

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

**Ysgol Santes Tudful
Queens Road
Twynyrodyn
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8HA**

School Number: 6752042

Date of Inspection: 27-29 March 2006

by

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15682**

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- * secondary schools;
- * special schools;
- * pupil referral units;
- * independent schools;
- * further education;
- * adult community-based learning;
- * youth support services;
- * LEAs;
- * teacher education and training;
- * work-based learning;
- * careers companies; and
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Ysgol Santes Tudful was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Ysgol Santes Tudful took place between 27/03/06 and 30/03/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dafydd Gwynfor Evans undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

"There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **short** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Santes Tudful is a Welsh-medium county primary school. It serves the town of Merthyr and nearby villages. According to evidence presented by the school, the nature of the residential area from where the pupils come is varied. It states that at least 60% of the pupils come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and the remainder from areas which are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.
2. Currently, there are 334 full-time pupils and 54 part-time children of nursery age on the register. Seventeen per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to free school meals. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and a further 42 have additional learning needs.
3. The vast majority of pupils come from English speaking homes, only two per cent of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main language. Welsh is the medium of instruction in the nursery/reception and in Key Stage (KS) 1; in KS2, pupils are taught through the medium of Welsh and English in order that pupils are bilingual when they transfer to the secondary school at 11 years of age.
4. The school was last inspected in January 2000, and there have been some staffing changes since that date. The headteacher has been in post since Autumn 1993.

The school's priorities and targets

5. The following are listed amongst the priorities in the school development plan (SDP) for 2005-2006:
 - continue to develop pupils' literacy and information and communications technology (ICT) skills;
 - aspects within teaching and assessment;
 - further develop curricular aspects in science, geography, religious education and the key skills;
 - develop the role of the School Council and strengthen the school's rewards system;
 - further strengthen the school's self-evaluation processes including the link between the co-ordinators and the governors;
 - support Welsh-medium playgroups;
 - staffing, resources and buildings issues.

Summary

6. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful is a good school with many outstanding features. Amongst the outstanding features are the high standards of achievement, the leadership of the headteacher, the senior management team and the governors, together with a team of enthusiastic and committed teachers who provide a wide range of rich and motivating experiences to the pupils in a caring and friendly community.
7. The school's self-evaluation report identifies many good features in the school's work. The judgement of the inspection team is that the majority of these features are outstanding. As a result, the inspection team awarded grade 1 to each key question in comparison with the grade 2 awarded by the school.
8. The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

9. Overall, the quality of the educational provision for the children under five years of age is appropriate for their needs and children make very good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
10. Across the learning stages, pupils of all abilities make consistent progress and succeed in achieving agreed learning objectives.
11. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
12. At the end of KS1 in 2005, pupils' achievements in all the core subjects, namely Welsh, mathematics and science exceeded county and national averages. In comparison with other schools across Wales, on average the school's results over the last three years show that the school is performing between the median and upper quartile according to national benchmarks.
13. In KS2, in 2005, pupils' achievement in the core subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) through teacher assessment was higher than county and national averages. In comparison with other schools across Wales, the

school's results over the last three years show that the school is performing around the median according to benchmarking evidence.

14. Pupils' bilingual competency is developing very well. Successful development in bilingual skills is the main objective and philosophy of the school. The pupils and parents are proud of this.
15. For the children under five, standards in the key skills across the areas of learning are good with no important shortcomings.
16. In KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking and listening in Welsh are outstanding features. Standards of reading and writing are good. In KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of oracy, reading and writing in English are good.
17. In both key stages, pupils' use of their numeracy and ICT skills is good. Their creative skills are very good and their problem-solving skills are good.
18. Pupils respond well to the language targets set for them and they are aware of what they need to do in order to improve in some other subjects, such as physical education. Overall, however, their awareness of targets and methods of improving across the areas of learning are limited.
19. Pupils' attitudes to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to concentrate on their tasks are outstanding features. Pupils' personal and social education skills are developing very well.
20. Pupils' awareness of equal opportunities issues is developing appropriately. They realise the importance of this in the context of every day life in the school and the diversity within society; they know their responsibility with regard to helping those less fortunate than themselves.
21. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding; they are aware of the school's high expectations and respect them. This has a positive effect on their learning. They are courteous, friendly, considerate and relate very well to each other.
22. The average attendance of pupils for the three terms prior to the inspection was 93.2% with no instances of unauthorised absence during the same period. Pupils are punctual in arriving at the school and at their lessons, and are eager to start working.

The quality of education and training

23. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was deemed as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade5
43%	57%	0%	0%	0%

24. These percentages are significantly higher than the Welsh Assembly Government's target of 65% of lessons being good or better (Grade 1 and 2) by 2007.
25. The quality of relationships in the classroom is very good. Teachers are role models of a high standard and pupils are aware of the high expectations with regards to standards of work and behaviour. Teachers have a sound knowledge of subjects and the overall requirements of the NC, and use a wide range of teaching techniques effectively.

26. In the best lessons, planning is detailed with clear learning objectives. Questioning is skilful and penetrating and the tasks set are challenging and motivating. Teachers make imaginative use of a wide range of teaching resources and the environment and the displays are very stimulating.
27. The quality of assessment is good and enables the school to recognise individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses across the age and ability ranges. It also highlights areas for development. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously with constructive comments, particularly in Welsh and English, on how to improve the work.
28. Core subjects are assessed regularly, but assessment of the foundation subjects and religious education has not been developed to the same level.
29. Results and scripts of NC assessments are analysed, together with a wide range of other standardised tests. The information is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in core subjects and to steer priorities in the long-term planning. A progress tracking form is kept which gives useful information on the pupils' performance throughout their time at the school. This is one of the strengths of the school.
30. Pupils' personal targets are recorded in their language books and targets are set in some lessons, such as physical education. Overall, however, the pupils are insufficiently involved in the process of assessing and improving progress.
31. Annual reports to parents conform to statutory requirements and they contain informative comments on achievements, particularly in the core subjects, together with comments on the way forward for pupils.
32. The school ensures access to a broad and balanced curriculum which stimulates pupils' mind, body and imagination. It ensures that all legal requirements regarding the curriculum, assemblies, reports and policies are met.
33. The promoting of pupils' personal development is an outstanding feature of the school's work. This, together with their spiritual, moral and cultural development is done through the personal and social education programme, assemblies, religious education and the general life of the school. The school aims at an ethos where children develop self-respect, self-discipline and good behaviour, and makes appropriate use of external agencies in order to promote this.
34. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as sports clubs, Urdd, dance and music which are provided by enthusiastic teachers. Bilingualism and the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* are promoted very effectively.
35. Partnership between the school and its parents is very good. The school's Parent Teachers' Association provides substantial financial support for the school. The vibrant link which the school has with its community greatly extends and enriches pupils' learning. The school has effective links with other schools which feed Ysgol Rhydywaun and the transition arrangements with that school are very good. All parents are aware of the home-school agreement.
36. The school's links with the world of work are an outstanding feature. Pupils visit a number of businesses in connection with their curricular work and a

- number of visitors from the world of work come to the school to hold workshops or to discuss their work with the pupils.
37. The school is proactive in promoting education for sustainable development. Pupils' awareness of global citizenship is very effectively raised through a variety of activities.
 38. The school makes effective use of different external agencies in order to provide support for its pupils.
 39. The school has clear procedures in order to ensure the health and safety of its pupils and these are appropriately implemented. The school is a secure environment and the school rules support self-discipline. Health education contributes well to the overall health of pupils. There are detailed and sensible guidelines for the protection of children. These are effectively implemented.
 40. The quality of the provision for additional learning needs is very good. There are appropriate strategies in place and the school conforms to the 2002 Code of Practice. Appropriate attention is given to the needs of individuals. Purposeful support is given in the class through differentiated work.
 41. The school promotes equality between boys and girls very well. This occurs across all activities of the NC and extra-curricular activities. The school's equal opportunities policy challenges stereotyping in relation to pupils' choices and expectations.
 42. There is an appropriate equal opportunities policy in place which is operational. The school recognises and respects diversity and gives full consideration to pupils' social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background. There are efficient strategies in place to eliminate any instances of bullying.

Leadership and management

43. The headteacher's leadership is very good. He has clear vision and firm plans to raise and improve the quality of the educational provision. The deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team undertake their responsibilities conscientiously and efficiently.
44. The subject co-ordinators undertake their duties effectively. They make a valuable contribution to the strategic management of the school even though their role in monitoring pupils' achievement is not fully developed.
45. The school gives full consideration to national priorities and local partnerships.
46. The SDP prepares a clear path for the development of the school over the school year with a good programme for the longer term. It is a very good document which sets challenging but realistic targets and objectives.
47. The governing body is very supportive, knowledgeable and extensively involved in the life of the school. The members contribute very effectively to strategic planning; they are linked with curricular areas and whole-school aspects. They take part appropriately in the process of monitoring standards and the quality of the provision in co-operation with the professional staff.
48. There is in the school a culture of positive self-criticism which allows the staff to recognise the school's strengths as well as the areas for development.

49. The school has effective arrangements to ensure that the whole school community contributes towards the self-evaluation process. The school improvement group, which includes teachers and members of the governing body, make an important contribution to that process.
50. The school's self-evaluation report is of a high standard. It is soundly based on a wide range of first-hand evidence.
51. The school has succeeded in dealing successfully with the key issues identified in the last inspection in 2000.
52. The school has an appropriate number of staff, they show a special commitment to the school. Teachers are well deployed and the arrangement of exchanging teachers to present aspects of the curriculum to different classes is having a positive effect on standards. The higher level learning assistant, the nursery assistant and the learning assistants make an important and valuable contribution to the quality of learning and teaching.
53. The school has a very good supply of resources to support the NC and religious education. Resources are purchased to support the school's priorities and the investment since the last inspection, particularly in human, books, artefacts and ICT resources, is having a positive effect on the quality of pupils' work. However, there is a need to increase the number of interactive whiteboards at the school.
54. Since the last inspection, the school has ensured a number of improvements to the building, including a purpose-built unit with enclosed areas allocated to the early years. The school buildings and grounds are now in a good condition. The classrooms are of an appropriate size for the number of pupils on roll and the imaginative use of displays of pupils' work and other learning materials create a very stimulating educational environment. This is one of the outstanding features of the school.
55. The school makes very good use of the local environment, the community and educational establishments such as residential centres and national organisations to enrich the pupils' learning.
56. There is a very good link between spending decisions and the school's priorities. The headteacher and governing body regularly review and evaluate the need and use of resources. The financial management is very good and the school offers outstanding value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- R1 maintain the very good standards with outstanding features and further improve the areas adjudged to be good.

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 1: Good with outstanding features

57. The inspection team's findings do not agree with the grade 2 judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
58. The overall quality of educational provision for the children under five is appropriate for their needs, and the children make very good progress in the six areas of learning towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
59. Across the learning stages, pupils of all abilities make consistent progress and succeed in achieving agreed learning objectives.
60. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
61. At the end of KS1 in 2005, pupils' achievement according to the core subject indicator was higher than the county and Wales. In all the core subjects, namely Welsh, mathematics and science, the results exceeded county and national averages. In comparison with other schools across Wales, the school's results on average over the last three years, show that the school is performing between the median and upper quartile according to national benchmarks. The percentage of pupils who attain level 3 is higher than national averages in each of the subjects.
62. In KS2, in 2005, pupils' achievement in the core subjects of the NC according to the core subject indicator by teacher assessment was higher than county and national averages. In English, mathematics and science, the results were higher than county and Welsh averages and in Welsh broadly in line with the county but higher than Wales. In comparison with results of other schools across Wales, the school's results over the last three years show that the school has performed around the median according to benchmarking evidence. Over the last three years, on average, the percentage of pupils attaining level 5 is slightly lower than the national average apart from mathematics where it was higher.
63. The school is constantly analysing assessment and test results in order to identify possible differences between boys and girls. There are variations from year to year but, on average over the last three years, girls have performed better than boys. Although the gap is wider than the national percentage, boys' results, however exceed the county and national percentages. Addressing this issue is one of the school's current priorities.
64. Pupils' bilingual competence is developing very well. Successful development in bilingual skills is a main objective and philosophy in the school. Bilingualism has been effectively integrated into the life of the school and, by the end of KS2, pupils show very good standards in working in both languages. Pupils and parents are proud of this.
65. In the early years, children's key skills are developed well. Skills in speaking Welsh are solidly established in the nursery class and listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are successfully developed in the reception classes. Children make good use of their numeracy and ICT skills.

66. In KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking and listening in Welsh are outstanding features. Standards in reading and writing are good. In KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of oracy, reading and writing in English are good.
67. In both key stages, pupils' use of their numeracy skills across the curriculum is good and they are prominent in science, history, design technology and religious education. Pupils make increasing use of their ICT skills across a wide range of subjects and the standards and progress are good.
68. Their creative skills are very good and their problem-solving skills are good.
69. Pupils are responding well to the language targets set for them and they are aware of what they need to do in order to improve in some other subjects such as physical education. Overall however, their awareness of targets and the methods of improving across the areas of learning are limited.
70. Pupils' attitudes towards learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to concentrate on their tasks are outstanding features. Pupils work hard in lessons, they are ready to take part in the range of educational and extra-curricular activities provided and show enthusiasm towards their work.
71. Pupils' skills in personal and social education are developing very well. They work well with others as well as working effectively independently. Pupils of all ages are considerate and friendly and are notably courteous to each other, staff and visitors. They have firm moral values and these are reflected very prominently in the respect and concern they show towards others and towards their community and their environment.
72. Pupils' awareness of equal opportunities issues is developing appropriately. They realise the importance of this in the context of the day-to-day life of the school and the diversity within society; they know of their responsibility to help people less fortunate than themselves.
73. The pupils understand the principles of equal opportunities well and each pupil has the same opportunity to take part in the school's activities. They have a good awareness of the cultures and beliefs to be found in society. They visit Christian places of worship and those which belong to other beliefs and they respect their traditions. Pupils succeed whatever their linguistic, social or ethnic background.
74. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, they are aware of the school's high expectations and respect them. This has a positive effect on their learning. They are courteous, friendly, considerate and relate very well to each other. They show a high level of courtesy to each other, all staff at the school and visitors. Younger children in the nursery and reception quickly become aware of the expectations and the difference between right and wrong. No instances of aggressive behaviour or bullying were seen during the inspection but the school has comprehensive procedures in place should any instances occur. One pupil was temporarily excluded during the previous year with the school following the correct procedures.
75. The average attendance of pupils for the three terms prior to the inspection was 93.2% with no instances of unauthorised absence over the same period. Pupils are punctual in arriving at school and for their lessons, and eager to

start working. Although parents are regularly reminded of the importance of good attendance and punctuality, a minority of parents still take their children on holiday during term time. The school does not have a formal attendance policy but is aiming initially at an average of 94%. The educational welfare officer calls at the school every fortnight in order to monitor the situation and to address any problems which arise. Registration procedures comply with statutory requirements.

76. Pupils have a very good awareness of the world of work and of their community. The school provides a substantial number of visits within the community and further afield in order to support and strengthen pupils' curricular work. Older pupils have a strong awareness of their responsibility towards their community.
77. Pupils are aware of the importance of moral values such as fairness, respect and sincerity. They show proactiveness in activities such as fund raising for good causes, enterprise initiatives and community links. Through taking part in a wide range of extra-curricular, social and educational activities, pupils have an outstanding understanding of Welsh culture.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

78. The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade5
43%	57%	0%	0%	0%

80. These percentages are significantly higher than the Welsh Assembly Government's targets of 65% of lessons to be good or better (Grade 1 and 2) by 2007.

81. The quality of relationships in the classrooms is very good and one of the strengths of the school. Teachers are role models of a high standard and pupils are aware of the high standards expected with regard to work and behaviour. Good work is praised and the system of celebrating effort and attitude towards work is popular with pupils and makes an important contribution to their development.

82. Teachers have a sound knowledge of subjects and the overall requirements of the NC and they use a wide range of effective teaching techniques. Good use is made of teachers' subject expertise in areas such as science, music, physical education and ICT.

83. Teachers constantly promote equal opportunities and equality in lessons. Individual learners' needs are satisfied in a flexible way.

84. Where teaching is good with outstanding features, teachers:

- plan purposefully and in detail with clear learning objectives at the start of the lesson;

- have high expectations with regard to pupils' achievements, attitudes and behaviour;
 - question skilfully and penetratingly in reviewing previous work and carry out evaluation periods which reinforce the learning;
 - make imaginative use of a wide range of resources to stimulate and develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills;
 - prepare challenging and stimulating tasks to challenge pupils to listen intently, to speak with purpose, to reason and expatiate in offering comments and ideas, and
 - prepare a stimulating environment with displays of a very high standard which include an extensive range of pupils' work.
85. In a small minority of cases, the tasks were not sufficiently challenging and the pace of the lesson did not ensure pupils' full attention.
86. The nursery assistant and learning assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching succeeding in effectively supporting teachers' work; there is an understanding and exceptionally well-organised collaboration between them.
87. Teachers use a wide range of techniques to extend pupils' bilingual skills, especially oral skills in the early years. Throughout KS1, they introduce new language carefully, giving appropriate attention to vocabulary and sentence patterns. In KS2, teachers plan effectively for pupils' dual literacy skills through paying attention to listening, speaking, reading and writing activities in Welsh and English.
88. The quality of assessment is good and enables the school to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils and highlight areas for development. The quality of assessment undertaken in the nursery class and the baseline assessments undertaken after children start their full-time education in the reception class are good.
89. Core subjects are assessed regularly, termly, at the end of a module of work and at the end of a stage. This ensures that the school has a clear picture of each pupil's achievements. However, the methods of assessing the foundation subjects and religious education have not been developed to the same degree.
90. National Curriculum results and assessment scripts are analysed, together with the results of a wide range of other standardised tests. The information is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the core subjects and to steer priorities in the long term planning. A form for tracking progress is kept which gives useful information on pupils' performance throughout their time at the school This is one of the school's strengths.
91. There are good procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils with SEN and challenging targets are set in those pupils' individual educational plans (IEPs).
92. Personal targets are recorded in pupils' language books and targets are set in some other lessons, such as physical education. Overall, however, pupils are insufficiently involved with the process of assessment and improving progress.

93. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously with constructive comments made, particularly in Welsh and English, on how to improve the work.
94. Good use is made of pupils' record of achievement files, which contain test results, examples of recent work and evidence of their personal and social development. Work has started on the development of subject portfolios, although currently their contribution to the process of levelling pupils' work across the classes is limited.
95. The annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements and there are informative comments on achievement, particularly in the core subjects, and the way forward for pupils. Parents are formally welcomed to three meetings annually to review their child's progress and they are welcomed informally at any time.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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96. The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
97. The learning experiences satisfy the needs and aspirations of pupils very well. They are offered access to a broad and balanced curriculum which stimulates the mind, body and imagination of pupils. It is ensured that all legal requirements involved within the curriculum, assemblies, reports and policies are met.
98. The school is involved in the Healthy Schools project and pupils are encouraged to eat healthily through buying fruit and drinking water during the day.
99. The school has effective procedures for the development of pupils' basic and key skills. They are included in the long and short term planning and are appropriately implemented in lessons and the school's other activities.
100. Promoting pupils' personal development is an outstanding aspect of the school's work. This, together with their spiritual, moral and cultural development is done through assemblies, the personal and social education programme, religious education and the general life of the school. The school encourages pupils to adopt the best morals and the confidence to express an opinion.
101. The school aims to create an atmosphere where pupils develop self respect, self discipline and good behaviour, and good use is made of outside agencies in order to promote this. Pupils are enabled to understand, tolerate and appreciate the various beliefs in the world in the every day context. Pupils are given opportunities to celebrate, reflect on events and to pray within the morning assembly.
102. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as sports clubs, Urdd, dance and music which are provided by enthusiastic teachers. It makes effective use of residential centres such as Tan-y-Bwlch, Dol-y-Gaer

and Llangrannog. These activities provide very valuable learning experiences and support the class work very well.

103. The partnership between the school and its parents is very good. The school's Parent Teacher Association provides substantial financial support for the school. As well as purchasing a mini bus for the school, the society has helped to fund a variety of resources which enrich the curriculum. Parents also offer willing support for visits, sports, concerts and eisteddfodau.
104. The vibrant links which the school has with its community greatly extends and enriches pupils' learning. Several members and representatives of the community come to the school to share their experiences and interests with the pupils. Pupils in all classes visit a number of different locations in the community in order to learn about their heritage and to take part in its celebrations and activities such as recently celebrating the bicentenary of Richard Trevithick.
105. The school has effective links with other schools which feed Ysgol Rhydywaun and the transition arrangements with that school are very good. There are good links with Merthyr College and the school accepts students from there, as well as from Ysgol Rhydywaun, on work experience. There is a good partnership between the school and the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff and Trinity College, Carmarthen; the school regularly receives students on initial teacher training from both establishments.
106. The school's links with the world of work are an outstanding feature. Pupils visit a number of businesses relating to their curricular work and various members from the business world come to the school to hold workshops or to discuss their work with pupils. The school has won several awards relating to the business world recently, for example the Sainsbury's cookery contest, Bays Science Club, 3M Welsh Innovation Awards and the Welsh Heritage Trust School Initiative. The school also receives sponsorship from a number of local companies. Four teachers have recently received effective placements in the world of work.
107. Pupils' bilingual skills are very effectively developed through curricular activities and the everyday life of the school. The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is very prominent in the life of the school.
108. The school is innovative in promoting education for sustainable development. It has gained the bronze and silver Eco-Schools award and there are particular examples of this to be seen in pupils' work and in the way the school is managed from day-to-day.
109. Pupils' awareness of global citizenship is very effectively raised through a variety of activities. The school has held a 'Lets End Poverty' week; the school raised enough money to sponsor 24 goats through the Africa Farm project. Pupils also regularly raise money for a number of charitable causes such as 'Operation Christmas Child' and 'Cancer Wales'.
110. National priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration are reflected well. Good attention is given to developing pupils' entrepreneurial skills through links with the community and project work in design technology. Pupils are also responsible for running the fruit shop at break time.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

111. The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
112. The school makes effective use of different external agencies in order to provide help and support for its pupils.
113. The partnership with parents is outstanding and very positive responses were received through the questionnaires and the pre-inspection meeting with parents. There are appropriate arrangements to gather and respond to parent's opinions through questionnaires distributed by the school and the surgery sessions with staff and governors. The school's means of communication with parents is effective and the secretary's contribution is very much appreciated. The home-school agreement informs every one of their responsibilities and meets with statutory requirements.
114. The school gives high priority to the promotion of pupils' personal and social education. Very good use of praise permeates through all the work of the school and achievements are regularly celebrated. Personal support and guidance is given, including specialist services of a high quality to pupils. The school ensures that each pupil is given an equal opportunity to take part in the school's activities.
115. Arrangements for the monitoring of punctuality and attendance are effective. The educational welfare officer visits the school every fortnight and takes the necessary steps when needed. All these processes meet statutory requirements.
116. Pupils of all ages settle in well to the homely environment of the school. The good links with the local nursery school ease this process. There are appropriate transfer visits and meetings to ensure that pupils transfer confidently to the secondary school.
117. Management and monitoring of behaviour is very effective. No instances of aggressive behaviour or bullying were seen during the inspection but the school takes any instances of bullying seriously and acts quickly and appropriately according to the need.
118. The school has clear procedures in order to ensure the health and safety of pupils and these are appropriately implemented. The school is a secure environment and the school rules support self-discipline. Health education contributes well to the general health of pupils. There are sensible and detailed guidelines in place for the protection of children. These are effectively implemented.
119. The quality of provision for additional learning needs is very good. There are appropriate strategies in place and the school conforms to the 2002 Code of Practice.
120. The school recognises and analyses pupils' special needs early in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils with SEN are mainly taught in their classes together with valuable separate sessions for them with the classroom

assistants and the support teacher. Individual educational programmes are monitored regularly and reviewed termly. The school ensures that all pupils with special needs are fully included in the life and work of the school.

121. Appropriate attention is given to individuals' needs. Purposeful support is given in class through differentiated work. Teachers work well in partnership with parents, carers and governors and consider their opinions in making decisions.
122. The school has a comprehensive policy in order to ensure equal treatment of disabled pupils and, to this end, the building has recently been adapted. Ramps were built for wheelchairs to ensure access for individuals with physical disabilities. The school endeavours to ensure equal treatment of all pupils.
123. The school promotes equality between boys and girls very well. This occurs across all NC and extra-curricular activities. The school's equal opportunities policy challenges stereotyping with regard to pupils' choices and expectations.
124. There is an appropriate racial equality policy in place and is operational. The school recognises and respects diversity and gives full consideration to pupils' social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

125. The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
126. The school has agreed aims and objectives which promote equality for all and are reflected in all aspects of the school's work. All the school's partnerships, pupils, staff, governors and parents share the same expectations and work together very effectively in order to achieve them.
127. The school is very well led by a headteacher who has a clear vision and positive plans to raise standards and improve the quality of the educational provision across the school. The deputy headteacher undertakes his whole-school responsibilities conscientiously and works efficiently with the headteacher and all the staff at the school.
128. The senior management team operates effectively. The departmental and subject co-ordinators meet regularly. There is a clear and definite direction to their strategic role of self-evaluating learning, teaching and the quality of the educational provision and, as a result, their professional development is very good.
129. Staff meetings are held regularly; they are an appropriate platform to deal openly with all aspects of the school's work.
130. Procedures for supporting newly qualified teachers and students from the colleges are very effective.
131. The school gives full consideration to national priorities and local partnerships. The contribution of the recently established School Council helps pupils to influence the decisions which directly affect them. Initiatives such as Eco-schools and healthy eating are very successful.

132. The school has effective procedures for self-evaluation and target setting. Pupils' standards of achievement in the core subjects are evaluated against specific criteria; strengths and aspects which need attention are identified. The findings are shared with their colleagues and the governing body.
133. The findings of the self-evaluation inform the SDP.
134. The SDP prepares a clear path for the school's development over the school year with a programme for the longer term. It is a very good document which sets challenging but realistic targets and aims. The operation of the plan together with the effect of the developments on the school are regularly monitored and evaluated.
135. The governing body is very supportive, knowledgeable and extensively involved in the life of the school. Members contribute very effectively to setting the strategic direction; they are linked to curricular areas and whole-school aspects. They take part appropriately in the process of monitoring standards and the quality of provision in co-operation with the professional staff.
136. Members regularly attend training courses arranged by the LEA. They fulfil all their managerial and legal requirements.
137. The operation of the school's language policy which aims at ensuring bilingualism amongst the pupils by the time they are 11 years of age is monitored closely.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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138. The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
139. Self-evaluation has been an important aspect of the school's work for some time. As a result, there is in the school a culture of positive self-criticism which allows staff to recognise the school's strengths as well as areas for development.
140. There are clear procedures and guidelines in place which ensure that an extensive range of work, performance and quality of the provision in the school are monitored regularly and effectively.
141. The headteacher, the deputy headteacher, departmental heads and subject co-ordinators undertake the work of monitoring according to the school's programme. Attention is given to the implementation of the schemes of work in classes and to the quality of learning and teaching. Co-ordinators have a portfolio to display samples of pupils' work across the school. They have a good awareness of pupils' standards of achievement in the core subjects but they do not possess enough firsthand evidence to come to a sound judgement on pupils' achievement in other areas of learning.
142. The school sets challenging but realistic targets for individuals and groups and the tracking system feeds important information to teachers on the development in pupils' performance across the years.

143. Pupils' performance in tests and assessments is thoroughly analysed. If changes are seen in the pattern, such as differences in the performance of boys and girls, they endeavour to find the reason for it before recommending methods for implementation.
144. The school has effective arrangements to ensure that the whole school community contributes to the self-evaluation process.
145. There are formal arrangements to receive parents' opinions through questionnaires and surgery sessions, as well as the open door culture to receive comments. The school responds positively to the comments. The governing body undertook a self-appraisal and members have responded constructively to the findings. Pupils have an opportunity to express an opinion through the School Council which was established during the past year.
146. The school improvement group, which includes teachers and members of the governing body, make an important contribution to the self-evaluation process.
147. The school's self-evaluation report is of a high standard. It is soundly based on a wide range of first hand evidence. The report identifies many of the good features together with issues to be developed in the SDP. The judgement of the inspection team is that the majority of the good features identified by the school in each of the key questions are outstanding features. As a result, the team awarded a grade 1 to each question in comparison with the grade 2 awarded by the school.
148. The school has succeeded in dealing successfully with the key issues identified in the last inspection in 2000. They succeeded in maintaining and building on the good standards, the facilities for the children under five were developed and the registration procedures fully comply with statutory requirements.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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149. The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the grade 2 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
150. The school is appropriately staffed to support the number of pupils on roll. Teachers are suitably qualified and have detailed job descriptions which identify their curricular responsibilities. Teachers have been well deployed and the arrangement for the exchange of staff to present aspects of the curriculum to different classes is having a positive effect on standards.
151. Curriculum leaders contribute very effectively to the development of their subjects. They have a good awareness of what is happening in their areas of responsibility and have opportunities to monitor the planning, provision and the outcomes within those areas.
152. The higher level learning assistants and the nursery assistant fulfil their responsibilities well making an important and valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and to pupils' standards of achievement.
153. Pupils also benefit from the contributions of teachers who support language and SEN and peripatetic music teachers, which include tuition of quality on the harp to a good number of pupils.

154. Teachers and support staff show a particular commitment to the school; they are energetic and conscientious and work together very well. This is an obvious strength.
155. The secretary, mid-day supervisors, the caretaker and cleaners fulfil their duties effectively. The school is kept orderly and clean.
156. There are appropriate arrangements for non-contact time, planning, preparation and assessment, performance management and continuous professional development of staff. In-service training is held internally and externally in order to satisfy the professional needs of staff, and the programme is appropriately linked to priorities within the SDP. There are good arrangements in place to mentor newly qualified teachers and they receive effective support.
157. The school has a good supply of resources to support the NC and religious education. Resources are purchased to support the school's priorities and the investment since the last inspection, particularly in human, book, artefacts and ICT resources is having a positive effect on the quality of pupils' work. However, there is a need to increase the number of interactive whiteboards.
158. Since the last inspection, a number of improvements have been made to the school's buildings, including a purpose-built unit with enclosed areas assigned to the early years. By now, the school's buildings and land are in a good condition. The school takes good advantage of the playing area around the building and the School Council has ensured a number of visual improvements which contribute to the pupils' enjoyment during their break times. The school does not have a grassed area, but a nearby playing field is used for games and athletics.
159. The classrooms are of an appropriate size for the number on roll. The imaginative use of displays of pupils' work and other learning materials create a very stimulating educational environment. This is one of the outstanding features of the school.
160. Suitable use is made of rooms which are not classrooms. Staff's resourcefulness in the use of the two halls, the library, the music room and corridors in order to present a broad, balanced and varied curriculum creates a stimulating environment.
161. The school makes very good use of the local environment, the community and educational establishments such as residential centres and national establishments in order to enrich pupils' learning.
162. There is a very good link between spending decisions and the school's priorities. The headteacher and the governing body review the needs and evaluate the use of resources regularly. The financial management is very good and the school offers outstanding value for money.

School's response to the inspection

As headteacher of the school, I would like to thank the inspection team for their professionalism and courtesy during their visit to Ysgol Santes Tudful.

The commendable report gives pride to me personally and to the whole community of the school. It shows that we have committed teachers and assistants, enthusiastic and industrious pupils, conscientious governors and parents who are supportive of the cause.

I trust that this successful report will be a strength to the school's continuing brilliance and ensuring the future of Welshness in the community of Merthyr Tydfil.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Queens Road, Twynyrodyn Merthyr Tydfil
Postcode	CF47 8HE
Telephone number	01685 722212

Headteacher	Mr Dewi Hughes
Date of appointment	Autumn 1993
Chair of governors	Mr Dyfrig Morgan
Registered inspector	Mr D Gwynfor Evans
Dates of inspection	27 – 29 March 2006

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	27	45	55	48	46	53	53	35	362

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	17	3	17.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	19.1:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	9:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	23
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.16:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Spring 2005	88.9	87.9	92.5
Summer 2005	89.9	87.8	92.3
October 2005	95.5	97.5	94.0

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1 (temporary)

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results 2005			Number of pupils in Y2:		47		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School			6	66	28
		National		2	10	63	25
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School			6	60	34
		National		2	11	63	24
Science	Teacher Assessment	School			2	72	26
		National		2	10	65	23

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	91.5	In Wales	80.9

D Pupils who are exempted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2005			Number of pupils in Y6		37						
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School					3	16	54	27	
		National	1			1	5	16	46	30	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School					3	16	51	30	
		National	1	1		1	3	17	49	28	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School					3	8	51	38	
		National				1	3	17	46	31	
Science	Teacher assessment	School						8	62	30	
		National				1	1	11	50	37	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment			
In the school	81.1	In Wales	72.3

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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

- The school was inspected by a team of four inspectors over a period of 10 inspector days.
- The headteacher was the nominee.
- Twenty-three lessons or parts of lessons were inspected, as well as a selection of pupils' practical and written work.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- Registration procedures, collective worship and other activities were seen during the inspection.
- Discussions were held with staff and pupils relating to their work.
- Inspectors attended a meeting of the School Council.
- All documents presented by the school were scrutinised before and during the inspection.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the staff, parents and governing body.
- Twenty-two parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and the 59 questionnaires completed by them were analysed.
- Post-inspection meetings were held with the staff and governing body.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr D Gwynfor Evans Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key questions 1, 5 and 6 Appendices
Mrs Nan Williams Team	Key questions 3 and 4
Mr Ogwyn Phillips Team	Key questions 2 and 7
Mrs Janice Davies Lay	Contributions to the seven questions
Mr Dewi Hughes Nominee	

Acknowledgement

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

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