areas. In the core subject indicator, the school's result is slightly lower than the average, but this figure includes all the pupils in the SNRB.

3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum

In both key stages standards in key skills across the curriculum are very good in speaking and good in listening. Standards are good in reading and writing. In numeracy and information and communications technology standards are good.

- Pupils in both key stages speak clearly and fluently and use a range of vocabulary. Pupils effectively use language in a range of contexts across the curriculum; they use technical terms competently in science and mathematics. Pupils' use of

subject specific vocabulary is good and is encouraged by all members of staff.

- In both key stages pupils develop good listening skills. During whole class reading sessions they listen attentively and express an opinion about the text. They listen and appraise compositions in music and listen to their peers during group discussion in design and technology. In physical education they listen to instructions and respond appropriately.
- Pupils achieve good standards in reading. In both key stages pupils read with accuracy and understanding and use books appropriately for research investigation and study. They access information from a variety of sources and use index pages confidently to locate information. In KS2 pupils' understanding of the past is enhanced when reading a range of historical accounts.
- Pupils in both key stages make good progress in writing. They evaluate designs in design and technology, list materials in science and label items in Welsh. Pupils' understanding of history and geography is extended effectively through a range of writing activities.
- Pupils develop good numeracy skills in both key stages. There is evidence of measuring in design and technology and collating evidence in geography. Graphs are used appropriately in a number of subject areas.
- ICT is used effectively to support pupils' learning in a number of subject areas. In KS1 pupils access information from the Internet and use CD-ROMs to support literacy and research in geography. In KS2 pupils' word processing skills enhance their work in history, geography and science.
- Pupils with SEN make steady progress in the key skills relative to their age and ability.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and for moral, social and cultural development is very good.

- The school's aim of providing a happy school where children are sensitively cared for and helped to reach their full potential is conveyed effectively through a wide range of enriching and relevant experiences across the curriculum. Respect for oneself and consideration for others are values which are embedded in the daily life of the school: these are reflected in the way in which pupils relate to each other and include visitors in the school activities they enjoy.
- Within a happy and secure school community the quality of relationships is good and pupils feel valued and confident. They have been involved in the compilation of school rules and consequently have an awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils understand the school's expectations regarding acceptable social behaviour and this contributes positively to a purposeful working

environment.

- Pupils work well together and collaborate sensibly in group and paired activities. They take their responsibilities seriously when participating on the School Council expressing their views honestly, fairly and courteously. Older pupils represent the views of younger pupils on the council and develop a spirit of caring within the school community.
- Acts of collective worship are varied and meet statutory requirements. Pupils conduct class assemblies and contribute effectively and enthusiastically through singing hymns and playing musical instruments. Achievements are celebrated and opportunities are given for enhancing pupils' self-esteem and reinforcing positive attitudes. Further consideration, however, needs to be given to enabling pupils to participate in moments of quiet reflection.
- Pupils' social and personal skills are purposefully and thoughtfully promoted through a range of learning experiences and are well developed. The school complies with the ACCAC framework (2000) in providing a relevant programme of learning opportunities for the introduction of life skills. Pupils express their views coherently and honestly in class discussions and related activities, showing courtesy and consideration to each other, to staff and to visitors.
- Social skills are further enhanced through extensive links with the wider community and in this context pupils are given the opportunity to develop their awareness and understanding of sustainable development incidentally through topic linked extra-curricular projects supported by outside professional bodies. The school has identified further intentions in this area. Contributions by visiting speakers, adult volunteers and local clergy enrich the experiences of pupils and contribute to the standards achieved.
- Through their fund raising activities for charities, pupils learn to empathise with and develop an understanding of others less fortunate than themselves and of the significance of equality issues.
- Pupils respect and appreciate their own cultural traditions alongside those of others, with Welsh culture and heritage having a secure place in the curriculum. Pupils' awareness of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is consistently reinforced through attractive displays, cross-curricular activities, educational visits and annual celebrations.
- There is a policy in place to meet the legal requirements of the Racial Equality Act and aspects of cultural diversity and racial harmony are promoted positively through the curriculum. Initiatives such as the Comenius project and their studies in religious education and geography enhance pupils' understanding of other people's lives, beliefs and traditions.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

Standards of behaviour and attitudes are very good.

- The school is a caring community where relationships are very good: pupils are valued and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school.
- The school has high expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements. Staff are consistent in their implementation of routines and pupils quickly learn what is expected of them.
- The foundations of good behaviour are laid effectively in the early years. At this very early stage of the academic year, children happily leave their parents and settle quickly to work.
- Pupils understand what is expected of them, have a good attitude to learning and in almost all classes they respond readily to the tasks set them. They move around the school in an orderly manner. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously and assist staff in monitoring behaviour.
- As staff respect the pupils in their charge, pupils respond with positive attitudes towards the school, adults and to each other. Self-esteem and self-discipline of pupils have been developed effectively.
- The standard of behaviour has a very high impact on the level of achievement and the quality of life in the school.
- The comprehensive positive behaviour management policy and other school policies follow local authority guidelines and are closely linked to personal and social education.
- Midday supervisors maintain positive discipline to ensure continuity of good behaviour during the lunchtime period. Lunch is a positive social occasion for both younger and older children.

4.3 Attendance

The standard of attendance is good.

- Average attendance for the three full terms prior to the inspection was 92.4%.
- Registration is carried out briskly and absences are codified appropriately. Administration staff follow approved procedures effectively in maintaining attendance records on computer.
- Administration staff also support the head teacher in the close scrutiny of absences. Follow-up procedures are in place with close and regular support from the Education Welfare Officer.
- During the inspection, punctuality was good at the start of the day but some lessons were slow to start after break times.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching was good overall. In reception and KS1, the teaching was good or better in 88% of lessons, and very good in 36%. In KS2, it was good or better in 73% of lessons observed, and very good in 15%.

- The quality of much of the teaching is a strength of the school, particularly in reception and KS1 classes. Routines are well established and appropriate activities planned. There is a clear focus on learning in a stimulating environment. Adults provide challenge and support, enabling pupils to succeed in their work.
- In KS1 and KS2, planning shows continuity and progression in all subjects of the National Curriculum. Teachers plan together in year groups to ensure that all pupils, including those in the special needs resource base, experience a similar curriculum. Short term planning is directly linked to schemes of work, and in some classes there is clear evidence that careful ongoing assessment is used to inform effective planning. The school would benefit from disseminating this good practice to all classes.
- There is specific time planned for English, mathematics and science. Foundation subjects are taught through topic work, which takes place on a two-yearly cycle. Work in the autumn term is based on industry links and all classes have had an educational visit as a starting point.
- Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and resources are generally ready and available for pupils so that lessons begin promptly. Transitions between activities operate efficiently, so that little learning time is wasted.
- Teachers use an appropriate range of methods including whole class, individual, paired and co-operative group work. In both key stages, pupils engage in research and some are able to undertake their own investigations.
- In the best practice, teachers recapitulate on previous work. They share clear learning objectives with the class and these form part of a well-structured sequence of activities. Instructions are clear and pupils respond positively, settling to work quickly. Teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and achievement, and lessons proceed at a good pace which keeps pupils involved and interested. A review at the end of the lesson enables pupils to identify what they have learnt and how successful they have been.
- Opportunities for the development of key skills often occur through the expertise of the teacher and links between subjects are well developed. Teachers refer to knowledge and skills gained in other subjects and ensure pupils apply these to their current work. However, planning for the inclusion of key skills is at a very early stage of development.

- Work is generally well matched to the abilities and prior achievements of pupils. This is particularly evident in the special needs resource base classes.
- Teachers have established very good relationships with pupils. They act as good role models and offer frequent praise and encouragement. This means that pupils are well motivated, concentrate well and persevere. Teachers show appreciation of their efforts and respect their pupils.
- Classroom assistants and support staff work efficiently and conscientiously alongside the teacher and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and welfare.
- On the very few occasions when shortcomings occur in teaching, time management is inappropriate, resulting in a slow pace to the lesson, uncompleted tasks and pupils not achieving their potential.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

Arrangements for the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' learning is good.

- Whole school policies for planning assessment, recording and reporting and a marking policy provide an effective framework for the school.
- Information gained from statutory tests and commercial materials is used to assess pupils' progress. The co-ordinator provides good support for teachers by his thorough and careful analysis and dissemination of pupils' performance.
- Individual pupil portfolios contain evidence of pupils' work in NC subjects. These effectively support teachers in planning for teaching and learning. Portfolios containing exemplar material of pupils' work are retained by the school to support assessment. Currently, subject portfolios require more careful moderation and annotation to assist teachers when assessing standards achieved.
- The school's marking policy provides useful guidelines for teachers when marking pupils' work. In the best examples pupils are given a clear indication of the strengths of their work and clear targets for improvement. In a minority of classes pupils are beginning to evaluate their own work and have a clear perception of their progress. However, there are examples of pupils' work where marking is cursory and unsupported by meaningful comments, and the school would benefit from ensuring that the good practice is disseminated to all classes.
- The school complies with statutory arrangements for assessing and recording the needs of pupils on the SEN register.
- Reports to parents are of good quality. They provide information on standards achieved and give an indication of their child's progress. Parents are invited to the school to discuss their child's progress informally and on formal occasions.

5.3 Curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum of good quality which meets the requirements of the NC and the agreed syllabus for religious education.

- The overall quality of educational provision for children under five is good and offers a broad range of activities to promote learning and progression towards the Desirable Outcomes. However no opportunity is given for outdoor play.
- A curriculum map based on a two-year rolling programme of topics ensures coherent coverage of all areas of learning. Whole school policies and comprehensive schemes of work have been established since the previous inspection and are in place for all subjects. These identify learning objectives which adequately support day to day planning. School based schemes are supported by local authority and published schemes.
- While key skills are identified in medium term plans they are not consistently delivered in all classes and are not always identified in short term planning. There is no whole school approach to ensure that all pupils develop key skills systematically in a broad range of contexts.
- The school has a homework policy. Tasks include home reading, spelling and mathematical facts including tables. Occasional home school tasks derive from research into class topic work or completion of unfinished work and in this context purposefully supports pupils learning.
- Link governors engage actively in the learning programme and the good quality support given by adult helpers supplements pupils' learning and enables them make good progress.
- The school's policy on personal, health and social education, supported by the ACCAC framework (2000), is successfully promoted in all areas of the curriculum. The policy on sex education decided upon by governors is also incorporated into this aspect of school life.
- The commitment of the teaching staff enables pupils to develop skills in a range of extra-curricular activities. These are attended enthusiastically by pupils and add a valuable dimension to their cultural and sporting experiences.
- The curriculum is enhanced by fieldwork in the local area, cultural links with the local community and wide ranging visits to places of educational interest. These, combined with visiting speakers, including those from overseas and participation in initiatives such as the Comenius project and mini-enterprise, contribute very positively to educational standards achieved and greatly widen and enrich pupils' learning experiences.
- The curriculum for pupils with SEN is wholly appropriate and well co-ordinated. The school is sensitive to the needs of all its pupils and is aware of the importance of ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

Support and guidance in the school is very good. Provision for ensuring pupils' welfare is good.

- The head teacher, teachers and support staff know and care for pupils well. They work within governors to provide very good support for all pupils.
- The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good. Pupils are clear about who they would talk to about problems and are confident that their concerns would be dealt with promptly.
- The school takes action to ensure that all pupils with special educational needs are included in its activities. They are very well integrated into the life of the school. This year's head boy was a pupil in the Special Needs Resource Base last year.
- Pupils are taught both to value one another and themselves. Their achievements in and outside school are celebrated. All staff have high expectations of pupils and this motivates them to behave well and to work hard in class.
- The school's approaches to the Personal and Social Education (PSE) of its pupils are good. Planning for P.S.E is currently included in cross-curricular links. The new School Council is well supported by pupils who value being able to take part in decision-making. Arrangements for including pupils with special educational needs in its work are good.
- The school has developed a satisfactory health education policy document. The role of the wider community in health education is stressed. Pupils know and understand the importance of such topics as hygiene and healthy eating. Approaches to sex education are good. The school's policy and procedures in relation to drugs and their misuse are very good.
- Provision for the health and safety of pupils is good. Pupils attend a safety course organised by the school's community police officer. First aid equipment is of a high quality and procedures for the prevention of infection and cross infection are very good. There are a number of trained first-aiders in the school.
- A significant number of pupils in the school are given prescribed medications by support staff during school hours. The schedule for this is complex. Procedures are satisfactory.
- The entrances to both the school's buildings have controlled access systems to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.
- Child protection procedures in the school are very good. The Child Protection Policy is a good document overall. Two child protection co-ordinators have been appointed: one for the main school and one for the Special Needs Resource Base. Staff understand the school's child protection procedures and the arrangements for referrals. The headteacher works closely with staff and outside agencies in relation to child protection issues.

5.5 Provision for pupils with SEN

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is very good. 113 pupils in the main school are on a graded approach of action and intervention and all have individual education plans (IEPs). Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

- The school's policy document for SEN is good. It is clearly written and informative. The school's policy in relation to gifted and talented pupils is also documented. Other documentation in relation to SEN is very good.
- The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) works effectively with class teachers, pupils, support staff, governors and outside agencies. Arrangements for identifying pupils with special educational needs are very good.
- Good IEPs are based upon very thorough assessments and good quality observations of pupils. Very good use is made of baseline and other assessment data to develop clear IEP targets. Targets for improvement for pupils with SEN are also set.
- The SENCO, teachers and support staff work well together. IEPs are reviewed regularly. Procedures for annual review and for statementing are in line with the Code of Practice. The school seeks to involve parents in review processes, including those which are part of IEP work.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress throughout the school. Class teachers' planning for pupils with SEN is based in differentiation and a good range of resources is available and used to support pupils' learning.
- Support staff are satisfactorily deployed. They are knowledgeable about individual pupils' needs and support both learning and behaviour well. They are sensitive to the need to allow pupils to work as independently as possible.
- The governor with responsibility for SEN is actively involved in monitoring and reviewing this aspect of the school's work.
- Links with parents, educational welfare officers, social services and the police are good. LEA specialist and advisory teachers regularly visit the school and support its SEN work well. Links with the county educational psychology service, with psychiatric social workers and with specialist medical services are satisfactory.
- Access to the school's buildings for pupils and others with restricted mobility is limited at present.

Special Needs Resource Base

The provision for pupils in the Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB) is very good. The school has a well-resourced unit which caters for Key Stage 2 pupils with a range of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, there were 39 pupils in the Base, of whom 35 were statemented.

- The SNRB is effectively led. It has its own development plan and there are very good procedures in place for diagnostic assessment, educational planning and the monitoring of individual pupils' needs and progress.
- Each pupil has a good IEP. In the best examples in Y5, these are very good. IEPs contain clear and relevant learning objectives. These are shared with pupils and the school seeks also to involve parents. IEPs are reviewed and updated regularly.
- Approaches to target setting in the SNRB are very good. Pupils have achievable individual targets which they know. Ambitious targets are also set in order to accelerate pupils' progress and to raise their achievement.
- The quality of the teaching in the SNRB is good, with some very good teaching seen. Lesson plans have clear learning objectives which are well linked to the needs of the pupils. Teaching resources are of good quality.
- The support assistants within the SNRB are deployed appropriately. They work effectively with class teachers and play a significant role in supporting pupils' learning and behaviour. They are sensitive to the need to enable pupils to work independently when possible.
- The SNRB has its own policy for behaviour and discipline. This is a very good document which emphasises that pupils need to achieve both good behaviour and good work. From time to time individual behaviour plans are drawn up for pupils whose behaviour may be very challenging.
- Whilst they have complex needs, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils in the Base are very good. They have very good speaking and listening skills and positive attitudes to their work. They are confident and try hard to improve. Relationships within the Base are good.
- The SNRB receives good support from LEA advisory services and collaborates effectively with the local special school. Teachers also meet with colleagues from other similar units in the LEA to examine the standards achieved by pupils.
- All staff are committed to the inclusion of pupils who are placed in the SNRB and they are encouraged to take a full part in the life and activities of the school.

5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions

Partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is very good.

- The school prospectus is well produced, updated annually and covers all aspects of school life. Parents are further informed of school events through the regularly issued 'Diary Update'.
- Parents support the work of the school in classrooms and assist on school visits.

An active Friends of Pontnewydd association assists in arranging social and fund-raising events.

- The school is very sensitive to the needs of the community it serves and has close partnership with local organisations and with individual citizens. The school choir is very active in the community and is a regular contributor to local concerts. Pupils are also regular visitors to local residential homes to entertain senior citizens.
- Representatives of a wide range of organisations are regular visitors to the school, and their talks and discussion give pupils a better understanding of the world around them.
- Pupils' understanding of the wider community has been enhanced by the school's active involvement with the twinning arrangements locally and with Bruchsal in Germany and also its participation in European projects involving Finland and Ireland.
- There are effective curricular links with the comprehensive school to which most pupils transfer and transition links are well established. Very good links are also in place with other comprehensive schools to which a small number of pupils may transfer including pupils with special educational needs.
- Students from a nearby teacher training institution regularly attend the school for teaching practice as part of their course.
- The school has received a number of awards from outside agencies for good practice in several areas.

5.7 Partnership with industry

Partnership with industry is very good. It is the foundation of much of the topic work carried out in the autumn term.

- The school has a sound policy for Economic and Industrial Understanding and has close links with EBP, local TEC, Business in the Community and the CBI.
- Partnership with industry and commerce has been carefully planned to enhance the curriculum meaningfully in every year group.
- EBP support has enabled work placements for most of the present staff to assist their development and to assess potential teaching resources.
- Pupils have received good experiences and insights into the world of work through visits and mini enterprise projects.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good.

- Both staff and governors are aware of the school's strengths and areas for development, and a self-critical ethos is evident. They are keen to improve their understanding and methods of working to contribute to raising pupils' standards of achievement.
- Assessment data is used effectively to produce whole-school targets, and the school self-audit and questionnaires to parents are carefully considered.
- The role of the subject leader has been considerably developed since the last inspection through the establishment of clear monitoring processes although there is still room for improvement in the development of annotated and moderated school subject portfolios.
- The school's self-assessment report provides a clear picture of measures taken to improve the quality of educational provision and standards achieved. A number of relevant steps have been taken to enhance teachers' skills in recognising good practice in learning and teaching.
- The school development plan (SDP) is used effectively as a management tool, providing a sound foundation for further improvement. It identifies time scales, resource implications, necessary staff training and criteria for success.
- Priorities and progress towards targets are reviewed regularly by the head teacher and governing body.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

The leadership and efficiency of the school are of very good quality.

- The school has a strong sense of purpose, appropriate aims and a firm commitment to equality of opportunity for all. The sense of community which exists within the school and between the school, parents and the wider community is a very strong feature.
- The orderliness of daily routines and the quality of relationships both between adults and pupils and the pupils themselves is evidence of the hard work put in by all members of the school community. The ethos of the school is very good.
- The governors, head teacher and senior staff provide positive leadership which gives a clear direction to the work of the school. The governing body is well informed, fully involved in the life of the school and has a positive impact on the progress the school is making.

- The head teacher has a clear vision for the further development of the school. She undertakes her work conscientiously and has a deep commitment to the school, its pupils and the community. She knows all staff and pupils well and is sensitive to their needs.
- The head teacher is well supported by her senior staff, who undertake their management roles effectively. The school has a very recently appointed deputy head teacher, who has already made herself aware of policies and procedures in the school.
- Staff understand the role they play in the running and development of the school: their views are actively sought and communication within the school operates effectively. Staff are hardworking and professional, giving their own time both within and outside school hours to provide additional enriching experiences for pupils.
- Subject leaders maintain written records of developments and ensure new ideas are conveyed to colleagues. They visit classrooms to monitor standards in learning and teaching. Some are developing portfolios of work: these now need to be annotated and moderated effectively to provide clear guidelines for the establishment of standards.
- The budget is well managed and appropriate financial priorities identified which are clearly related to the educational objectives established in the SDP. The school budgets systematically for new expenditure and uses appropriate methods of evaluating its effects.
- The governing body and head teacher ensure good use of all available resources to achieve high educational outcomes. The school is providing very good value for money.
- Administrative procedures are clear and operate effectively and efficiently, due in large measure to the successful operation of the school office. The school has acted to implement all measures suggested in the latest audit report.
- The school complies with statutory requirements and takes note of National Assembly for Wales and local authority guidelines in formulating policies and procedures. Guidance documentation published by Estyn is used effectively to aid its development.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good overall.

- Teachers provide the school with a broad spectrum of expertise and experience. Several new teachers have been recently appointed, including the deputy head teacher. All have been well supported by colleagues and are already making a significant contribution to the standards in the school.

- Staff development is linked effectively to initiatives identified in the SDP and teachers share their experience of in-service training (INSET) through an organised programme of staff meetings.
- Training needs are decided through discussion with subject leaders and the head teacher, and are well related to the SDP. A member of the senior management team takes responsibility for organisation of INSET and supply teachers.
- Support staff are efficiently deployed and make an important contribution to the standards pupils achieve in both mainstream and special needs classes. Administrative staff, caretaking, cleaning and catering staff provide effective support for the school. The teamwork evident between all staff members is a strong feature of the school.
- There is adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll, although one classroom in KS2 is rather small for the number of pupils. Four classrooms make up the Special Needs Resource Base, and are well equipped.
- The buildings for both reception and KS1 and KS2 are well maintained, although there are problems with the hall floor in the KS1 building, which are receiving attention.
- The two school halls are well used for assemblies, music, physical education and dining. Playgrounds are used effectively, and are marked for games. The playing field is frequently used both during school time and for after-school activities. However, there is no outdoor play area for pupils in the reception classes.
- The school has recently installed a computer suite which has enhanced the quality of IT provision and has already had a positive impact on standards pupils are achieving.
- Teaching and learning are well supported by a good range of resources, which are used well to enhance pupils' standards of achievement. However, resources in RE need improving and the school has identified this.
- The appearance of the whole school is enhanced by the high quality displays evident in all areas.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The educational provision for the under-fives, taken overall, is appropriate and successfully promotes the desirable outcomes for children's learning.

Children achieve very good standards in personal and social development and creative development, and good standards in language, literacy and communication skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.

Good features

- As the inspection is early in the school year, reception children are very new to the school, but are achieving good standards in all areas of learning. Routines are already well established, and pupils respond positively to these.
- A wide range of whole class, small group and practical activities are thoughtfully planned and well structured to stimulate children's thinking and encourage them to explore and investigate in a secure and supportive environment.
- Children concentrate well and learn purposefully in a warm and welcoming atmosphere and this contributes positively to the standards they achieve. Adults work very well together and are sensitive to the needs of children.
- Children listen and respond well to stories. They enjoy books, and the most able are beginning to 'read' in a group situation. They speak confidently and listen carefully to adults and each other.
- Children handle writing materials confidently and are moving steadily towards independence in writing their own names and commentaries on their pictures. Writing areas give opportunities for independent activities, and children make good use of them.
- They have made a positive start to learning Welsh, responding to greetings and simple instructions appropriately.
- Children enjoy number rhymes and games, and use comparative language well. They are beginning to recognise two-dimensional shapes, and name them correctly. In working at the computer, they respond to ordinal language by putting the first or second garment on a teddy.
- Children are generally confident and happy and have formed effective relationships with adults and each other. They are eager to learn and are beginning to solve practical problems. The majority achieve very good standards in their personal and social development.
- Children are beginning to recognise days of the week, and can identify the initial letters. They can discuss the weather and make comparisons. They are beginning to be involved in scientific investigations, and their use of subject-specific language is developing well. They are able to describe the job and attire of the crossing supervisor.
- They are beginning to understand that there are different terms for colours, and are beginning to mix colours to match the leaves they are printing. They

experiment confidently, and use colour imaginatively in representational images. Most are able to sing in tune.

Shortcomings

- Children do not have access to an outdoor play area.
- There is little formal planning for adult intervention in play activities to take children's understanding forward.

English

Standards in speaking and listening are very good in both key stages. In reading and in writing standards achieved in both key stages are good.

Good Features

- In both KS1 and KS2 pupils make very good progress in the development of their listening skills. In most classes they listen very attentively to their teachers. Pupils listen to and take account of the views of their peers.
- In KS1 pupils listen to and are eager to answer teachers' questions. Their recall of previous work from 'big book' sessions is good. They interpret instructions well. Pupils in Y2 know and understand the conventions for working in the school library.
- Pupils in KS2 demonstrate the ability to listen very well during sustained whole class discussion and plenary work. In the Special Needs Resource Base pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good in the context of their differing needs.
- Pupils in both key stages make good and often very good progress in their speaking skills. KS1 pupils are able to think of appropriate questions and ask them confidently. They are able to structure and re-tell stories and to predict what might happen. Their literacy vocabulary is very good.
- In KS2 pupils develop their speech in line with a widening range of demands. In Y3 they apply music vocabulary confidently. Pupils in Y4 and Y5 in the Special Needs Resource Base use language very well to express their reasoning in science. Pupils in Y6 are able to evaluate metaphors being used in newspaper articles.
- In KS1 pupils make good progress in reading. In Y1 they are eager to read to their teacher. They read key words, identify capital letters, speech marks and explanation marks and can explain their use. Throughout the key stage pupils use an increasing number of strategies to help them identify unfamiliar words. By the end of the KS1 more confident pupils read with expression and meaning. In Y2 pupils reading a food label recognise and can explain the reason for the use of an apostrophe.

- During shared reading, younger pupils in KS2 are able to interpret text. They read aloud confidently and when reading speak very clearly. By the end of the key stage more confident readers read with expression and understanding. They are eager to discuss their books, use local libraries and read for pleasure at home.
- Older pupils in KS2 use dictionaries to support their reading. They read and retrieve work from a range of sources to support their work across the curriculum.
- In KS1 pupils make good progress in writing. Younger pupils respond well to lessons which develop their handwriting skills. Y2 pupils are beginning to apply simple punctuation and to write for a variety of purposes. Many are aware of the need to space writing for their readers
- In KS2 pupils make generally good progress in their ability to plan, draft and revise their writing. They use word banks and dictionaries to support their work. Pupils write for an increasing range of purposes. In Y5 they have a good understanding of the conventions of script-writing and draft and re-draft their work to produce scripts which have clear dialogue and are well punctuated. The standard of Y5 spelling is good.
- The standard of presentation of pupils' written work is good in KS1. However as pupils move through KS2 their use of a joined style of writing is variable. The standard of presentation of pupils' work in Y6 is just satisfactory.
- Pupils with SEN are well supported and make good progress in the context of their ages and abilities.

Shortcomings

- In KS2, particularly in Y6, the standard of presentation of pupils' written work requires further development.
- In both key stages there is a need to ensure that pupils' individual reading books allow them, in the context of their abilities, to make best progress in reading.

Mathematics

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages pupils make good progress in their understanding of number and in the development of mathematical skills, knowledge and concepts. Pupils use mathematical knowledge appropriately when discussing their work.
- In KS1 pupils are developing a good understanding of place value and can add and subtract using one and two digit numbers. Y1 pupils recognise patterns in number sequences, are able to double numbers and count on and back from two digit numbers. Pupils in Y2 understand place value involving three digit numbers and record them accurately. More able pupils know addition and subtraction facts

to twenty and are developing good skills in mental calculation.

- Pupils in KS2 extend their skills in mental calculation and can explain the strategies they use in appropriate terms. Y4 pupils count on and back from two and three digit numbers and multiply numbers by ten and a hundred.
- At the end of the key stage Y6 pupils extend their methods of computation to include decimals, fraction and percentages of quantities. Y6 pupils also understand the terminology of probability. KS2 pupils are developing an understanding and use of the four operations to solve problems and use calculations appropriately.
- Pupils in both key stages can describe the properties of two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) shapes.
- In KS1 pupils in Y2 recognise the differences between 2D shapes and accurately describe a variety of 3D shapes. More able pupils describe angles in shapes and draw lines of symmetry. Pupils in KS1 make sensible estimates of length and use measuring instruments appropriately. When involved in practical activities they weigh objects accurately using a variety of scales.
- Pupils in KS2 are developing accuracy when measuring and calculate the areas and perimeters of shapes. Y6 pupils use IT effectively to produce planned views and 3D layouts when involved in an investigation. Pupils measure angles accurately and are able to use degrees to measure rotation.
- Pupils in both key stages interpret mathematical data and present their results using tables and graphs appropriate to their age and ability.
- Pupils in both key stages are developing skills in interpreting graphs and representing their information using appropriate graphical forms. At the end of KS2 pupils use block and line graphs and are able to describe and hypothesise using appropriate terminology. Computer generated graphs feature in pupils' work in both key stages.

Shortcomings

- Problem solving tasks are often over-prescriptive and do not challenge pupils sufficiently to apply their mathematical knowledge in a range of practical tasks and to real life problems.

Science

Standards in science are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of science. Most use subject-specific language accurately and appropriately, and have good attitudes towards investigation.

- Recording develops well as pupils progress through the school. They outline their hypotheses, methods and conclusions, illustrating them with appropriately labelled diagrams and tables of results.
- In KS1, pupils can sort and classify materials. They can name parts of the body and of plants, and understand the life cycle of a flower.
- At the end of KS1, they are able to predict what will happen when ice warms up, and work well in groups to negotiate the best place to put the ice, recording both as a group and individually. They discuss the results sensibly, and are able to identify that the ice melts quickest in the warmest place.
- Pupils in KS2 have good recall of work done in previous years, and can discuss this well. They are able to discuss the use of a fair test in their investigations.
- Younger pupils are able to discuss their visit to a chemical works and understand the implications of what they saw. They have good recall of chemical functions and their use. They are able to explain their work with magnets and forces, and discuss the use of appropriate materials for buildings.
- At the end of KS2, pupils can describe their current work with forces well, and are able to design a fair test. They hypothesise individually, and work well in groups to investigate and compare the downward pull of gravity and the upthrust of water on objects. They have good recall of previous work on forces and can recount and explain much of the KS2 science work on materials, plants and animals.

Shortcomings

- Pupils have a limited understanding of the use of graphical representations of findings.

Welsh second language

Standards in Welsh as a second language are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils are responsive and enthusiastic in their Welsh lessons. Their recall of previous work is good. They are able to understand and follow simple instructions and commands, respond to greetings and make progress in learning basic vocabulary. In some classes pupils give extended responses when answering registration. Pronunciation is generally good.
- In KS1, pupils correctly request items of food identified from flash cards and respond enthusiastically to the resulting questions. They participate with obvious enjoyment to related role play in the café, reinforcing previously learned phrases.
- In Y3, pupils respond confidently to a variety of questions relating to the weather. They convey their understanding with expressive responses and concentrate

intently on a related board game prior to questioning peers.

- Pupils in Y4, create their own books illustrating written commands based on school activities. Working in pairs and groups they practise related reading skills. Some pupils utilise their IT skills to produce drawings and writing for inclusion in a class book.
- Older pupils in KS2 can identify features related to towns and incorporate them into sentences of their own in response to questions. Others develop their writing skills by recording and compiling facts relating to themselves into filo-fax entries.
- Pupils develop their reading skills from worksheets and flash cards. They read from big books in groups and class related activities although this was not observed during the inspection.
- Pertinent displays and cross-curricular work, particularly in music when pupils participate with obvious enjoyment in the singing of Welsh songs contribute significantly towards creating a Welsh ethos in the school. The assistance of the athrawes fro in supporting and encouraging teachers in the delivery and organisation of the subject programme has a positive effect on pupils' progress.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' writing skills, while showing progression, are currently underdeveloped.
- Daily target phrases and the extended responses encouraged in some classes during registration and in every day situations, including through other subjects in the curriculum are not yet applied consistently in all classes in order to consolidate progression.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement are good in both key stages

Good features

- In both key stages pupils make good progress in design and make activities. They measure accurately, choose suitable tools and materials and use appropriate tools and techniques.
- In KS1 pupils understand that materials behave in different ways and use this knowledge appropriately when making model swings. They choose suitable materials and demonstrate good skills when assembling and joining components. They demonstrate an understanding of shape and symmetry when cutting materials.
- Pupils extend their designing and making skills in KS2. Y5 pupils demonstrate an understanding of angles and shape when making frames for craftwork. Pupils in Y6 produce accurate drawings and demonstrate an understanding of movement using cogs and wheels when making a carousel.

- Pupils in both key stages investigate and evaluate simple products. Y2 pupils make a model of a sieve and evaluate its use while pupils in Y6 design and make periscopes describing the making process and refinements to their designs.
- In both key stages pupils use suitable finishing techniques, discuss their products and evaluate their work.
- Cross-curricular links are developed in history, science, art and mathematics. Y2 pupils make Roman mosaics while Y4 pupils make jewellery from the Stuart period. In another activity Y4 pupils demonstrate an understanding of circuits when designing home security alarms.
- Pupils are taught how to use tools and equipment safely and to consider the hazards and risks in their activities.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings although some design and make tasks are over prescriptive and do not provide pupils with opportunities to develop problem-solving skills.

Information technology

Standards of achievement are very good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in both key stages use IT equipment confidently and competently in a wide range of curriculum subjects. They can enter and store information and communicate their ideas in different forms. Information technology is timetabled for all pupils. Effective co-ordination of the subject's development and good planning has had a significant impact on the standards achieved.
- The recently installed computer suite ensures continuity and progression in pupils' learning through timetabled access to this facility. Teachers in both key stages use ICT appropriately to support pupils. Pupil support provided by the classroom assistant is very good.
- In KS1 pupils are able to generate and communicate their ideas in different forms. They write simple sentences and add pictures to text. Y1 pupils write descriptive sentences following a visit by a policeman, while Y2 pupils choose font styles, type a title, access and position a picture to enhance the text.
- Word processing skills are extended in KS2. Pupils in Y4 are able to highlight text change, font size and colour. In Y5 pupils use their skills to align text, underline and highlight blocks of text. At the end of the key stage, Y6 pupils use search engines to locate relevant graphics and are able to organise their work for a specific audience.

- Pupils in both key stages use CD Roms appropriately to support and reinforce their learning.
- In both key stages pupils use their knowledge and skills to support their work across the curriculum. Y1 pupils use control technology for programming a route in Geography while Y4 pupils use a computer programme to label their work in Science.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

History

Standards of achievement are good in both KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- In both key stages pupils show a real interest in history. They listen well and respond effectively to questions. They have a good recall of previous learning and use relevant language and vocabulary well.
- Through their links with industry and their topic work, for example Cadbury World in Y5, pupils have access to a range of additional history experiences. Good cross-curricular links are also made, particularly with literacy.
- Pupils in Y2 are able to identify and discuss similarities and differences between historical periods when related to every day life and activities. They can compare and contrast modern food labels with those of the past. Pupils in Y2 can explain terms used confidently.
- In Y3 pupils show a good understanding of chronological order and of changes over time. They have good sequencing skills and recall previous work well.
- Overall KS2 pupils have a good sense of the social aspect of history. They can show empathy with children of other times, particularly through their writing. Y6 pupils understand the difficulties faced by children in World War II and Y5 pupils recognise the problems faced by factory children in Victorian times.
- In KS2 there is evidence of pupils researching information from a variety of sources. They understand the difference between primary and secondary sources and use both to support their work.
- In KS1 pupils visit local supermarkets, can talk about what they have seen and done and about change over time. KS2 pupils' visits include Cadbury World and to the Blitz Experience at the Imperial War Museum. Pupils value these experiences and can relate them to their class work. They develop pupils' interest in history.

Shortcomings

- In a small number of instances in KS2 there is a need to develop further pupils' skills in using sources of information. Consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of both the tasks set and some of the historical reading materials used.
- There is a need to develop the range of written activities in KS2 so that pupils may have further opportunities to express their understanding of history in their own words.

Geography

Standards in geography are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Using maps, diagrams, photographs and ICT, pupils' geographical skills are developed progressively as they move through the school.
- In KS1, pupils undertaking studies in their local area are able to describe physical and human features. They show a good understanding of the purpose of maps and express their views knowledgeably and confidently when discussing features located on routes from school to nearby shops.
- Using aerial photographs of their locality, pupils in Y3 identify important landmarks and achieve a good understanding of the ways in which changes occur. Drawing on their knowledge of the locality they use appropriate vocabulary to express their ideas and opinions on aspects of environmental change relating to the re-siting of a supermarket.
- In Y4, pupils using maps and plans of various scales identify symbols to locate the capital cities of Europe. Others in Y4, in their explanations of why factories are situated in dock areas show developing understanding of locality in relationship to local industries.
- In KS2, pupils show a good understanding that different places may have both similar and different characteristics. In their studies of Kesharpur pupils are able to show an understanding of how the human and physical features of places affect the lives and activities of people living there. Some write letters empathising with difficulties relating to banana plantations in Chembokolli.
- In their studies on Africa older KS2 pupils investigate similarities and differences compared with life in Wales.
- When undertaking topic based work, good use is made of field work as a starting point for work on geographical enquiry and as a means of developing an understanding of the relationship between people and the environment.

Shortcomings

- In some classes the level of challenge in investigative work related to map work needs to be further developed.
- Pupils' understanding of global issues that effect people's lives and ways in which to protect the environment through sustainable development needs to be further developed.

Art

Standards of achievement are very good in KS1 and good in KS2.

Good features

- In both key stages, pupils use art activities effectively to support their work in other curriculum areas. Good use is made of art activities to develop work on Africa and India, for example, in KS2, and in KS1 to support design and technology designs for a playground.
- In KS1, pupils mix colours competently. They draw and paint from direct experience and from memory, and develop a good understanding of colour, pattern and line. Printing activities show pupils have a good awareness of repeating patterns.
- Oldest pupils in KS1 have produced sensitive charcoal drawings, using smudging techniques for shading. They have also produced samples of weaving which are attractively displayed.
- In KS2, pupils' skills in using charcoal and pastel develop further, and they can make good use of hatching to provide accurate shading. By the end of the stage, they are able to produce good observational drawings of fruit and interpret them in clay using texture and line.
- Younger KS2 pupils have produced wax resist designs and then made effective batik prints following their work on India.

Shortcomings

- While pupils produce some three-dimensional work, notably linked to topics, this aspect needs further development.

Music

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

Good features

- Pupils derive obvious enjoyment from their music lessons. Activities in performing, composing and appraising are appropriately integrated and pupils

make good progress in their music making.

- Pupils have good vocal skills and sing from a varied repertoire. They perform confidently with appropriate expression and sensitivity. They enunciate words clearly, sing well together and evidently enjoy the experience of participating in morning assembly and performing in school choir rehearsals.
- In KS1, pupils enjoy singing; they can memorise songs and keep to the rhythm of a piece of music. They know the significance of pitch and demonstrate their understanding using pitched animal noises from a related song. They respond well to instructions and copy rhythms with variable beat patterns.
- In Y3, pupils use appropriate subject specific vocabulary to describe their music making when participating in ostinato groups. They use a range of sound sources effectively including voices and body percussion to recite poems with underlying repetition
- Pupils in Y4 compose and perform music using the notes of the pentatonic scale. Using tuned percussion instruments they successfully maintain instrumental parts in group composition and make pertinent comments when evaluating their own and others compositions making suggestions for improvement.
- Others in Y4 can describe the main characteristics of two contrasting pieces of music. They listen attentively, identify instruments and are confident and enthusiastic in expressing their thoughts and feelings.
- Pupils in both key stages know the names of musical instruments and handle them with increasing competence and control. They make good progress in the use of the correct terminology when discussing their music making.
- Opportunities for pupils to perform in community and in school events provide enriching experiences and consolidates the development of skills. Support by peripatetic instrumental teachers have a positive effect on pupils standards in music.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings although the opportunities for evaluating compositions and performances needs to be consolidated in some classes.

Physical education

Standards of achievement in physical education are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages, particularly KS2, pupils respond enthusiastically to a wide range of activities through which they develop good movement skills. Pupils are well aware of the importance of safety and handle apparatus carefully and sensibly. Pupils develop an understanding of the body and its capabilities. Pupils

in Y2 can identify changes which occur as a result of physical exertion, such as increased heart rate and quicker breathing and KS2 pupils know the purpose of warm up and cool down activities.

- In KS1 pupils listen and respond well to instructions. They concentrate well. They are familiar with routines and in Y2 change quickly and efficiently. Y1 pupils are developing good hand-eye co-ordination. In Y2 pupils are able to use this when working alone to throw and catch a ball.
- Pupils in KS1 work well together in pairs and in simple team games. They use space well and in Y2 travel confidently changing both speed and direction.
- In their dance activities, older KS1 pupils are able to move to a given beat and to skip rhythmically. They can follow a simple country dance sequence accurately and are enthusiastic about their work.
- In KS2 pupils' control and co-ordination is developed further using apparatus. Pupils in Y5 and Y6 of the Special Needs Resource Base have, in the context of their abilities, very good skills in planning a sequence of movements and in balancing in different positions. They also turn well. Other Y6 pupils use apparatus confidently and generally work well in small groups. They can sequence twisting and turning movements and refine these with practice. They are able to assess the work of others and support pupils who try hard to improve.
- In dance, KS2 pupils listen attentively to instructions and collaborate well. They are able to plan movements and move effectively to music. Imaginative dance routines are produced.
- In team activities, pupils in KS2 develop good skills in sending, receiving, avoiding and striking. In Y5 pupils' ball control skills in hockey are satisfactory or better. They have good dribbling skills and can pass the ball whilst moving. When working in teams of seven, they are able to extend their game. More able Y6 pupils show skills in passing, attack and defence. They enjoy invasion games and have excellent recall of points recently covered, including tactics and techniques.
- Extra-curricular sporting activities are well supported by pupils of all abilities and contribute effectively to improving standards. Pupils are enthusiastic and work well together and with staff. Pupils attend swimming lessons and learn the need for water safety.
- Opportunities are provided for outdoor and adventurous activities. There is a very good pupil handbook to support the pupils' visit to a residential centre. The school raises funds to support this.

Shortcomings

- Whilst pupils use technical terms well, their ability to appraise their own and others efforts in order to improve the quality of their work is not sufficiently developed in KS1 and in some instances in KS2.

Religious education

No lessons were observed in KS1 during the inspection: judgements were based on talking with pupils, displays of work and scrutiny of books. On this basis standards were judged to be good overall in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages pupils readily share their thoughts and feelings linked to their own experiences and are sensitive to the ways others feel. Younger pupils talk with understanding of the importance of being kind and helpful to others and appreciate the importance of friendship.
- Pupils in KS1 know of animals that help people in their daily lives and are aware of the importance of kindness and caring when looking after their own pets.
- When partaking of a Harvest Breakfast, pupils in Y3/4 use the appropriate conventions and show a good understanding of its significance.
- In Y5, pupils show a clear understanding of the significance of baptism as part of Christian life. Following related role-play they use appropriate vocabulary to describe the use of symbolism. Some pupils pose questions of their own.
- Pupils in Y6 can explain the vision of Bernadette when writing about an imaginary visit to Lourdes.
- In both key stages, pupils have a good understanding of the purposes of places of worship. They are able to describe the interior of a church and correctly identify the main features using appropriate vocabulary. Visits by local clergy are used effectively to bring first hand experiences to pupils.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' understanding of the underlying religious significance of experiences need to be further developed in some classes.
- Pupils' understanding of how and why believers of other faiths worship needs to be further developed through visits and additional use of artefacts.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the last inspection

The last inspection report of November 1996 identified a number of key issues for action. These were:

1. improve the quality of curriculum planning through a number of measures;

2. implement consistently the school's policy on assessment, recording and reporting;
3. improve the staff development provision to ensure that all curriculum leaders have the support required to carry out their roles effectively, to ensure that good practice in teaching and learning is consistently shared among all staff, and to focus the roles of senior management on the curriculum, teaching and learning and the standards of pupils' work.

There is clear evidence of improvement of all the above, through the implementation of a clear action plan.

The school has a curriculum plan which shows how all the key elements of knowledge, skills and understanding is covered by a rolling programme of school topics and discrete subjects, and each subject has an appropriate scheme of work. There is full coverage of the programmes of study in history, geography and physical education. Teachers plan carefully in both the long and the short term. Work for pupils in the early years is well differentiated and provides a varied and stimulating curriculum.

The school's policy on assessment, recording and reporting is being implemented consistently, although the school needs to disseminate the good practice found in some classes in formative assessment and marking to all classes.

Subject leaders have planned non-contact time to improve their subject areas through examination of books, and observing learning and teaching which helps to disseminate good practice. The senior management team works effectively to improve the curriculum, learning, teaching and standards achieved in pupils' work.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The school needs to:

- improve the presentation of written work at the end of KS2;
- ensure that the good practice in marking pupils' work and recording formative assessment evident in some classes is disseminated throughout the school;
- moderate and annotate subject portfolios to provide clear guidelines for achievement;
- ensure that there is consistency in planning key skills in all subjects.

The inspection team thanks the pupils, parents, staff and governors of Pontnewydd Primary School for the courtesy with which it was treated during the inspection.

APPENDIX

A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Pontnewydd Primary School
School type	LEA maintained
Age -range of pupils	4 – 11 years
Address of school	Bryn Celyn Road Pontnewydd Cwmbran
Post-Code	NP44 1JW
Telephone Number	01633 483307

Headteacher	Mrs P Wadsworth
Date of appointment	January 1996
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mr K Jones
Registered Inspector	Mrs H R D Palmer
Dates of inspection	30.9.02 – 3.10.02

B. School data as indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils		36	27	37	59	61	80	70	370

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	18	0	18

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24 : 1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	5 :1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1 :1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Term 1	94.6	92.8	93.8	93.8
Term 2	96.0	90.3	92.3	92.9
Term 3	91.9	89.7	89.8	90.5

Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	2
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C. Results of national curriculum assessments and public examinations

Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	23	57	17	0
		National	0	4	13	63	20	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	3	34	37	26	0
		National	0	4	14	54	28	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	17	11	66	6	0
		National	0	5	13	71	10	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	17	69	14	0
		National	0	2	11	64	22	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	6	69	26	0
		National	0	2	9	61	26	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	26	54	20	0
		National	0	2	10	68	20	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
In the school:		In Wales	80

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2002							Number of pupils in Y6:78					
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	1	0	1	4	15	48	31	0
		National	0	0	1	0	1	6	19	48	25	0
	Test/Task	School	0	2	2	0	0	3	11	48	37	0
		National	0	1	0	0	0	4	14	47	31	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	1	0	1	4	18	48	28	0
		National	0	0	1	0	1	4	19	47	28	0
	Test/Task	School	0	2	1	0	0	4	17	44	32	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	4	18	42	32	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	1	0	0	2	14	53	30	0
		National	0	0	1	0	0	3	15	52	29	0
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0	0	2	12	52	31	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	2	13	51	31	0

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:	52.5*	In the school:	53.8*
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

* this percentage includes pupils in the SNRB

- 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
- F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

D. The evidence base of the inspection

Before the inspection, meetings were held with the staff, the governing body and the parents of pupils registered at the school. Fifteen parents were present at the pre-inspection parents' meeting. Documents supplied by the school were scrutinised and 47 questionnaires returned by parents were analysed. A team of five gave eighteen inspector days to the inspection, in the course of which formal observations were made of 107 lessons or part lessons. In addition, formal notes were made of aspects of pupils' work and provision. Discussions with pupils from all age groups and abilities were undertaken, both inside and outside the classroom. A representative sample of pupils' work from all classes and for the whole academic year was scrutinised. Teachers' plans and records were examined. Inspectors considered the site, fabric and resources of the school. Discussions were held with the Head and with teachers, particularly about their subject management roles. Still within the context of the inspection, reporting back meetings took place with the Head, the staff and the governing body.

E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

	Registered Inspector	Team Inspector	Team Inspector	Team Inspector	Lay Inspector
NAME:	H Palmer	D Howells	G Rees	J Sparks	C Hewitt
<i>Responsibility</i>					
1 (CON)	*				
2 (MF)	*				
3.1 (SA)	*				
3.2 (KS)		*			
4.1 (SMSC)			*		
4.2 (BEH)					*
4.3 (ATT)					*
5.1 (QT)	*				
5.2 (ARR)		*			
5.3 (CURR)			*		
5.4 (SUP)				*	
5.5 (SEN)				*	
5.6 LNK)					*
5.7 (IND)					*
6.1 (SE)	*				
6.2 (L&Ef)	*				
6.3 (Res)	*				
8.1 (PROG)	*				
8.2 (KIs)	*				
EY	*				
EN				*	
MA		*			
SC	*				
WE 2			*		
TEC		*			
IT		*			
HI				*	
GG			*		
MU			*		
AR	*				
PE				*	
RE			*		

1 (CON)	CONTEXT - The school and its priorities
2 (MF)	MAIN FINDINGS - The main findings of the report
3.1 (SA)	STANDARDS - Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning
3.2 (KS)	STANDARDS - Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum
4.1 (SMSC)	ETHOS - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development
4.2 (BEH)	ETHOS - Behaviour and attitudes
4.3 (ATT)	ETHOS - Attendance
5.1 (QT)	QUALITY OF EDUCATION - Teaching
5.2 (ARR)	QUALITY OF EDUCATION - Assessment, recording and reporting
5.3 (CURR)	QUALITY OF EDUCATION - Curriculum
5.4 (SUP)	QUALITY OF EDUCATION - Support, guidance & pupils' welfare
5.5 (SEN)	QUALITY OF EDUCATION - Provision for pupils with special educational needs
5.6 (LNK)	QUALITY OF EDUCATION - Partnership with parents and community, schools & other institutions
5.7 (IND)	QUALITY OF EDUCATION - Partnership with industry
6.1 (SE)	MANAGEMENT – Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement
6.2 (L & Ef)	MANAGEMENT – Leadership and efficiency
6.3 (Res)	MANAGEMENT – Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
8.1 (PROG)	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT – Progress since last inspection
8.2 (KIs)	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT – Key issues for action
7	SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING:
EY	The educational programme for under-fives
EN	LANGUAGE – English
MA	Mathematics
SC	Science
WE 2 nd	LANGUAGE - Welsh second language
TEC	Design and Technology
IT	Information Technology
HI	History
GG	Geography
MU	Music
AR	Art
PE	Physical Education
RE	Religious Education