

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

**PONTNEWYNYDD PRIMARY SCHOOL
Lower Leigh Road
Potnewynydd
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 8LQ**

School Number: 678 2119

Date of Inspection: 21-24 February 2005

**by
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W157/78272**

Date: 27 April 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/165/04P

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Pontnewynydd 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 inspection of Pontnewynydd Primary School took place between 21-24 February 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mrs C Llewellyn 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 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.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Pontnewynydd Primary School is a local authority community school, which serves a small area on the outskirts of Pontypool, in the county borough of Torfaen. It occupies an imposing building that was built at the beginning of the last century.
2. The catchment is in an area of social and economic deprivation and includes a designated Welsh Assembly Government Communities First region. Fifty-one per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a much higher figure than the county and national averages of around twenty per cent. Nearly all pupils come from English speaking homes and Welsh is taught as a second language. Two per cent of pupils come from ethnic backgrounds, but do not require support in learning English as an additional language.
3. There is a Special Needs Resource Base [SNRB] at the school, catering for a maximum of eight key stage 1 pupils, from the northern part of the county, who have a wide variety of special needs. All pupils in the SNRB are referred through the Educational Psychology Service. Where appropriate, the pupils in the base join their mainstream peers.
4. Children are admitted to the school in the September following their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were 180 pupils on roll, aged four to eleven, including eight in the SNRB. A general demographic trend has caused numbers to decline by ten per cent in the last three years.
5. Pupils' level of ability upon entry to school shows their scores to be the lowest in Torfaen and considerably below the average for Wales. There are 58 pupils on the register of special educational needs [SEN], with two having a statement of their needs. The statement of one pupil includes modification of the National Curriculum [NC]. No pupils are disapplied from the NC subjects.
6. The school was last inspected in November 1999.

The school's priorities and targets

7. The school's motto is 'Only the Best is Good Enough' and it aims to provide a caring, stimulating environment in which pupils of all abilities can achieve their full potential and develop their particular talents.
8. The school's major priorities and targets for 2004-05 include:
 - o the development of ICT key skills throughout the school and across the curriculum;
 - o the development of communication key skills
 - o the development of mathematics key skills;
 - o a review of Performance Management.

Summary

9. Pontnewynydd Primary School is a good school with outstanding features in caring for, guiding and supporting its pupils. Since the last inspection it has improved its quality of education and raised standards of achievement considerably. Pupils achieve good standards academically and in their personal development.
10. The head teacher provides very good leadership and he is well supported in this by the staff and school governors.
11. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in addressing the key issues for action highlighted in that report. The current inspection focused in particular on the standards of achievement of children under-five in the six areas of learning and in the subjects of English, science, Welsh second language, design and technology and physical education.
12. The inspection team agree with the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report on five of the seven key questions for this inspection. The inspection team judged the school to have underestimated its standards in key questions four and six.

Table of grades awarded:

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

Standards

Under-fives: Standards of achievement in the Areas of Learning are:

Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2

Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Physical Education	Grade 2	Grade 2

13. During the inspection standards of achievement in lessons observed, relative to pupils' ability, were:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	81%	6%	3%	0

14. Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons are well above the targets set by the National Assembly for Wales, which are for 95% of pupils to attain grade 3 or above, and of these 50% to achieve grade 2.
15. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and they make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
16. Including pupils from the SNRB, the National Curriculum 2004 teacher assessments of pupils in year 2 for English, mathematics and science showed the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected Level 2 was considerably below local and national averages. However, when compared with the 2003 figure for schools in Wales that have more than thirty-three per cent free school meals, the school is performing well. Excluding pupils from the SNRB, the results placed the school in the upper twenty-five per cent for the three subjects. Since 2001, the key stage 1 assessment results show a good rate of improvement, having increased by approximately twenty per cent in each of the three core subjects.
17. In the key stage 2 National Curriculum Tests of 2004, results show pupils to be achieving well when compared with similar schools. Pupils' achievements in attaining the expected level 4 or higher placed the school in the lower twenty-five per cent when compared with the national average, but in the upper quarter for the three subjects when compared with all primary schools in the same free school meal range. Girls outperformed boys by eight per cent. The standardised test results have showed a very good improvement since 2001, having increased by approximately twenty per cent in the three subjects.
18. Pupils with SEN, within the SNRB and in mainstream school, make good progress in learning in line with the targets in their individual education plans and achieve good standards.
19. Children in the reception class make very good progress in their personal and social development. They are very well behaved, courteous and very

enthusiastic learners. They make good progress in developing their key skills. They listen extremely well and make good progress in developing their vocabulary and speaking skills. Children enjoy looking at books and having stories read to them. They identify letter sounds extremely well, recognise simple, familiar words and are beginning to write with generally correctly formed letters. Most pupils recognise numbers to ten or beyond and many count reliably. Children have good keyboard skills and control a mouse well. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

20. Pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make good progress in the development of their key skills across the curriculum. Almost all pupils listen very well and pay attention to what they are told. However, a very small number of pupils in key stage 1 sometimes find difficulty in being attentive to what is being said. Pupils' speaking skills in both English and Welsh are good and are developed effectively. Pupils' reading and writing skills are good overall across the curriculum, although the written work of a minority of pupils in key stage 1 shows careless presentation.
21. Pupils' make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills across the curriculum. They use their information and communication technology skills [ICT] effectively to access information, to support learning in a variety of subjects and to present information in written form or in graphs and tables.
22. Pupils' bilingual competence is good. Pupils' good knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language is apparent in Welsh lessons and is also effectively developed at other times.
23. Pupils make very good progress in developing their ability to work with others. They show respect and tolerance towards others and are keen to take on responsibilities within the classroom and the school.
24. Pupils generally show enthusiasm and good attitudes towards all aspects of their learning. They talk readily about their work, but are not skilled in assessing and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, they have a limited understanding of their own progress and performance or how to evaluate and improve.

The quality of education and training

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	67%	11%	0%	0%

25. The percentage of teaching that is good or better is high at 86 per cent. This is well above the national average and a substantial improvement since the last inspection when 65 per cent of teaching was good or very good.
26. Good features of teaching include the sharing of the lessons' aims with pupils, challenging but achievable activities that are well matched to the needs of all levels of abilities, skilled, focused questioning and imaginative and creative

- use of a wide range of resources to sustain interest. In a very few lessons, over-direction by the teacher impacts upon the pace of the lesson, and the same tasks are undertaken by all pupils. On these occasions, pupils are insufficiently challenged and opportunities are missed for them to become more independent in their learning and to develop their decision-making skills.
27. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
 28. Within individual lessons, pupils use key skills to good effect, but whole school planning to ensure the systematic development of key skills is at an early stage.
 29. The quality of assessment is good overall. It is generally used effectively to inform planning and target setting for the core subjects. However, assessments are not consistently used to ensure that work provided is suitable for pupils of all levels of attainment. Assessment procedures, provision and support for pupils identified as having SEN are good and they make good progress towards their learning targets.
 30. The school is particularly effective in ensuring equality of access and opportunity for its pupils. The curriculum is of a good quality. It is well balanced and relevant. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects. Educational visits and visitors to the school effectively enhance pupils' learning. A good number of pupils attend extra-curricular clubs and activities, such as rugby, athletics, computer club and Gwyl Plant.
 31. There is good provision for the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and pupils achieve good standards. Lessons and assemblies make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and pupil response is good. Provision for the development of pupils' understanding of multi-cultural life is not as well developed.
 32. Partnerships between parents, the community and other schools in the area are effective. The school has a good relationship with parents, although its distance from a large part of the catchment area means that parental support within school is limited. The school is supported strongly by the community.
 33. The school is very effective in its day-to-day promotion of good race relations and equality, but pupils' understanding of diversity and the value of contributions made by others from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures is insufficiently developed. This has been identified by the school as an area for development.

Leadership and management

34. The quality of leadership and strategic management of the school are good. The headteacher is committed to maximising the potential of all pupils and to

ensuring their well-being. He demonstrates positive, caring and supportive management, which gives a very clear sense of direction to the school's work. The school is well supported by the experienced and caring governing body, which fulfils its regulatory and statutory obligations. Governors are involved with setting the school's strategic direction and have identified the need to become more involved in the monitoring of pupils' standards.

35. Staff with leadership roles has made a good start to the formal monitoring of their subjects across the school. Standards are monitored well in the core subjects but leaders do not look critically enough at pupils' achievements in the foundation subjects. They are suitably involved in the process of gathering evidence by talking with pupils, looking at their work and observing lessons, in order to write informed developmental subject action plans.
36. The school is good at evaluating its work. All staff were involved in the self-evaluation document which identifies strengths and areas it wishes to improve.
37. Pupils are supported by a well qualified, experienced and stable staff. The accommodation is generous for the number of pupils on roll. Although the school does not have an outdoor grassed area, co-operation with nearby schools enables some access to sports fields.
38. Overall there are sufficient good quality resources which are used effectively to support teaching and learning. Time, accommodation, and staff are all deployed well ensuring efficient use of all resources.
39. Spending decisions are appropriately matched to the school's priorities. Although current budget reserves are higher than recommended, these are suitably designated to protect against the impact of falling rolls.
40. Since the last inspection, all staff have worked together and achieved considerable success in the improvement of provision and achievement. The school gives good value for money.

Recommendations

The school should maintain the good and very good features and: -

R1 Improve standards of achievement by addressing the shortcomings in the subjects and whole school planning of key skills.

R2 Develop the role of co-ordinators further to ensure they are fully involved in the monitoring of standards of achievement **

R3 Involve pupils more in the evaluation of their work and in the setting of their own targets. **

R4 Provide additional opportunities for pupils to become more independent in their learning and to develop their decision-making skills.

R5 Ensure the systematic development of pupils' multi-cultural awareness. **

** identified by the school as areas for development

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

41. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
42. The overall standards achieved by pupils, according to their ability, during the lessons or sessions observed were:

Pupils' standards of Achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Percentage at each grade	10%	81%	6%	3%	0%

43. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children in the reception class make very good progress in their development of key, personal, social and learning skills. Standards of achievement in the areas of learning are:

Area of Learning	Standard
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Grade 2
Creative Development	Grade 2
Physical Development	Grade 2

44. Children in the reception class make very good progress in their personal and social development. They are very well behaved, courteous and very enthusiastic learners. They make good progress in developing their key skills. They listen extremely well and make good progress in developing their vocabulary and speaking skills. Children enjoy looking at books and having stories read to them. They identify letter sounds extremely well, recognise simple, familiar words and are beginning to write with generally correctly formed letters. Most pupils recognise numbers to ten or beyond and many

count reliably. Children have good keyboard skills and control a mouse well. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

45. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, in the subjects inspected, the standards of achievement are:

Subjects	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh Second Language	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and Technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical Education	Grade 2	Grade 2

46. Including pupils from the SNRB, the National Curriculum 2004 teacher assessments of pupils in year 2 for English, mathematics and science showed the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected Level 2 was considerably below local and national averages. However, when compared with the 2003 figure for schools in Wales that have more than thirty-three per cent free school meals, the school is performing well. Excluding pupils from the SNRB, the results placed the school in the upper twenty-five per cent for the three subjects. Since 2001, the key stage 1 assessment results show a good rate of improvement, having increased by approximately twenty per cent in each of the three core subjects.
47. In the key stage 2 National Curriculum Tests of 2004, results show pupils to be achieving well when compared with similar schools. Pupils achievements in attaining the expected level 4 or higher placed the school in the lower twenty-five per cent when compared with the national average, but in the upper quarter for the three subjects when compared with all primary schools in the same free school meal range. Girls outperformed boys by eight per cent. The standardised test results have showed a very good improvement since 2001, having increased by approximately twenty per cent in the three subjects.
48. At the end of both key stages, pupils' achievements exceeded the challenging targets set in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
49. Pupils with SEN, within the SNRB and in mainstream school, make good progress in learning in line with the targets in their individual education plans and achieve good standards.
50. The school makes every effort to ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity to succeed, regardless of social background, gender or race. Gender analysis of the key stage 2 results for 2004 showed boys to be achieving at a lower level than girls, especially in mathematics and science. The school attributed this difference to the difficulty of some pupils to comprehend the written questions and have taken steps to address this issue. There was no similar difference in gender achievement at key stage 1.

51. Throughout the school, pupils' progress and standards in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and using ICT are good overall. The listening skills of almost all pupils are very good, with the exception of a few pupils in key stage 1 who have occasional difficulty in listening carefully. Pupils' speaking skills are good and are developed effectively. Pupils' reading and writing skills are good overall across the curriculum, although the written work of a minority of pupils in key stage 1 shows careless presentation.
52. Pupils' make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills across the curriculum. They use their ICT skills effectively to access information, to support learning in a variety of subjects and to present information in written form or in graphs and tables.
53. Pupils' bilingual competence is good. Pupils' good knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language is apparent in Welsh lessons and is also effectively developed at other times.
54. Pupils demonstrate good progress within lessons, showing a sound ability and keenness to acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills. Throughout the school, pupils have positive attitudes to their work. They enjoy school and are enthusiastic about becoming involved in various activities in lessons and during afternoon clubs.
55. Pupils' level of attendance is satisfactory. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to monitor attendance and the school acknowledges pupils whose attendance improves. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time.
56. Pupils talk readily about their work, but are not skilled in assessing and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, they have a limited understanding of their own progress and performance or how to evaluate and improve. The school lacks a formal system to encourage pupils to assess their own work, but has recognised the need for pupils to develop the ability to take more responsibility for their learning and be more involved in setting their own targets for improvement.
57. Overall, pupils achieve good with outstanding features in their personal, moral, social and wider skills. The behaviour of almost all pupils is very good within the school. They understand what is expected of them, are most respectful, courteous and show care and concern for each other and for adults. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. During lessons almost all listen to others and appreciate the rights of others to have opposing opinions.
58. The school's assertive discipline policy has been very effective in improving behaviour and the quality of life in the school. Consequently, pupils' standards of achievement have improved year on year. Adults endorse the belief that good behaviour provides a sound foundation for learning and work hard to promote it. At key stage 1, however, there are a few pupils who occasionally

demonstrate difficult behaviour patterns and find difficulty in listening carefully and, as a consequence, disrupt the learning of their peers.

59. Pupils in the SNRB are well behaved and work hard to achieve during their lessons. They are successfully integrated into the life of the school and treated equally.
60. Pupils' involvement in the local community and visits to places of interest successfully helps them to develop their knowledge of the diversity of the wider world. They value opportunities to demonstrate their considerable talent in singing and dancing at public events such as the local Eisteddfod and Welsh Dancing event Gwyl Plant. Various visits and visitors are arranged to enhance the curriculum and add realism. Some pupils have gained valuable new experiences of the outside world during their stay at Talybont Outdoor Pursuits Centre, near Brecon. Such visits contribute greatly to the development of pupils' social skills.
61. Pupils are keen to come to school and have the capacity to use their problem solving skills and to work without being entirely dependent upon the teachers. They are appreciative of the teachers' capacity to make learning fun and interesting, and respond positively to these qualities. They show interest in their work and their ability to sustain concentration develops appropriately though the school. Within some lessons, however, pupils could be given more opportunities to work independently.
62. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and pupils respond positively. They are eager to take on responsibilities and carry them out willingly and efficiently. They get on well together and support each other in lessons, working collaboratively when required. The school council provides a good opportunity for pupils to voice their opinions.
63. Pupils across the school have a clear understanding of the importance of equal opportunities. They recognize that people have different beliefs and customs and they learn to respect diversity appropriately. By the end of key stage 2, pupils have a good awareness of their own role in the life of the school and in the community and are well placed to move on to the next stage of their education.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

64. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	67%	11%	3%	0%

65. The number of lessons where teaching is good or better is high at eighty-six per cent. This is well above the national average and a substantial improvement since the last inspection when sixty-five per cent of teaching was good or very good.
66. The school has well-qualified and experienced staff who demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Support staff are well informed and play a valuable role in sensitively supporting the teaching and learning for pupils with additional learning needs. Relationships are good and make a substantial contribution to the quality of life throughout the school.
67. The teaching in the reception class is consistently good and frequently has outstanding features. Lessons are based upon a sound understanding of the needs of young children, with a good range of activities that engage children's interest, sustain their interest and consolidate their learning. Overall, in key stage 1 and in the SNRB, good features of teaching outweigh some shortcomings and in key stage 2 teaching is consistently good with some outstanding practice.
68. Schemes of work and policies successfully inform medium and short-term planning and meet the requirements of the NC. Teachers are effective in meeting the requirements of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig.
69. In lessons judged to be good or good with outstanding features, the teaching includes:
 - clear learning aims in detailed and purposeful planning, which were shared with the pupils at the start of the lessons;
 - activities matched to the needs of all levels of abilities that are challenging but achievable;
 - skilled, focused questioning when revising previous work or when evaluating to reinforce learning;
 - imaginative and creative use of a wide range of teaching styles and resources, including an interactive whiteboard to stimulate interest and secure the active engagement of learners;
 - feedback within the lesson with explanations to show pupils how they can improve.
70. In the few lessons where less effective teaching occurs, the shortcomings were:
 - tasks are insufficiently challenging to engage and extend more able pupils;
 - the pace of the lesson is too slow due to over-direction by the teacher or initial presentations being too long;
 - over-use of worksheets does not allow for pupils to apply their knowledge in new situations or develop their ability to work independently, without close supervision by adults.
71. Throughout the school, and in all aspects of its life, teachers are usually very successful in the promotion of equality of opportunity and effectively address the issues of gender, race and disability.

72. In the reception class, the teaching is very well matched to pupils' needs for the development and reinforcement of their language and communication skills in English and in Welsh. Across the school, teachers use the Welsh language appropriately to instruct in a range of subjects. They provide good role models for pupils, using Welsh incidentally throughout the day raising pupils' levels of understanding and confidence in using bilingual skills.
73. Teachers make good use of the inter-active whiteboard, a valuable resource that makes a significant impact on teaching and learning. It adds variety to the lesson, which helps to sustain interest and provides opportunities for teachers to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding.
74. The quality of assessment is good overall. It is generally used effectively to inform planning and target setting, but on occasions it is less well used and work is not matched to the needs of all pupils. Records are used to track the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school and these are efficiently maintained. The results of assessments in the core subjects are monitored carefully and teachers meet to agree levels of work. Subject coordinators work well with class teachers and are using information from assessments appropriately to plan further developments in their subjects.
75. Procedures for assessment meet all statutory requirements including those for pupils who are identified as having SEN. Good assessments of their needs are made by the school, followed by the production of appropriate Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
76. The marking of pupils' work is undertaken regularly and positive comments made. There are occasions however, when marking does not inform pupils sufficiently about what they must do to improve.
77. Reports to parents are detailed with appropriate emphasis on achievement and work covered. Reports set future targets in the core subjects that are shared with parents to support pupils' progress.

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

78. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
79. Overall, the quality and range of learning experiences made available to pupils are appropriate to their needs and equally accessible to all. The school provides a good curriculum that is stimulating and enriched by many practical and meaningful experiences. The curriculum for children under-five is of a very high standard. It provides well-planned experiences and activities that lead naturally into the NC subjects.

80. At key stages 1 and 2, the school's provision meets the statutory requirements of the NC and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Provision for pupils' personal and social education is very effective. Planning to ensure pupils' learning builds upon previous experiences and progresses smoothly as they move through the school is good.
81. The arrangements for learning support for pupils in mainstream classes and in SNRB are a strong feature of the school's provision. Pupils in the SNRB have access to a curriculum that is relevant to their needs. The school has regular contact with professional agencies such as the Education Psychology Service, speech and language therapists, social and welfare services and the LEA.
82. The provision for pupils' bilingual development and their appreciation of the Welsh culture and heritage are appropriately planned through a range of subjects. Contributions towards the annual St David's Day celebration and participation in local musical and dance events that have a strong Welsh identity also make a good contribution towards pupils' understanding of the culture of Wales. Visits to places of educational interest further promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of their country's history.
83. Within individual lessons, pupils use key skills to good effect, but whole school planning to ensure the systematic development of key skills is at an early stage. Pupils with SEN are well supported both inside the classroom and in withdrawal sessions and make good progress in using key skills commensurate with their stage of development.
84. Personal and social education is promoted effectively across the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding about right and wrong, and the school operates as a well-ordered community, where pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils have good opportunities to develop social skills and an understanding of the need for rules and fair play through inter-school sport, musical activities, visits outside school and the school's good range of extra-curricular clubs. The involvement by year 4 pupils in the Forest School Initiative, where a local wood is visited under the guidance of a forest ranger, is particularly effective for the development of their social, creative and problem-solving skills. All pupils have the opportunity to take on additional duties and respond positively to the responsibilities.
85. Provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Collective worship is Christian by nature, and pupils have appropriate opportunities to gain an insight into other beliefs and traditions through assemblies and curriculum subjects. Opportunities to reflect and contemplate quietly to develop spirituality were less evident during the inspection. Weekly celebratory assemblies praise pupils for academic and social achievements and contribute well to their sense of self-worth. Pupils are made aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves and contribute generously to several charitable initiatives.

86. To support awareness of other cultures, the school has used World Book Day, Commonwealth Day and special events like the Olympic/Commonwealth Games and the Rugby/Soccer World Cup competitions effectively. The school has correctly identified this area of the curriculum as requiring further attention to ensure the systematic development of pupils' cultural awareness.
87. Lessons are enriched by the school's partnerships with others. The Home-School Links are strong, and reflect a good working relationship. Parents are very supportive of the school's work and value its positive ethos. Some parents assist in classrooms and the library, help with sporting activities and on school visits. Activities such as sports days, concerts and festivals attract much support from parents and the community.
88. The effective support given by the Athrawes Bro strongly promotes the development of pupils' language skills in Welsh and has a very positive impact on standards by the end of key stage 2.
89. The school has a small but active Parent-Teacher Association. Families and the community support fundraising and social activities very well. Money raised augments school funds and is used appropriately to support pupils' learning, including subsidising school visits.
90. Parents are well-informed of their children's progress through formal parents' evenings, annual reports and informal contact with staff. Letters to parents and the twice-termly newsletters are effective in informing parents of general events and happenings within school. Once a year, the school seeks and takes account of the views of parents by asking them to complete a questionnaire. The joint school/governors report for parents is imaginatively put together and provides an outstanding, user-friendly document with useful information about the activities of the previous year. Parents' response to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicates their satisfaction with the information provided by the school.
91. Partnerships with the local community are good. There are particularly good links with Garndiffaith Rugby Football Club, Dragon Sports and the local schools. The school choir has performed at the local Eisteddfod and its Welsh dancers performed well at the annual Gwyl Plant held in Cwmbran Square. Children perform concerts in school to which parents and friends are invited. The school has established good links with local places of worship.
92. The school welcomes visitors from the community such as the nurse, road safety, and community police. They talk about their work and help pupils to understand their role in the community. During the inspection the school welcomed the Chair of Governors in her role as Mayor of Torfaen. She talked about her many mayoral duties and responsibilities and helped pupils to understand her work by comparing it with that of the School Council.
93. The school's partnership with industry is good and makes a successful contribution towards the broadening of pupils' curriculum experiences and the enhancement of their personal development. The school benefits materially

from these links. Local businesses provide funding for sports kit and equipment and have subsidised the cost of bus hire. Through its links with Gyrfa Cymru/Career Wales, staff are given the opportunity to broaden their experience by temporary secondment to commercial establishments or businesses enterprise, but few have availed themselves of this facility.

94. The school enjoys good relationships with local primary schools whose head teachers and curriculum leaders meet regularly. The school also works closely with nearby comprehensive schools and is successful in preparing its pupils for their secondary education. Arrangements for transferring year 6 pupils to the secondary schools are good and ensure a smooth transition. Induction days provide learners with good opportunities to taste life in the high school of their choice.
95. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of sustainable development is developed successfully through working on a range of environmental issues, and the school is working towards gaining the Eco Green Flag to complement its Eco Schools silver award. The school's Eco Council has introduced a number of projects to promote environmental awareness, including recycling of paper and composting food waste. Pupils have designed and made nesting boxes and placed them around the school to attract birds.
96. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Pupils in year 6 run a healthy eating tuck shop each day. Appropriate plans have been made for a summer entrepreneurial event when all classes will be challenged to raise more than the sum of money allotted to them.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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97. The findings of the inspection team did not match the judgement of grade 2 made by the school in the self-evaluation document. The school underestimated its level of care, guidance and support.
98. Pupils are very well cared for in a consistent and caring environment., where their welfare, support and guidance is given a high priority. Pupils confirm that they feel safe and well supported by the adults who work at the school and happily turn to the teachers if there is a problem or concern.
99. There are clear policies and procedures to ensure everyone's health, safety and welfare. The governing body plays an appropriate role in overseeing the school's health and safety arrangements.
100. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well and there are very good procedures in place to ensure pupils are provided with the support and guidance they need. The school is quick to seek additional help and guidance

from external agencies, including social services, and ensures that parents and carers are fully involved in discussions.

101. The school makes every effort to work closely with the parents. Regular and good quality information is provided for them. Parents support the school in many ways most notably through the PTA who raise money from which the school benefits. Parents are encouraged to support the work of the children at home and this has a positive impact on achievement.
102. Induction arrangements to settle the children when they start at the school are well organised and flexible to suit the needs of the individuals.
103. Effective child protection arrangements are fully documented and follow local procedures. The headteacher has designated responsibility for child protection and staff are suitably trained. The school takes effective action to support children looked after by the authority.
104. Internal Health and Safety issues are properly addressed. A risk assessment and Health and Safety audit is carried out each year.
105. The personal and social education programme is developing well throughout the school. The school has clear guidance and provides high quality personal support. The school takes pride in its achievements and encourages pupils to do the same.
106. There are suitable practices for the monitoring of punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance and registers are completed in accordance with statutory requirements.
107. The system of early identification and assessment of pupils with SEN is an outstanding feature of the school. The results of the assessments are used well to develop effective individual education plans (IEPs) that are instrumental in raising pupils' standards of achievement, including those in the SNRB. These are monitored regularly and new targets are set accordingly. Additional staff liaise with teachers to give good support to pupils with SEN, and respond effectively to pupils' needs. Statements of SEN are up to date and identified actions fully implemented; statutory requirements are met.
108. Effective measures are taken by the school to deal with pupils who display very challenging behaviour. All staff are trained in Assertive Discipline techniques and pupils and parents are aware of strategies used. Links with outside agencies are good and effective in the behaviour management of individual pupils. The systems in place since the introduction of assertive discipline have led to marked improvements in behaviour and standards of achievement. No pupils have been excluded over the last year. However, occasional inappropriate behaviour of a few pupils at key stage 1 is a cause for concern.
109. In discussion, pupils indicate that bullying is extremely rare and that teachers and the headteacher will deal promptly with any concerns brought to their

attention. The school's very effective arrangements to deal with any oppressive behaviour, bullying and harassment are outstanding features of its work.

110. The catchment is in an area of social and economic deprivation, and the school works hard to ensure this is taken into account when planning and delivering pupil support and guidance. The qualities of fairness and equality of opportunity for all, regardless of pupils' backgrounds, underpin all aspects of the school's work and are an outstanding feature of the school's provision. Gender equality is promoted well through the life of the school and, in particular, through sports and the extra-curricular activities available to pupils.
111. There are no pupils with physical disabilities currently attending the school, but the school has given due consideration to the steps it could take to provide physical access for disabled pupils in the three-storey building.
112. The school is very effective in its day-to-day promotion of good race relations and equality, but pupils' understanding of diversity and the value of contributions made by others from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures is insufficiently developed. This has been identified by the school as an area for development.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

113. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
114. The school has clear aims and objectives that are focused upon the needs of the pupils and shared by the staff and the governors. They form a sound basis for the caring ethos that permeates the school. Suitable policies are in place and followed to ensure equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. This is a strength of the school. All policies are reviewed regularly according to the management plan.
115. The quality of leadership and management shown by the headteacher is very good. He is committed to maximising the potential of all pupils and to ensuring their well-being. He demonstrates positive, caring and supportive management, which gives a very clear sense of direction to the school's work. Since the last inspection, all staff have worked together and achieved considerable success in promoting the improvement of provision and achievement.
116. The school works with the LEA and makes good use of data to set realistic and challenging targets for the end of key stage achievement. In 2004, the challenging targets were exceeded in all three of the core subjects.

117. The school takes good account of national priorities being pro-active in local partnerships such as the school cluster group, Communities First, working with the comprehensive school to share good practice and LEA priorities such as attendance, behaviour and exclusion rates. There is a strong commitment to raising pupils' awareness in and taking responsibility for matters related to sustainable development, through the work of the pupils' Eco Council.
118. There are appropriate arrangements for the monitoring of staff. Continuous Professional Staff Development, which has led to more effective teaching and the raising of standards since the last inspection, is linked to Performance Management and to the School Strategic Plan. It offers a suitable balance of support and challenge.
119. The governing body is very supportive and is committed to providing the best support possible to the school. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities and are effectively involved in helping to set the strategic direction of the school. The headteacher and staff provide regular information upon which the governors base their decisions. The development of their role to be more involved in the monitoring of the quality of provision has been identified as an area requiring further development. Governors meet legal requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

120. The findings of the inspection team did not match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation document. The school underestimated the quality of its self-evaluation procedures.
121. In order to judge its success, the school is developing a good range of strategies for self-evaluation. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to raising standards. The positive steps taken to address the shortcomings identified at the last inspection have resulted in significant improvement in standards of achievement, particularly in the core subjects.
122. All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process. The self-evaluation document is accurate and honest. The school has a good level of awareness of what it does well and the areas that require improvement. The inspection team agreed with the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report in five of the seven questions. In the two instances where it disagreed, the school underestimated the good work it is doing.
123. The three-year school strategic development plan has clear priorities for the school and shows where these are linked to the local authority's priorities. The current plan ends in April 2005 and due to the postponement of the authority's

new strategic education plan, the school has been suitably flexible in its arrangements and is producing an interim plan for 2005-6.

124. Good use is made of information obtained from the analysis of a range of pupils' assessment tests to set realistic and challenging targets for pupils and to improve teaching and learning. The school actively seeks the opinions of interested parties, including an annual parents' questionnaire and the views of the School Council.
125. Staff with leadership roles have made a good start to the formal monitoring of their subjects across the school, especially in the core subjects. Standards in these subjects have risen considerably since the last inspection. In the foundation subjects, however, monitoring of standards is at an early stage and leaders do not look critically enough at pupils' achievements. In conjunction with other staff members, co-ordinators review and revise policies and schemes of work and have started to talk to pupils about their work and to observe lessons. The information gained is being appropriately incorporated into subject development plans for presentation at the end of the academic year. The school has identified this as an area for further development.
126. The governing body and headteacher ensure adequate resources are available to ensure objectives are met. The governing body has a clear overview of financial resources and uses funds appropriately to improve the learning opportunities for pupils. The effectiveness of any initiatives is monitored and evaluated carefully to measure the impact they make. The school has made good progress in addressing all the key issues identified at the previous inspection and in the sustaining or raising of standards in the foundation subjects

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

127. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
128. The school is appropriately staffed and all teachers have job descriptions and co-ordinating roles that cover all NC subjects. Staff have undertaken relevant training that contributes to their subject knowledge, the training priorities set by the school and the quality of teaching overall.
129. Support staff make a substantial contribution to the work of the school and provide very good assistance for pupils of all abilities including those with SEN. The school secretary carries out the daily routines and a range of other responsibilities efficiently and effectively. The school also benefits from the services it receives from the school caretaker and ancillary staff.
130. The fabric of the school, despite its age is decorated by stimulating displays, which include pupils' work and record of achievement. The building is well

maintained and overall the quality of the accommodation is good. It is spacious and includes a relatively new IT suite, Eco room and toilet/washing facilities for the disabled. The school library has also been refurbished and a safe play area made available.

131. The school has infant and junior hard surface play areas but no grassed area. The limited facilities for games and outdoor activities is overcome by the use of the playing field of a neighbourhood primary school and rugby club.
132. The school building and rooms are accessible to all pupils presently on roll. Access for the disabled is very limited, however, the school clearly recognises that due regard would need to be paid to disability access if required.
133. Resources for learning are of good quality for all curricular areas and are used effectively. The school plans appropriately and acquires resources in line with its educational priorities and targets.
134. The head teacher and governing body manage the budget effectively. Debate and discussion about spending are linked well to the objectives and prioritise the effect it will have upon standard and quality of education. Provision of resources for pupils is reviewed regularly.
135. Overall, the school achieves good value for money and provision is increasingly helping pupils to reach their potential.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Subject 1: UNDER-FIVES

136. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Pupils' Learning. Pupils in the reception class make good or very good progress and achieve the following standards appropriate to their age and abilities:

Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2

Good and outstanding features

Language, literacy and communication skills

137. Children make very good progress in the development of language, literacy and communication skills. They are attentive listeners. They listen to adults and other children and reply or respond appropriately and with confidence,

sometimes using newly acquired vocabulary. Regular instructions in Welsh are understood and followed by children with responses being made by some children. This provides a very good start to the development of children's bilingual skills. All children show great interest in books. They enjoy the 'Story Sack' sessions and know that written words convey meaning. Very good progress is made in the recognition of phonic sounds; some children are starting to recognise phonic blends and try to build words using their knowledge. Children recognise their names and many are able to write them without assistance.

Personal and social development

138. Children make very good progress in the development of their personal and social skills. They are extremely well-behaved and eager learners. They show confidence in their daily tasks and in their relationships with adults, turning to them to seek assistance or with a query. They are keen to explore new learning and become engrossed in the teacher's input. When involved with various activities, children work attentively, staying on task for considerable lengths of time, and play together harmoniously. They understand class routines and select activities or resources with confidence.

Mathematical development

139. As a class, children count to twenty in ones without much assistance from the teacher. Higher achieving children count to twenty in twos and backwards from twenty with a little help. They recognise numbers to ten or beyond and match the number to the sound. Almost all children understand that putting two groups together will result in a larger number, and can add together small numbers of objects. When introduced to alternating patterns, children quickly recognise and reproduce them and relate them to what can be seen in the environment. They are familiar with the names of two and three-dimensional shapes, and can name the more familiar ones, such as cylinders, correctly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

140. Children understand that the young of animals grow to resemble the adults and that chicks come from eggs. They demonstrate good skills in using the computer mouse to draw and colour recognisable animals, to change colours and brush sizes confidently, and explain clearly how to use the colour fill command. They use a good range of relevant computer programs effectively to support their work in other areas of learning.

Physical development

141. During their physical development lesson, children behave well, listen carefully and follow instructions. They move around in a variety of ways, such as hopping, jumping and running, with a good developing understanding of space. They are aware of changes to the rate of their heartbeats and know that muscles need to be warmed up before exercise. Children manipulate a variety of small tools and objects with increasing control and are becoming progressively more accurate in the formation of their written letters and numbers.

Creative development

142. Children hold paintbrushes correctly and paint recognisable pictures with confidence. They clap rhythms according to the number of syllables in their names and describe how to play various untuned instruments, such as tambourine, maracas and drums. When singing, almost all children clap in time to the rhythms.

Shortcomings

143. There are no significant shortcomings

Subject 2: 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

144. Across the school pupils have good listening and speaking skills. They listen to their teachers and to one another respectfully, a feature which was evident in all lessons observed. Pupils respond orally with confidence in pairs, groups and as a class and share ideas with understanding and clarity. Pupils at key stage 2 present their ideas and views in a mature way using extended vocabulary in their responses. Speaking and listening skills are well developed through group and paired sessions in which pupils explain their ideas to the class in formal language.
145. Pupils' achievements in reading are good, because every opportunity is taken to develop pupils' skills and understanding. Pupils in key stage 1 have good knowledge of the sound that letters make and tackle new words and text confidently. The majority read clearly and with appropriate expression and have good understanding of the material they read.
146. At key stage 2, pupils read aloud with good expression. Pupils value books and respond well to the creative aspects of English especially to poetry and plays. They enjoy reading and talk with good knowledge and with enthusiasm about the books that they have read.
147. Pupils' achievements in writing are always at least satisfactory and often good. Pupils at key stage 1 make good progress in producing letters and words using space effectively. They use capital letters and full stops accurately and use their knowledge of phonics to help them spell words.
148. At key stage 2, pupils write for different purposes and for different audiences confidently. Their appreciation of how language can reflect mood and atmosphere develops well in literacy lessons. By the end of key stage 2, pupils develop their own personal writing style, they write longer and very well presented stories and are aware that written work must be purposeful, of good

quality, and a reflection of what they want to say. Pupils are able to use punctuation and grammar accurately and thoughtfully.

149. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and benefit from the good support they receive for their particular difficulties in literacy.

Shortcomings

150. A small number of pupils in key stage 1 do not always pay close enough attention to what others say.
151. At key stage 1 the extended writing of a few pupils is not fully developed because of the over-use of worksheets.

Subject 3: SCIENCE

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

152. Pupils at both key stages, including those with SEN, make good progress in their skills and understanding of the process of scientific investigation. At key stage 1, pupils start to understand the basic concept of fair test and in key stage 2 they plan investigations and make accurate reference to fair testing. At key stage 1, pupils undertake many practical activities and record their findings in a variety of suitable ways, including writing, drawing, using tables and the computer. At key stage 2, they build upon this and most record their investigative work neatly, including line graphs to show their measured results.
153. At key stage 1, younger pupils name and describe the physical features of familiar animals and show a good understanding of the needs and characteristics of pets. Older pupils transfer this knowledge to talk about the basic needs of humans. A few can discuss the level of importance the different requirements have. At key stage 2, pupils develop an awareness of the effects changes make to living things, and the purposes of major organs in the body. They use scientific names for the organs and their purpose, such as digestion and circulation, and correctly identify their positions in the body.
154. Pupils in both key stages make pertinent observations about the properties of common objects and materials. At key stage 1, pupils sort materials into sets according to their properties and undertake simple investigations to compare, for example, how efficient a range of materials are at absorbing and insulating liquids. They record their findings appropriately and higher achieving pupils reach simple conclusions about their observations. At key stage 2, younger pupils know about reversible and non-reversible changes in materials and develop their understanding of properties such as magnetism. At the end of the key stage, pupils explain the difference between soluble and insoluble solids and describe ways to separate them, such as filtering and evaporation.

155. In their work on physical forces, pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding. At key stage 1, pupils identify sources of light correctly, learn how to make a circuit and know that without a complete circuit a bulb won't work. Lower key stage 2 pupils consolidate this knowledge and predict correctly, with reasons, why diagrams of circuits would or would not work. By the end of the key stage, pupils make simple, series and parallel circuits, draw accurate diagrams and test familiar objects for their ability to insulate or conduct electricity.

Shortcomings

156. A small number of pupils in key stage 1 do not take sufficient care with the presentation of their work.

157. Pupils at the upper end of key stage 2 do not have a sound understanding of the concept of prediction.

Subject 4: Welsh second language

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

158. Pupils enjoy their successes leading to them making very good gains in listening to reading and speaking Welsh. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, greet each other, staff and visitors appropriately using the target language and express their feelings with confidence. At both key stages, pupils respond well to the good use made of registration periods and assembly to promote incidental use of the language.

159. Pupils benefit from the use of bilingual signs throughout the school. Pupils are keen to respond orally during lessons and instinctively use Welsh outside the classroom and this contributes significantly to their standards of achievement.

160. At key stage 1, pupils reinforce their vocabulary working in pairs at role-play. They show growing confidence in using the language to describe their toys. At key stage 2, younger pupils enjoy involving themselves in mini-dialogues making good progress in conversational Welsh. Their use of sentence pattern and vocabulary are enhanced by imaginative use of resources and ICT.

161. Older pupils at key stage 2 read with increasing confidence and fluency. They engage effectively in dialogue working in pairs, groups and as a class using the sentence pattern and vocabulary to which they are familiar in following the 'Rapagaliwns' programme.

162. Across the school, pupils make good progress in their ability to write in Welsh. At key stage 1, pupils write simple sentences during their lessons and, at key

stage 2, they use increasingly correct vocabulary and sentence patterns. Particularly good use has been made of IT to produce effective pamphlets in Welsh by pupils in year 4.

163. Across the school, pupils have learned songs and prayers which they use during acts of worship with good pronunciation. They sing tunefully in Welsh and older pupils demonstrate their ability to sing the language imaginatively in 'Rap' style music.

Shortcomings

164. At key stage 1, pupils' written work is underdeveloped. Their progress in using an appropriate range of sentence patterns is limited.

Subject 5: DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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

165. Pupils in year 1 make good progress in their design and technology skills. They look at a range of commercially produced moneyboxes and consider the practicalities of the products. They make good observations and identify what they require from the finished article, such as being able to hold money and to open and shut. Recognisable designs are then drawn and materials required are correctly identified, demonstrating a growing awareness of the properties and suitability of a range of materials. At year 2, pupils are enthusiastic when making vehicles with fixed axles and moving wheels. They join materials in different ways and apply paint finishes to make recognisable vehicles that resemble their original intentions. Pupils make considered evaluations of their finished products, choosing from a list of statements, and talk sensibly about why they like or dislike them.
166. In year 3, pupils make appropriate use of the Internet to find information to help them to design bird-feeders. Evaluation of existing feeders leads to pupils making appropriate critical comments. They explore and develop their ideas and produce good ideas, giving due consideration to appearance, function and safety, which they express clearly on paper.
167. Pupils in years 4 and 5 achieve some outstanding standards in their design and technology. Year 4 pupils undertake investigative work, linked to their work in science, to discover which boat shapes glide through water the fastest and which shapes are best for floating, before proceeding to the design stage. They made very good use of their skills when asked to design and construct a Forest School Shelter, which is now used to protect up to thirty children.
168. Year 5 pupils show a very good understanding of the evaluation and design process when considering the design brief of making something to hold

money. They produce good quality ideas that identify what the design must do, what affects the design and what they need to investigate, such as a new joining method. They produce a series of suitable designs and select one, taking into account their design brief, then make and attach practice pieces to show their newly acquired techniques.

169. Pupils make good use of their ICT skills to enhance their work in design and technology. In groups, they worked with a visitor making and manipulating plasticene models to produce outstanding, individual animated films which incorporated sound and text.
170. At the end of the key stage, pupils work diligently and with interest to make zoetropes and produce simple textile products in the style of Victorian samplers. During discussions, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the design and evaluation processes they have used.

Shortcomings

171. There are no significant shortcomings.

Subject 6: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

172. Pupils at both key stages have a good understanding of the way their bodies respond to exercise and the need to warm up for activities, including dance. Boys and girls have equal access to the physical education curriculum and there is no marked difference in their attainment.
173. Pupils dress appropriately for all activities and are enthusiastic learners.
174. At key stage 1 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, control their movements well and demonstrate good spatial awareness. They travel confidently at different levels, create a sequence of movements and hold a well-balanced finishing position. They carry apparatus safely.
175. At key stage 2, pupils further develop their body control and show good balancing, rolling and jumping skills. They demonstrate good individual skills travelling with and sending and receiving a rugby ball. Their observations about their own and others performances are expressed confidently and confirm a deepening understanding of how to succeed in activities. Pupils at the end of key stage 2 are well aware of the benefits of exercise and healthy eating on fitness. They are tested for their fitness levels and record their results.

176. At key stage 2, swimming is successfully emphasised and many pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres by the end of the key stage.
177. Older pupils at key stage 2 achieve good standards in dance. They respond well to musical stimuli and are able to discuss the quality of movement, plan, perform and evaluate their work and make very good progress.
178. A wide range of extra curricular activities makes a good contribution towards the development of skills and the understanding of teamwork. Pupils participate successfully at local, county and all Wales competitions in a wide range of sporting activities. A significant number of pupils have achieved representative honours including Welsh International status.

Shortcomings

179. A small number of pupils in year 2 do not always listen carefully enough to instructions.
180. Pupils at key stage 1 make insufficient progress in the ability to use evaluations of their own and others' work in order to improve performance.

School's response to the inspection

The process of inspection through self-evaluation is new to both schools and inspectors. The school is pleased that in producing its own self-evaluation report, the inspectors agreed with its grades for five out of the seven key questions. For the remaining two, the inspectors deemed that the school had underestimated its performance and awarded higher grades. To be judged by independent inspectors to be a 'good school with outstanding features in caring for, guiding and supporting its pupils 'is high praise indeed. The inspectors found standards of achievement to be good or better in 91% of lessons. Teaching was good or better in 86% of lessons observed. This is a reflection of the hard work of pupils, staff, governors and the head teacher of Pontnewynydd Primary School.

The inspectors found that the school had made good progress since the last inspection, in addressing the key issues, in improving the quality of education and in considerably raising standards of achievement.

Pupils at Pontnewynydd achieve good standards both academically and in their personal development. The high standards of pupil achievement, together with the high quality of teaching and the professionalism of all staff, give parents confidence that the school is providing their children with a very high standard of education and experiences.

An action plan to include the recommendations will be produced by the staff and governors and incorporated into the School Strategic Plan. This will ensure that we build upon our current strengths and continue to make progress.

Most recommendations for future development had already been identified by the school for inclusion in our next strategic plan. We will also be taking on board other issues and opinions raised by the inspectors.

The staff and governors would like to express their thanks to the inspection team whose professionalism in all aspects of the inspection process was greatly appreciated. Their opinions are valued and recommendations will form the basis for the next stage in the further development of Pontnewynydd Primary School.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Pontnewynydd Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Address of school	Lower Leigh Road Pontnewynydd Pontypool Torfaen
Post-code	NP4 8LQ
Telephone number	01495 763930
Headteacher	Mr B Jones
Date of appointment	September 1999
Chair of governors/ appropriate authority	Councillor Y Warren
Registered inspector	Mrs C Llewellyn
Dates of inspection	21-24 February 2005

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	N/A	13	30	34	24	25	30	24	180

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

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24.6:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	N/A
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	4:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	25.5:1
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.125:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Autumn 2004	98.25	93.53	94.27	95.35
Summer 2004	90.61	89.09	92.37	90.69
Spring 2004	90.54	90.82	93.60	91.65

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	51%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

These figures include assessments of pupils in the SNRB.

National Curriculum Assessment KEY STAGE 1 results 2004 compared with 2003 national results			Number of pupils in year 2					26	
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	W	1	2	3	4	
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	12	31	58	0	0	
		National	0	4	14	63	20	0	
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	11	31	46	12	0	
		National	0	4	14	55	27	0	
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	19	39	42	0	0	
		National	0	5	14	69	11	0	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	8	27	65	0	0	
		National	0	3	12	63	22	0	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	15	12	73	0	0	
		National	0	2	11	63	24	0	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	12	19	69	0	0	
		National	0	2	10	66	22	0	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	54%	In Wales	79%

- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004 compared with 2003 national results								Number of pupils in year 6			28	
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	7	46	46	0	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31	0
	Test/Task	School	0	4	0	0	0	7	25	61	4	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	5	12	38	40	0
Mathe- matics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	11	32	57	0	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	4	19	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	0	4	0	0	0	7	29	43	14	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	4	18	42	33	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	11	32	57	0	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35	0
	Test/Task	School	0	4	0	0	0	11	11	71	4	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	1	9	48	39	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language)			
By Teacher Assessment		By Test	
In the school	32	In the school	39
In Wales	63	In Wales	63

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

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection.

- A team of three inspectors were present at the school for eight inspector days.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school.
- Seventy-six questionnaires were completed by parents and analysed.
- Discussions were held with the head and staff.
- Thirty-six lessons or sessions were observed.
- School documentation and samples of pupils' work from across the ability range in each year group were examined.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work and life in school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during break periods, at lunchtimes and at the beginning and end 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
Mrs Christine Llewellyn Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key Questions 1, 2, 5 and 6. Under-fives Science Design and Technology
Mr David Morgan Team Inspector	Key Questions 3 and 7 and contributions to Key Questions 1 and 2. English Welsh second language Physical Education
Mr Charles Brentnall Lay Inspector	Key Question 4 and contributions to Key Questions 1 and 3

The contractors were:

Lincoln Inspection Team
37 Park Drive
Grimsby
North-East Lincolnshire
DN32 0EG

Acknowledgement

The Registered Inspector and team wish to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy before and during the inspection.

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

**Pontnewynydd Primary School
Lower Leigh Road
Pontnewynydd
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 8LQ**

Summary for Parents

School Number: 678 2119

Date of Inspection: 21-24 February 2005

**by
Mrs C Llewellyn
W157/78272**

Date: 27 April 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/165/04P

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Basic information about the school

Name of school	Pontnewynydd Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Address of school	Lower Leigh Road Pontnewynydd Pontypool Torfaen
Post-code	NP4 8LQ
Telephone number	01495 763930
Headteacher	Mr B Jones
Date of appointment	September 1999
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Councillor Y Warren
Registered inspector	Mrs C Llewellyn
Dates of inspection	21-24 February 2005

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	N/A	13	30	34	24	25	30	24	180

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

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

Pontnewynydd 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 inspection of Pontnewynydd Primary School took place between 21-24 February 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mrs C Llewellyn 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

Summary

Pontnewynydd Primary School is a good school with outstanding features in caring for, guiding and supporting its pupils. Since the last inspection it has improved its quality of education and raised standards of achievement considerably. Pupils achieve good standards academically and in their personal development.

The head teacher provides very good leadership and he is well supported in this by the staff and school governors.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in addressing the key issues for action highlighted in that report. The current inspection focused in particular on the standards of achievement of children under-five in the six areas of learning and in the subjects of English, science, Welsh second language, design and technology and physical education.

Pupils' level of attendance is satisfactory. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to monitor attendance and the school acknowledges pupils whose attendance improves. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time.

The inspection team agree with the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report on five of the seven key questions for this inspection. The inspection team judged the school to have underestimated its standards in key questions four and six.

Table of grades awarded:

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

Standards

Under-fives: Standards of achievement in the Areas of Learning are:

Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2

Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Physical Education	Grade 2	Grade 2

During the inspection standards of achievement in lessons observed, relative to pupils' ability, were:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	81%	6%	3%	0

Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons are well above the targets set by the National Assembly for Wales, which are for 95% of pupils to attain grade 3 or above, and of these 50% to achieve grade 2.

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

Including pupils from the SNRB, the National Curriculum 2004 teacher assessments of pupils in year 2 for English, mathematics and science showed the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected Level 2 was considerably below local and national averages. However, when compared with the 2003 figure for schools in Wales that have more than thirty-three per cent free school meals, the school is performing well. Excluding pupils from the SNRB, the results placed the school in the upper twenty-five per cent for the three subjects. Since 2001, the key stage 1 assessment results show a good rate of improvement, having increased by approximately twenty per cent in each of the three core subjects.

In the key stage 2 National Curriculum Tests of 2004, results show pupils to be achieving well when compared with similar schools. Pupils' achievements in attaining the expected level 4 or higher placed the school in the lower twenty-five per cent when compared with the national average, but in the upper quarter for the three subjects when compared with all primary schools in the same free school meal range. Girls outperformed boys by eight per cent. The standardised test results have showed a very good improvement since 2001, having increased by approximately twenty per cent in the three subjects.

Pupils with SEN, within the SNRB and in mainstream school, make good progress in learning in line with the targets in their individual education plans and achieve good standards.

Children in the reception class make very good progress in their personal and social development. They are very well behaved, courteous and very enthusiastic learners. They make good progress in developing their key skills. They listen extremely well and make good progress in developing their vocabulary and speaking skills. Children enjoy looking at books and having stories read to them. They identify letter sounds extremely well, recognise simple, familiar words and are beginning to write with generally correctly formed letters. Most pupils recognise numbers to ten or beyond and many count reliably. Children have good keyboard skills and control a mouse well. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make good progress in the development of their key skills across the curriculum. Almost all pupils listen very well and pay attention to what they are told. However, a very small number of pupils in key stage 1 sometimes find difficulty in being attentive to what is being said. Pupils' speaking skills in both English and Welsh are good and are developed effectively. Pupils' reading and writing skills are good overall across the curriculum, although the written work of a minority of pupils in key stage 1 shows careless presentation.

Pupils' make satisfactory use of their numeracy skills across the curriculum. They use their information and communication technology skills [ICT] effectively to access information, to support learning in a variety of subjects and to present information in written form or in graphs and tables.

Pupils' bilingual competence is good. Pupils' good knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language is apparent in Welsh lessons and is also effectively developed at other times.

Pupils make very good progress in developing their ability to work with others. They show respect and tolerance towards others and are keen to take on responsibilities within the classroom and the school.

Pupils generally show enthusiasm and good attitudes towards all aspects of their learning. They talk readily about their work, but are not skilled in assessing and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, they have a limited understanding of their own progress and performance or how to evaluate and improve.

The quality of education and training

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	67%	11%	0%	0%

The percentage of teaching that is good or better is high at 86 per cent. This is well above the national average and a substantial improvement since the last inspection when 65 per cent of teaching was good or very good.

Good features of teaching include the sharing of the lessons' aims with pupils, challenging but achievable activities that are well matched to the needs of all levels of abilities, skilled, focused questioning and imaginative and creative use of a wide range of resources to sustain interest. In a very few lessons, over-direction by the teacher impacts upon the pace of the lesson, and the same tasks are undertaken by all pupils. On these occasions, pupils are insufficiently challenged and opportunities are missed for them to become more independent in their learning and to develop their decision-making skills.

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

Within individual lessons, pupils use key skills to good effect, but whole school planning to ensure the systematic development of key skills is at an early stage.

The quality of assessment is good overall. It is generally used effectively to inform planning and target setting for the core subjects. However, assessments are not consistently used to ensure that work provided is suitable for pupils of all levels of attainment. Assessment procedures, provision and support for pupils identified as having SEN are good and they make good progress towards their learning targets.

The school is particularly effective in ensuring equality of access and opportunity for its pupils. The curriculum is of a good quality. It is well-balanced and relevant. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects. Educational visits and visitors to the school effectively enhance pupils' learning. A good number of pupils attend extra-curricular clubs and activities, such as rugby, athletics, computer club and Gwyl Plant.

There is good provision for the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and pupils achieve good standards. Lessons and assemblies make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and pupil response is good. Provision for the development of pupils' understanding of multi-cultural life is not as well developed.

Partnerships between parents, the community and other schools in the area are effective. The school has a good relationship with parents, although its distance from a large part of the catchment area means that parental support within school is limited. The school is supported strongly by the community.

The school is very effective in its day-to-day promotion of good race relations and equality, but pupils' understanding of diversity and the value of contributions made by others from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures is insufficiently developed. This has been identified by the school as an area for development.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and strategic management of the school are good. The headteacher is committed to maximising the potential of all pupils and to ensuring their well-being. He demonstrates positive, caring and supportive management, which gives a very clear sense of direction to the school's work. The school is well supported by the experienced and caring governing body, which fulfils its regulatory and statutory obligations. Governors are involved with setting the school's strategic direction and have identified the need to become more involved in the monitoring of pupils' standards.

Staff with leadership roles have made a good start to the formal monitoring of their subjects across the school. Standards are monitored well in the core subjects but leaders do not look critically enough at pupils' achievements in the foundation subjects. They are suitably involved in the process of gathering evidence by talking with pupils, looking at their work and observing lessons, in order to write informed developmental subject action plans.

The school is good at evaluating its work. All staff were involved in the self-evaluation document which identifies strengths and areas it wishes to improve.

Pupils are supported by a well-qualified, experienced and stable staff. The accommodation is generous for the number of pupils on roll. Although the school does not have an outdoor grassed area, co-operation with nearby schools enables some access to sports fields.

Overall there are sufficient good quality resources which are used effectively to support teaching and learning. Time, accommodation, and staff are all deployed well ensuring efficient use of all resources.

Spending decisions are appropriately matched to the school's priorities. Although current budget reserves are higher than recommended, these are suitably designated to protect against the impact of falling rolls.

Since the last inspection, all staff have worked together and achieved considerable success in the improvement of provision and achievement. The school gives good value for money.

Recommendations

The school should maintain the good and very good features and: -

R1 Improve standards of achievement by addressing the shortcomings in the subjects and whole school planning of key skills.**

R2 Develop the role of co-ordinators further to ensure they are fully involved in the monitoring of standards of achievement **

R3 Involve pupils more in the evaluation of their work and in the setting of their own targets. **

R4 Provide additional opportunities for pupils to become more independent in their learning and to develop their decision-making skills.

R5 Ensure the systematic development of pupils' multi-cultural awareness. **

** identified by the school

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.