

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

**Somerton Primary School
Hawthorn Avenue
Newport
NP19 9AB**

School Number: 680/2030

Date of Inspection: 10 – 11 October 2005

by

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W267/78911**

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Under Estyn contract number: T059/05

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Somerton 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 Somerton Primary School took place between 10 – 11 October 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Stephanie James, 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

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 **standard** inspection.

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	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
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. Somerton Primary School is a community school lying at the centre of a large housing estate to the east of the city of Newport. It serves an urban catchment area containing a mix of private and council owned property. The area surrounding the school is socially and economically disadvantaged with poor infant health, high levels of unemployment and social deprivation, a significant number of single parent families and few facilities. The majority of pupils who attend the school live on the Somerton estate.
2. The school caters for pupils from three to eleven years of age. There are 143 pupils on role. A further 12 children attend nursery part-time. Children are admitted to nursery the term following their third birthday and to the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. Ninety one per cent of pupils are of white ethnic origin. Ninety four per cent of pupils speak English at home, whilst 6 per cent of pupils speak languages such as Bengali, Urdu, Portuguese and Punjabi as their first language, in addition to English. No pupils speak Welsh as a first language. Seventy per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is much higher than the national average of 18.8 per cent. 35.4 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs (SEN), which is well above the average of approximately 20 per cent. Three pupils have a statement of special educational need. Information from baseline assessments shows that pupils' attainment on entry to nursery is well below average overall and a significant number of children have poor speech and language skills.
3. The well-utilised school grounds include two playgrounds, a new multi-use games area, a sports field and an outside teaching area. The present buildings date from 1962 and consist of a main building, a purpose-built nursery unit with its own play area, a temporary building with two classrooms and a canteen. Investment in the structure of the building in recent years has focused on basic maintenance of its fabric, the addition of ramps for people with disabilities, the installation of a computer network and replacement of the fire alarm system. A new Early Years Centre was opened during the week prior to the inspection.
4. The head teacher has led the school for many years. There are eight full-time teachers in addition to the head, four of whom have been appointed since the last inspection in October 1999. The deputy head teacher has been absent since January 2005, due to ill health, and a temporary teacher has covered her class since then. Another temporary teacher took over the mixed age year 4/5 class two weeks before the inspection, when the class teacher's contract came to an end. Pupils are divided into six classes. The falling number of pupils on role means that the school has one less class than in 1999, all of which, except year 1, are now mixed age.

The school's priorities and targets
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5. The school's main aim is to foster a family atmosphere in which each child feels loved and important, whilst simultaneously recognising the importance of improving standards of learning as a preparation for the next stage of education and adult life.
6. Objectives in the School Development Plan (SDP) for the current academic year are to:
 1. Develop an Early Years Centre;
 2. Enhance the position of speaking and listening throughout the school;
 3. Continue work in developing thinking skills in mathematics and science, participate in the development of 'Building Learning Power' with the Local Education Authority (LEA) and involve staff, governors and parents in further development as a 'Thinking School';
 4. Work with Newport Behaviour Support Service and Newport Multi-Ethnic Service on implementing strategies for dealing with pupils whose behaviour falls outside the remit of positive assertive discipline;
 5. Review the English curriculum in key stage 2;
 6. Further work on racial equality and introduce a planned approach to social skills;
 7. Develop global citizenship.

Summary

7. Somerton Primary School is a caring school where pupils make good progress in the core subjects, often from a below average starting point, because of the generally good quality of teaching they receive. The school has addressed most of the shortcomings identified in the previous inspection in 1999.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

8. During the time of the inspection, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed in the six areas of learning and subjects were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	61%	35%	0%	0%

9. Sixty five per cent of pupils' standards in lessons observed were judged to be grade 2 or above, which is in line with the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2007. Standards in 100 per cent of lessons were grade 3 or above, which exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government's target that standards should be at least grade 3 or above in 98 per cent of lessons by 2007.
10. In the early years, overall standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Areas of Learning in the Early Years

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	2
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	3
Physical development	2

11. The overall quality of 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.
12. Children under five make good progress and achieve good standards, with no important shortcomings, in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy through their activities in all six areas of learning.
13. In key stages 1 and 2, overall standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	2	2
Mathematics	2	2
Information Technology	3	3
Design and Technology	2	3
Religious Education	3	3

14. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, regardless of their background, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science so that standards achieved are in line with national expectations by the end of key stage 2. Standards achieved are above average when compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools (those with in excess of 49 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals).
15. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress relative to their abilities and achieve well because of the school's excellent provision for them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress in their linguistic skills.
16. In key stage 1, pupils' use of the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy in subjects across the curriculum is good, with no important shortcomings. In key stage 2, pupils achieve good standards, with no important shortcomings in their speaking and listening skills. Their use of reading, writing and numeracy in subjects other than English and mathematics, however, is less well developed because of the limited number of opportunities they have to develop and apply them.
17. Throughout the school, most pupils develop a functional understanding of how to use information and communication technology (ICT) for a variety of purposes, but they do not use their research and investigative skills sufficiently regularly to achieve high standards of competence.
18. From the early years to the end of key stage 2, pupils successfully develop their understanding of, and confidence in using, the Welsh language.
19. In key stage 1, 2005 SAT results compare favourably with both Local Education Authority (LEA) and national averages. Over the last three years, the performance of boys has steadily improved in all three core subjects and

they outperformed girls in 2005. The performance of girls has been more erratic, but the relatively small size and changing nature of each group of pupils makes it difficult to draw reliable conclusions from the data. There is, however, a gap between pupils' attainment in mathematics and science, and that in English, largely due to their poor language skills on entry to school.

20. In key stage 2, apart from a dip in standards in 2004 due to a large number of pupils with SEN, above average achievement in comparison with similar schools in the LEA and in Wales has been maintained or improved. By the end of the key stage, the gap in pupils' performance in English, and mathematics and science has closed. There is no marked difference in the pattern of performance between boys and girls in mathematics and science.
21. Pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential in the core subjects, but do not always achieve as much in the foundation subjects because less time is devoted to those subjects.
22. Children under five are happy in their learning and demonstrate an increasing ability to concentrate for prolonged periods when engaged in activities they have chosen themselves. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 build well on this sound foundation and demonstrate good personal and social skills.
23. Standards of behaviour are generally good. The majority of pupils are well behaved and show courtesy and consideration for others.
24. Whole school attendance equals the LEA average but is below the national average. A small, but significant, number of pupils arrive late at the start of the school day.
25. Pupils are interested in, and respect, cultural and religious diversity and are aware of equal opportunities issues. Their involvement in the local community and visits to places of interest help them understand the wider world. Their knowledge of the world of work is less well developed.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
3%	69%	28%	0%	0%

27. The percentage of lessons awarded a grade 2 or above is in line with the national picture. No lessons received a grade 4 or 5, which is better than the national picture.
28. Teachers effectively stimulate and challenge pupils to achieve their potential, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. They conduct the majority of lessons at a good pace, use a range of stimulating resources

and mostly succeed in gaining pupils' commitment to their work. They demonstrate secure knowledge of the subjects they teach.

29. A particularly good feature of the quality of teaching is the positive relationships that teachers establish with pupils. They have clear expectations of behaviour, which they make explicit to pupils and consistently apply the school's behaviour policy.
30. Some features in the teaching of children under five are outstanding. The early years co-ordinator is a very good role model in her teaching of language and literacy. She has an excellent understanding of young children's literacy development and makes the most of opportunities to maximise children's learning in this area. Nursery nurses and other adults are very effectively deployed and fully understand their role in enhancing children's learning.
31. Teachers plan thoroughly and have clear objectives for what pupils have to learn. They usually share objectives with pupils at the start of lessons, so that they know what is expected of them. Lessons are structured effectively and build well on pupils' previous learning. Opportunities are sometimes missed, however, for pupils to conduct independent research and develop their investigative skills.
32. In those lessons where there were some shortcomings, whole class discussions were too prolonged, resulting in pupils becoming restless and losing concentration. There were also insufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently and too little time given for them to become really absorbed in their tasks, or to finish them.
33. Teachers treat all pupils equally and fairly, successfully promote the Welsh language and give good support to pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language. However, there are some instances where tasks are not modified quite so well for pupils of all abilities.
34. Assessment procedures are good overall, although more could be done to ensure learners understand what they need to do to improve. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring the progress of pupils with SEN. Reports to parents are clear, comprehensive and suggest how parents can support their children.
35. The school's mission statement and aims give direction to the curriculum and this is reflected in the emphasis placed on the teaching of the core subjects. The curriculum also ensures that foundation subjects are included within the planning and provision of all lessons across all the key stages, although the amount of time devoted to these subjects does not always allow pupils to develop a deep knowledge and understanding of some aspects of them.
36. The curriculum in the early years is very well planned, coherent and provides a wide range of relevant and worthwhile experiences for children. Planning for the development of children's linguistic and mathematical skills is particularly detailed and effective in meeting their needs. Opportunities for

them to explore their creative potential, however, are sometimes over-directed.

37. In key stage 1, planning for the development of pupils' key skills is good. In key stage 2, although key skills are identified in planning, there are insufficient opportunities to ensure that pupils develop and apply their key skills systematically, particularly in the foundation subjects. The school acknowledges that this is an area to be developed.
38. Good provision is made for pupils' personal and social development. The school endeavours to involve pupils in activities and experiences that promote self-reliance, responsibility and respect for others. It promotes the development of a healthy lifestyle with good emphasis on healthy eating issues. Collective worship reinforces the school's aims to promote good personal values but does not always encourage pupils to reflect and explore wider issues of a spiritual nature.
39. The quality of the links with the local community is an outstanding feature. The school's close involvement with community organisations and regeneration schemes are an important part of its work. Parents offer good quality support in the classroom in a range of activities. There are good links with local schools and colleges. Induction arrangements are good for both nursery children and between key stages 2 and 3. Visits to places of educational interest provide a valuable addition to pupils' learning experiences.
40. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, the Welsh dimension, is promoted well throughout the school and is incorporated in most subjects across the curriculum.
41. The additional learning needs of pupils identified on the special needs register are very successfully met within an ethos of equal opportunities and inclusion.
42. The school's policy to promote race equality is well implemented. It effectively promotes equality of access and opportunity for all and works diligently to tackle social disadvantage. The curriculum successfully raises pupils' awareness of sustainable development, global citizenship and environmental issues. Pupils support a number of charities, which helps them understand the plight of those less fortunate than themselves.
43. There are some opportunities for pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills. However there is scope for further improving this aspect of learning.
44. Pastoral care of pupils is given high priority. Pupils feel safe and secure whilst in school. The head teacher and staff know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Most children start their education in the school's nursery, where the arrangements to settle them work very well. They benefit from a gentle introduction to school life. Pupils who joined the school at other times report that they settled in quickly and were welcomed.

45. The support and guidance of all learners is achieved through a structured and co-ordinated programme that includes health education and the careful tracking of pupils' academic progress. The school makes effective use of specialist services.
46. The school's provision for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being has good features that outweigh shortcomings. A safety and security issue was brought to the attention of the governing body.
47. Staff are trained in first aid and there are good procedures in place for meeting the needs of pupils who are unwell or who have an accident. Health and safety audits are regularly carried out within the school and risk assessments are undertaken before educational visits take place. Appropriate procedures are in place for child protection.
48. The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good with outstanding features. The procedures for identifying pupils with SEN are comprehensive and systematic. Programmes of work contain manageable and achievable targets. Pupils, parents and carers are involved in the discussion and evaluation of their targets. Pupils with SEN receive equal access to the curriculum.
49. There are effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' behaviour. The school also has effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, bullying or any form of harassment.
50. The school recognises the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and treats all of them equally, with dignity and respect. Appreciating all people for who they are is built into the personal and social element of the curriculum. Parents feel that their children are well supported.

Leadership and management

51. The school has clear aims and objectives, which are reflected in the planned curriculum. The head teacher and staff are very committed to the care and wellbeing of the pupils. Parents and carers feel able to discuss any queries or problems they may have with the head teacher and staff.
52. There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. The head teacher monitors the work of the school informally, spends a great deal of time in classrooms and knows individual pupils very well. All staff work well together to promote the good relationships that exist between themselves and pupils. The quality of leadership shown by curriculum leaders in key areas is good. The work of the school senior management team is currently hampered by long-term staff absence, but committed curriculum leaders are ably carrying out school development in the core subjects.
53. Communication is generally good throughout the school and efficient administration procedures ensure its smooth running.

54. The school's performance management procedures promote teachers' professional development and help to improve the quality of the school's provision.
55. The governing body is very supportive, well informed and actively involved in the life of the school. It fully meets all regulatory and legal requirements.
56. The school monitors its performance by means of an open culture established between staff and governors. Governors effectively monitor staff performance by visiting classes and observing teaching and help establish priorities for the future.
57. Leaders of core subjects have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible. However, foundation subject leaders do not have sufficient first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning. They therefore do not always establish rigorous, specific, focused criteria by which to measure progress, strengths and areas for development in the subjects for which they are responsible. Whilst portfolios of pupils' work aid the self-evaluation process in the core subjects, similar portfolios are at an early stage of development in the foundation subjects.
58. Staff are well qualified to teach the curriculum and meet the needs of all pupils. They take advantage of opportunities to develop their professional expertise through attending a number of courses. Part-time and temporary staff contribute positively to the quality of provision. The commitment of the staff is a strong feature of the school. Changes in staff have resulted in class reorganisation, and the school has yet to plan successfully for this change, within its staffing structure.
59. Subject leaders effectively manage budgets and monitor resources for the subjects for which they are responsible. On the whole, resources are adequate. There is a limited number of computers, but those that are available are not always used as efficiently as they could be, with the result that there are shortcomings in pupils' information technology skills.
60. The new Early Years Centre for nursery and reception children is spacious and well designed, appropriate for the needs of young children and very well resourced.
61. Some parts of the school building, particularly the accommodation for pupils in key stage 2, are in a poor state of repair. The outside area adjacent to the school hall is dangerous due to uneven surfaces, poor drainage and low walls. Shortcomings in the accommodation sometimes detract from the quality of teaching and learning. However, teachers manage to minimise the impact of these shortcomings on standards achieved. The caretaker and her cleaning staff work hard to maintain standards of cleanliness.

62. The main playground has been enhanced through the building of a multi games area. This provision extends valuable opportunities for pupils and young members of the community to participate in sport.
63. The school has a deficit budget brought about by falling rolls, which makes it difficult to plan for necessary expenditure. It is continuing to work with the LEA to resolve the budget deficit. Standards achieved by pupils in the early years and in the core subjects indicate that, overall, the school is providing adequate value for money.

Recommendations

64. The school now needs to:

- R1 Improve the quality of planning, development and application of pupils' key skills across the curriculum in reading, writing and numeracy in key stage 2 and in the use of ICT throughout the school;
- R2 Raise the profile of the foundation subjects;
- R3 Further develop the role of curriculum leaders in the self-evaluation process, particularly those who lead foundation subjects;
- R4 Address the safety and security issue brought to the attention of the governing body;
- R5 Continue to take action to reduce the deficit budget.

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

65. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
66. During the time of the inspection, standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	61%	35%	0%	0%

67. In 65 per cent of lessons pupils' standards of achievement were judged to be grade 2 or above, which is in line with the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2007. Standards in 100 per cent of lessons were grade 3 or above, which exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government's target that standards should be at least grade 3 or above in 98 per cent of lessons by 2007.
68. Information from baseline assessment confirms that many children enter the school with a limited range of experiences and poor language skills. They make good progress, regardless of their background, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science so that standards are in line with national expectations by the end of key stage 2. Standards in these subjects are above average when compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools (those with in excess of 49 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals). Parents are happy with the standards pupils achieve and can see clear progress as their children move through the school. In recognition of its work, the school has been awarded two Basic Skills Agency Quality Marks.
69. Pupils with SEN make good progress relative to their abilities and achieve well because of the school's excellent provision for them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress in using their linguistic skills.
70. In the early years, overall standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Areas of Learning in the Early Years

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	2
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	3
Physical development	2

71. The overall quality of 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.
72. Children under five make good progress and achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy through their activities in all six areas of learning. They are developing bilingual competence well.
73. In key stages 1 and 2, overall standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	2	2
Mathematics	2	2
Information Technology	3	3
Design and Technology	2	3
Religious Education	3	3

74. The school’s emphasis on developing pupils’ speaking and listening skills is bearing fruit. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and achieve good standards in using their speaking and listening skills in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils listen attentively in well-paced lessons and show increasing confidence in expressing their ideas and opinions as they progress through the school. Their attention begins to wander, however, if discussions are too drawn out.
75. In key stage 1, pupils’ use of the key skills of reading, writing and numeracy in subjects across the curriculum is good, with no important shortcomings. For example, through their study of topics such as ‘Ourselves’ and ‘Food’ they use their developing literacy skills well to read and write accounts, recipes and instructions. Pupils also use their numeracy skills effectively to make tally charts and graphs in their work in geography and to make accurate measurements in science investigations.
76. Although pupils in key stage 2 achieve good standards in reading, they do not use their reading skills enough to retrieve and present information in the foundation subjects. Although there are some good examples of pupils writing extended, well-structured accounts in subjects such as religious education and history, they do not write sufficiently frequently in foundation subjects fully to develop their skills in writing in a range of styles. Similarly, the lack of time spent on foundation subjects restricts the number of opportunities pupils have to apply their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics.
77. Throughout the school, most pupils develop a functional understanding of how to use ICT for a variety of purposes, but they do not use their research and investigative skills sufficiently regularly to achieve high standards of competence.

78. Pupils make good progress in their bilingual skills. They respond correctly to specific questions using appropriate phrases or short sentences. They also respond appropriately to Welsh greetings or requests used around the school in more informal contexts.
79. In the early years and key stages 1 and 2, pupils' creative and problem solving skills are less well developed because opportunities to use them are not sufficiently frequent. The school recognises this and is taking steps to improve provision for this aspect of pupils' learning.
80. In key stage 1, 2005 SAT results compare favourably with both LEA and national averages. They are well above average in mathematics and science, and above average in English in comparison with schools with a similar socio-economic profile. The gap between pupils' attainment in mathematics and science, and that in English, is largely due to their poor language skills on entry to school and is the reason for the school's current emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills.
81. Over the last three years, the performance of boys in key stage 1 has steadily improved in all three core subjects. They outperformed girls in 2005. The performance of girls has been more erratic. However, the relatively small size and changing nature of each group of pupils makes it difficult to identify reliable patterns in the comparative performance of girls and boys.
82. In key stage 2, apart from a dip in standards in 2004 due to a large number of pupils with SEN, above average achievement in comparison with similar schools has been maintained or improved. In English, girls performed better than boys in 2003 and 2004, but boys outperformed girls in 2005. There is no marked difference in the pattern of performance between boys and girls in mathematics and science. The gap in pupils' performance in English, and that in mathematics and science evident in key stage 1 has closed by the end of key stage 2, reflecting the good progress made.
83. Pupils generally have a good understanding of what they are doing and how well they are progressing, but sometimes find it difficult to explain their achievements because of a lack of clarity in the feedback they receive from teachers.
84. Pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential in the core subjects, but do not always achieve as much in the foundation subjects because less time is devoted to those subjects.
85. Children under five are happy in their learning and demonstrate an increasing ability to concentrate for prolonged periods when engaged in activities they have chosen themselves. They are keen to join in all the activities that are offered to them.
86. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 build well on this sound foundation and demonstrate good personal and social skills. They are generally eager to answer questions, show an interest in their work and remain on task. They

work well in pairs and support one another in their learning. Pupils interact well in the playground and older pupils care for younger ones.

87. Standards of behaviour are generally good. Pupils are involved in drawing up class rules, know what is expected of them and understand the consequences of misbehaviour.
88. Whole school attendance for the three terms preceding the inspection was 90.9 per cent; this equals the LEA average but is below the national average. Unauthorised absence averaged 2.5 per cent. A small but significant number of pupils throughout the school are late arriving at the start of the school day.
89. When given the opportunity, pupils work well with others to solve given tasks. They increasingly express their views with confidence and listen to the opinions of others. Although some pupils can use the computer without adult guidance, the ability of a significant number of them to work independently to improve their own learning using ICT is limited.
90. Pupils are interested in, and respect, cultural and religious diversity and are aware of equal opportunities issues. A very good example of this was evident in discussions with some pupils in year 6, who quite eloquently expressed the belief that, "It doesn't matter whether you're black or white, what religion you are, or even if you don't speak our language – we're all friends and make everybody welcome and not left out".
91. Pupils' involvement in the local community and visits to places of interest help them to develop their knowledge of the diversity of the wider world. They value opportunities to visit places in and around Newport. Pupils are involved in running the school allotment. These activities are successful in helping them develop an understanding of, and involvement in, their community. Their knowledge of the world of work, however, is less well developed.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
3%	69%	28%	0%	0%

94. Seventy two per cent of lessons were judged to be grade 2 or above, which is in line with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in her most recent report. No lessons received a grade 4 or 5, which is better than the national picture.

95. Teachers effectively stimulate and challenge pupils to achieve their potential, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. They conduct the majority of lessons at a good pace, use a range of stimulating resources and succeed, for the most part, in gaining pupils' commitment to their work. The use of interesting objects, visual aids and practical activities is particularly successful in engaging pupils' interest and attention. Many lessons are characterised by good questioning techniques and plenty of interaction to develop pupils' thinking skills.

96. In those lessons where there were some shortcomings, whole class discussions were too prolonged, resulting in pupils becoming restless and losing concentration. There were also insufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently and too little time given for them to become really absorbed in their tasks, or to finish them.

97. Some features in the teaching of children under five are outstanding. The early years co-ordinator is a very good role model in her teaching of language and literacy. She has an excellent understanding of young children's literacy development and makes the most of opportunities to maximise children's learning in this area. She uses short bursts of concentrated interaction with stimulating texts skilfully to integrate the development of children's phonic knowledge into their growing understanding and appreciation of stories and rhymes. This approach is not, however, employed consistently in morning and afternoon sessions. Nursery nurses and other adults are very effectively deployed and fully understand their role in enhancing children's learning.

98. A particularly good feature of the quality of teaching is the positive relationships that teachers establish with pupils. They have clear expectations of behaviour, which they make explicit to pupils and consistently apply the

- school's behaviour policy. They use praise judiciously to encourage pupils and promote their learning.
99. Teachers demonstrate secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. The expertise of particular subject leaders, such as those for religious education and design and technology, is drawn on effectively in their teaching of classes throughout the school.
 100. Teachers plan thoroughly and have clear objectives for what pupils have to learn. They usually share objectives with pupils at the start of lessons, so that they know what is expected of them. Lessons are structured effectively and build well on pupils' previous learning.
 101. Good features outweigh shortcomings in teachers' planning for the development of pupils' use of ICT. For example, although good examples of pupils using ICT were evident, there were also a number of missed opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in using ICT. In all classes, instances were observed when computers were under used. At other times, although pupils were using computers, insufficient time was allocated for them to complete a reasonable amount of work. Opportunities are also missed for pupils to conduct independent research and develop their investigative skills. The school recognises this and members of staff are attending courses in order to improve their planning for this aspect of pupils' learning.
 102. Throughout the school, teachers treat all pupils equally, consistently and fairly and ensure that everyone has access to all the opportunities and experiences offered.
 103. Teachers successfully promote the Welsh language during registration periods and informally through simple requests, praise or greetings in classrooms and around the school.
 104. Pupils who have English as an additional language and those with SEN are very well supported. However, there are some instances where tasks are not modified so well for pupils of all abilities, particularly for that group of pupils who are working below the average standard for the class, but who do not have special educational needs.
 105. The school adopts a whole school approach to assessment and a suitable marking policy is in place to ensure that pupils receive regular feedback to assist learning, but there is some inconsistency in the quality of marking in pupils' books. Whilst comments usually provide encouragement, they do not always include suggestions about how the pupil could improve.
 106. The school uses a wide range of standardised tests to measure progress and supplement this with a Reading Recovery programme for pupils in years 1 and 2. This programme helps to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses in reading and aids further planning.

107. Periodically, the school holds an assessment week where staff monitor progress in specific subjects. The results are used well to evaluate pupil progress in each subject and serve as a basis for future planning.
108. There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils with SEN and reviewing their progress. Learning support assistants provide valuable support and contribute to the assessment of pupils' progress and achievement.
109. Regular feedback is written in pupils' workbooks in key stage 2 regarding their progress. Where comments are clear, specific and give next steps for learning, pupils understand and can explain their progress. Some pupils cannot describe their achievements because feedback lacks clarity. Feedback is provided orally to pupils in key stage 1.
110. A few parents do not feel that the school provides them with enough information about their children's progress. However, annual school reports to parents refer to all aspects of the National Curriculum and indicate the progress made by pupils in each subject. The reports are comprehensive, clear and suggest how parents can support their children. Although the reports do not include provision for written parental comments, the school holds an open afternoon where parents are given the opportunity to discuss and contribute to their children's reports. Statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on the National Curriculum are met.

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

111. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgement of Grade 1 made by the school in its self-evaluation report because some shortcomings were identified.
112. The school responds well to the needs and interests of learners and the wider community and provides equal access to the planned curriculum. The school's mission statement and aims give direction to the curriculum and this is reflected in the emphasis placed on the teaching of the core subjects. The curriculum also ensures that foundation subjects are included within the planning and provision across all the key stages, although the amount of time devoted to these subjects does not always allow pupils to develop a deep knowledge and understanding of some aspects of them.
113. Schemes of Work and policies are in place for all National Curriculum subjects and religious education, which is taught in agreement with the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
114. The curriculum in the early years is very well planned, coherent and provides a wide range of relevant and worthwhile experiences for children. Planning for the development of children's linguistic and mathematical skills is

particularly detailed and effective in meeting their needs. Opportunities for them to explore their creative potential, however, are less well developed.

115. In key stage 1, planning for the development of pupils' key skills is good overall. In key stage 2, key skills are identified in planning, but there are insufficient opportunities to ensure that pupils apply, consolidate and refine their key skills systematically, particularly in the foundation subjects. The school has acknowledged that this is an area to be developed. Opportunities for pupils to express their creativity and engage in problem-solving activities are also under-developed.
116. Visits to places of educational interest provide a valuable addition to pupils' learning experiences. Older pupils visit the outdoor education centre at Talybont and places of historical interest such as Caerleon and Llancaich Fawr. The school provides some opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments and take part in sporting activities.
117. Good provision is made for pupils' personal and social development. The school promotes the development of a healthy school and lifestyle with good emphasis being placed on healthy eating issues. Pupils are responsible for drawing up rules for good conduct in their classrooms; these demonstrate strong values of responsibility and a clear sense of right and wrong. Collective worship reinforces the school's aims to promote good personal values but does not always encourage pupils to reflect and explore wider issues of a spiritual nature.
118. The quality of the links with the local community is an outstanding feature. The school's close involvement with organisations such as Community First, the Local Partnership Board and regeneration schemes help to give the local community an insight into its work and provides pupils with opportunities to enrich their learning experiences.
119. Parents offer good quality support in the classroom through helping with practical activities, for example, in design and technology lessons. Although there is no formal parent-teacher association, links are strong and the school takes the initiative to involve parents in many aspects of school life through activities such as Surestart and Homestart. The school has developed good links with local schools and colleges and induction arrangements are good for both pre-school children and between key stages 2 and 3.
120. Parents have an opportunity to discuss their child's progress through the twice-yearly parent/teacher consultations and the school report. There is, however, no formal, signed home/school agreement.
121. The curriculum complies with legal requirements. The school attends well to national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. Sex education is taught in accordance with the policy agreed by the governors.
122. Pupils' experience of the world of work is broadened through a suitable range of activities. Occasional visits are made to commercial or industrial sites and

visitors come in to talk to children about the work they do. Opportunities to support staff training and development through teacher placement are provided as relevant.

123. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, the Welsh dimension, is promoted well throughout the school and is incorporated in most subjects across the curriculum. It includes studying the work of Welsh designers or singers, and visits to places of cultural and historical interest. Displays in classes, the hall and elsewhere include appropriate labels and simple phrases in Welsh.
124. The school has a policy to promote race equality and it is well implemented. It effectively promotes equality of access and opportunity for all and works diligently to tackle social disadvantage. The planned curriculum, particularly in geography, successfully raises pupils' awareness of sustainable development, global citizenship and environmental issues. Pupils actively take part in the recycling of materials.
125. There are some opportunities for pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills. Year 6 pupils assist in serving items from the tuck shop, but are not involved in cashing-up or controlling the stock. Others have made and sold items such as bracelets and furry toys to raise money for charity and disaster relief. Young children through role-play 'buy and sell' things in the classroom shop, and begin to understand the purpose of money.
126. The school endeavours to lay the foundations of lifelong learning and community regeneration by involving pupils in activities and experiences that promote self-reliance, responsibility and respect for others. Activities such as circle time, assemblies and pupil discussions help develop qualities such as kindness, truthfulness and forgiveness.
127. From the early years on, pupils are given the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities by helping teachers prepare the classroom for lessons and delivering attendance registers and dinner lists. They also assist in the canteen. The school supports a number of charities and by so doing helps pupils appreciate there are people who have suffered misfortune and are in need of assistance from the world at large. These activities help prepare pupils for lifelong learning and for living in a community.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

128. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgement of Grade 1 made by the school in its self-evaluation report because some shortcomings were identified.
129. Pastoral care of pupils is given high priority. Pupils feel safe and secure whilst in school. The head teacher and staff know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. All pupils benefit from the school's determination to include

them fully in both its academic and social life. The school operates an effective positive assertive discipline policy and makes good use of available external agencies such as Newport's Behavioural Support Service to aid pupils experiencing difficulties.

130. The school endeavours to develop a strong partnership with parents and carers to support and guide their children. Informal contact with the head teacher and members of staff occurs daily. Teachers are available to discuss progress at other times by arrangement.
131. Most children start their education in the school's nursery, where the arrangements to receive and settle them work very well. They benefit from a gentle introduction to school life and staff are very understanding of, and sensitive to, the needs of very young children experiencing school life for the first time. In discussion, pupils who joined the school at other times reported that they settled in quickly and were welcomed. Arrangements for transferring pupils to Lliswerry and Hartridge High Schools are effective and ensure a smooth transition.
132. The provision for the support and guidance of all learners is achieved through a structured and co-ordinated programme that includes health education and the careful tracking of pupils' academic progress. The school makes effective use of specialist services.
133. Most parents co-operate by informing school if their child is unable to attend. The school's clerical staff carefully review the registers daily and routinely pursue unexplained absence. Lateness is recorded in the late book and in the register.
134. Attendance levels are slowly improving. Good or improved attendance is acknowledged and rewarded. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), who investigates any absence where there are concerns. Currently the school does not have the support of a dedicated EWO.
135. The school's provision for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all pupils has good features that outweigh shortcomings. A security concern was brought to the attention of the head teacher and governing body.
136. Staff are trained in first aid and there are good procedures in place for meeting the needs of pupils who are unwell or who have an accident. Pupils' contact details are regularly reviewed and updated. Safety checks are regularly carried out. The effectiveness of fire drill, which is normally practised once a term, was demonstrated when the alarm went off during the inspection. Health and safety audits are conducted within the school and risk assessments are undertaken before any educational visit takes place.
137. Appropriate procedures are in place for child protection. The head teacher is the nominated focus and ensures regular training of staff. Staff are trained to be vigilant and to recognise any signs that a child may need protection.

138. The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good with outstanding features. The school has identified 49 pupils as having special educational needs. The procedures for identification of pupils with SEN are comprehensive and systematic. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) liaises very effectively with class teachers to plan programmes of work which contain manageable and achievable targets. Pupils are involved in the setting and evaluation of their targets. Programmes of work are reviewed at least three times a year and parents and carers are invited to participate in this process to strengthen the home-school learning links.
139. The SENCo provides very good guidance to class teachers and support staff. The tracking procedures are very effective and enable pupils to receive good quality support that addresses their needs. There are effective links with a wide range of outside agencies and their expertise is well directed. All pupils with SEN receive equal access to the curriculum.
140. There are effective policies and procedures in place to encourage and monitor pupils' behaviour. Teachers apply the policies for behaviour management consistently and act as positive role models for the pupils.
141. The school recognises the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and circumstances and treats all pupils equally, with dignity and respect. Teachers are helped and supported by written policies, which are regularly reviewed. Pupils learn to appreciate diversity and the necessity for good race relations. Appreciating all people for who they are is built into the personal and social element of the curriculum. The school has suitable measures in place to recognise, respect and actively promote diversity and to guard against all forms of discrimination. It is an inclusive community that is successful in promoting gender and race equality.
142. The school also has effective measures in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour, bullying or any form of harassment. Play times and lunch times are well supervised. Pupils understand the necessity to report immediately if they experience any unpleasantness or if they feel threatened or harassed in any way. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and those in the meeting, confirm that their children feel well supported.
143. The school is aware of the statutory requirements regarding provision for disabled pupils and adults and has suitable accessibility plans in place to ensure that at any time disabled learners receive equal access to the curriculum.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

144. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self- evaluation report.
145. The school has clear aims and objectives, which are reflected in the planned curriculum. The school development plan (SDP) is a shared document, which sets out the direction for the school's development and is fully understood by the governors and staff. The head teacher and staff are very committed to the care and wellbeing of the pupils. Good relationships with outside agencies have been fostered. Parents and carers feel able to discuss any queries or problems they may have with the head teacher and staff.
146. There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. The head teacher monitors the work of the school informally, spends a great deal of time in classrooms and knows individual pupils very well. All staff work well together to promote the good relationships that exist between themselves and pupils. This has a very positive influence upon pupils' personal, social and educational development. Members of staff have clear job descriptions.
147. The quality of leadership shown by curriculum leaders in key areas is good and they are committed to raising standards in their subjects and areas of responsibility. They are ably carrying out school development and supporting colleagues, particularly in the core subjects. The SENCo, who is also the early years co-ordinator, for example, manages her responsibilities to a high standard. However, the work of the school senior management team is currently hampered by long-term staff absence.
148. Communication is generally good throughout the school and efficient administration procedures ensure its smooth running.
149. The school's performance management procedures promote teachers' professional development and help to improve the quality of the school's provision. Individual staff are set objectives to improve their performance and they receive appropriate training.
150. There are effective policies and procedures in place which ensure equality of opportunity for both pupils and staff. They are reflected in the work of the school and are regularly reviewed by the staff and governors.
151. The school takes good account of national priorities and these are prioritised in the SDP. The school has fostered very strong partnerships with local organisations and the community.

152. The school has a tracking system which provides information to inform and set targets for year groups and groups of children. Challenging, yet realistic, targets are established and regularly reviewed.
153. The governing body is very supportive, well informed and actively involved in the life of the school. They understand their role well and are involved in the formulation of priorities for the SDP. They ensure that health and safety policies are rigorously applied and that community links are strong.
154. Governors monitor the work of the school well and reflect on the effectiveness of their own role. They evaluate their decisions well and prioritise their work to have a direct effect on the raising of the standard of education provided for the pupils. They have a good understanding of the school's financial situation. The governing body fully meets all regulatory and legal requirements.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

155. The team judged that although there are good features in the way that leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards, there are some shortcomings. The findings of the inspection team therefore differ from the school's self-evaluation of key question 6 in that the school allocated grade 2 for this key question.
156. The school monitors its performance by means of an open culture established between staff and governors. School governors monitor staff performance and hold annual interviews with subject leaders to evaluate performance and establish priorities for the future. Pupils are encouraged to make suggestions through their School Council representatives. The school also draws upon the expertise of the LEA advisory service to support its self-evaluation arrangements.
157. Leaders of core subjects have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. However, foundation subject leaders do not have sufficient first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning. They therefore do not always establish rigorous, specific, focused criteria by which to measure the progress, strengths and areas for development in the subjects for which they are responsible. Whilst portfolios of pupils' work aid the self-evaluation process in the core subjects, similar portfolios are at an early stage of development in the foundation subjects.
158. Information gained from pupils' achievements in the core subjects is used effectively to measure the school's own performance against that of other schools. The school also uses data effectively to identify, address and meet the needs of groups and individuals.

159. Staff annually evaluate progression towards the targets identified in the SDP and establish new priorities following their review. Targets are prioritised and incorporated into the planning cycle of the school. Schemes of work are regularly reviewed. Self-evaluation procedures have focused on the core subjects. The same process has not focused sufficiently on standards in foundation subjects.
160. The information gathered through the school's evaluation procedures is used to further develop or amend the SDP. As priorities are identified, they are costed to enable adequate and relevant resources to be allocated to those areas. Limited funding, however, inhibits this process. The school is sometimes successful in supplementing its funds to meet its priorities through grant aiding agencies, often linked to community shared resources.
161. The self-evaluation report produced by the school for the inspection is detailed and informative, but some comments under key question one do not focus sufficiently sharply on the standards pupils achieve and are more relevant to other key questions. The inspection team agreed with the school's evaluation in three out of the seven key questions. In three of the remaining key questions a lower grade was awarded, whilst in one key question a higher grade was given.
162. Good progress has been made in addressing some of the key issues that were identified during the previous inspection in 1999, when ten percent of the teaching was unsatisfactory and standards in IT at both key stages, and in design and technology at key stage 2, were unsatisfactory. Now, none of the teaching has shortcomings in important areas and standards are grade 3 or above in all subjects and areas of learning. Pupils' multi-cultural awareness is now good and there is a consistent approach to homework. Some progress has been made in addressing the other key issues identified, but ICT resources still need to be increased and the range of extra-curricular activities offered could be wider. Although the role of core subject leaders has been developed, that of foundation subject leaders remains under-developed.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

163. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school allocated Grade 4 for this key question because of the state of repair of some parts of the school building. The team agreed that the building is seriously in need of renovation and redecoration in places, but staff manage to overcome these difficulties, for the most part, in order to minimise the impact on pupils' education.
164. Staff are well qualified to teach the curriculum and meet the needs of all the pupils. Part-time and temporary staff contribute positively to the quality of provision within the school. The school makes effective use of its support staff, who work alongside the teachers to plan and implement an effective

support programme for pupils with SEN. The commitment and expertise of the staff are a strong feature of the school. Changes in staff have resulted in class reorganisation, and the school has yet to plan successfully for this change, within its staffing structure.

165. Subject leaders effectively manage budgets and monitor resources for the subjects for which they are responsible. On the whole, resources are adequate and meet the needs of the pupils. There are a limited number of computers, but those that are available are not always used as efficiently as they could be, with the result that there are shortcomings in pupils' information technology skills. Plans for essential spending on the development of ICT have not been finalised.
166. Three days before the inspection, a new Early Years Centre for nursery and reception children was opened. This is spacious and well designed, appropriate for the needs of young children and very well resourced. Staff are beginning to organise the space to best effect. Imaginative plans are also in place further to enhance this good provision.
167. The indoor facilities and fabric of the rest of the building have not been enhanced since the last inspection. Some parts of the school building, particularly the accommodation for pupils in key stage 2, are in a poor state of repair and unpleasant odours frequently emanate from the boys' toilets in the key stage 1 corridor. Some classrooms in the upper areas of the school are cramped, stuffy and reached through narrow corridors and by walking through other classes. Shortcomings in the standard of the accommodation sometimes detract from the quality of teaching and learning taking place. However, teachers manage to minimise the impact on standards achieved. The caretaker and her cleaning staff work hard to maintain standards of cleanliness.
168. The outside area adjacent to the school hall is dangerous due to uneven surfaces, poor drainage and low walls. New fire regulations also now limit the amount and type of display that staff can use to enhance the learning environment. The school is waiting for work to be carried out following a fire inspection.
169. The main playground has been enhanced through the building of a multi games area, financed by the National Lottery as part of a plan to develop school sport. This provision extends opportunities for pupils and young members of the community in the Somerton area to participate in sport. Sports groups use the multi games area extensively.
170. The school works effectively with other cluster schools to compare resource provision and to investigate and promote good practice, such as sharing resources and utilising staff expertise. Staff take advantage of opportunities to develop their professional expertise through attending a number of courses and to improve the quality of their teaching. This is a good feature of the school.

171. The school finds it difficult to ensure efficient financial planning due to the uncertainty of funds allocated. Unexpected funds were devolved to the school during the school year, but were not available at the time of development planning and resource allocation. The deficit budget, brought about by falling rolls, makes it difficult to plan for necessary expenditure. Standards achieved by pupils in the early years and in the core subjects indicate that the school is providing adequate value for money. The school is continuing to work with the LEA to resolve the budget deficit.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Subject 1: Early Years

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

172. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and they are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
173. Nursery children were admitted to the school only three days before the start of the inspection, when the new Early Years Centre was opened. This enabled the inspection team to confirm the school's evaluation that many children start nursery with below average communication and personal and social skills. Since children in the nursery had not been in school long enough for its provision to have an impact on their learning, the inspection team focused on the standards achieved and progress made by children in reception, most of whom attended nursery part-time during the previous year.

Good features

Language, literacy and communication skills

174. Although a number of new children in the nursery have very limited language skills, most of them are beginning to enjoy listening to short songs and rhymes and a few are beginning to join in the chorus.
175. Reception children listen very well when their interest is captured and make good progress in developing their confidence in speaking. They eagerly talk about their experiences with visitors. They recite favourite rhymes with great enthusiasm and their vocabulary is developing very well, so that they can find appropriate synonyms for words such as "incy wincy". They make very good progress in their reading skills. They really enjoy stories and understand terms such as 'author' and 'illustrator'. All children, whatever their reading ability, have very positive attitudes to books and use a good range of strategies in their reading of simple texts. They enjoy mark making with a variety of implements and write confidently and freely, applying their developing knowledge of the writing system. They increasingly produce recognisable letters to convey meaning and write simple messages in a variety of forms.

Personal and social development

176. Nursery children respond very well to the school's provision. Most of them happily leave their parents/carers and feel secure in their new environment, despite one or two enquiries about when they will see their mothers again. They show curiosity and interest in new experiences and are just beginning to settle to nursery expectations and routines.

177. Reception children interact confidently with their peers and with adults, are secure in their relationships and happy in their learning. They applaud other children's achievements. They can state the class rules, behave well and know how to take turns in activities. During their role-play activities in the 'house corner' they are beginning to co-operate in order to make a meal for the 'family'. They understand the need for personal hygiene and wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating. They concentrate for lengthening periods when involved in appropriate tasks and change over activities quietly and without fuss.

Mathematical development

178. Reception children make good progress in this area of learning. Most children demonstrate good recall of number songs, rhymes and games and can count up to 20 with encouragement. They are developing a good understanding of mathematical concepts such as "less than" and "more than" in a variety of ways. They are also developing sound concepts of weights and measures through activities such as cooking and weighing ingredients to make play dough. They use mathematical language appropriately in a range of contexts.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

179. Reception children are aware of different kinds of weather and know that they need to wear different sorts of clothes to keep them warm, cool or dry. They sometimes use the computer to draw simple pictures of themselves and animals and recognise and can name different colours. Visits from organisations such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals help children develop their knowledge and appreciation of the needs of living things. Through pouring, digging and experimenting in the sand tray they are discovering the properties of sand and its interaction with the variety of objects and materials provided.

Physical development

180. Reception children handle pencils and pens with increasingly good control to form letters and to colour in. They also manipulate play dough tools skilfully. More experienced children have an appropriate pencil grip. They move with freedom and confidence in the outdoor play area and are developing good physical control of large wheeled toys such as scooters, tricycles and a tractor. They use the available space well and demonstrate good co-ordination as they manoeuvre the equipment round paths and other vehicles and children.

Creative development

181. Reception children respond well to opportunities to make pencil drawings from close observation of a lizard. Following discussion with an adult, their drawings begin to show awareness of, and attention to, the details of pattern, line and shape that particularly interest them and their drawings show individuality. They also relish opportunities to engage in role-play in the new

'house corner' and extend their imaginative play into the outdoor play area where they pretend to move house, 'paint' the walls or do the washing. They use malleable materials such as play dough effectively to create a variety of objects and shapes.

Shortcomings

182. Reception children become a little restless and begin to lose concentration when sessions in the afternoon, such as practice of their letters and sounds, are too prolonged.
183. Some of the art work children produce is limited in the range of materials, media and techniques used and lacks creativity and individuality.

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 features

184. Pupils listen well in both key stages. They respond positively to their teachers' questions and in less structured situations during the school day. In key stage 1, pupils listen carefully to their teachers in directed class activities. They particularly enjoy listening to stories. Pupils in key stage 2 demonstrate more concentrated listening skills and older pupils listen and respond well in whole class and collaborative group discussions.
185. Pupils make good progress in their speaking skills. They readily discuss their tasks with adults and respond very well to visitors' questions. In key stage 1, they eagerly answer questions in class discussions and, through good teacher intervention, they progress to speaking in extended phrases and sentences.
186. By the end of key stage 2, pupils participate well in class discussion. They show increasing confidence in putting forward their own points of view and when given the opportunity they make thoughtful observations on a wide range of topics.
187. Pupils in both key stages make good progress with their reading skills. In key stage 1, pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds and their developing understanding of the text very effectively when reading individually and in their guided reading groups. They discuss the content of stories well and make sensible observations on the illustrations, characters and plot.
188. In key stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in reading. They read confidently, appropriate to their age and ability, in a wide range of contexts from silent and group reading, reading aloud in class and reading for research and in class lessons. By the end of the key stage, pupils use the library confidently to find specific information on topics. Pupils discuss their reasons

for choosing books, recall favourite authors and write informative book reviews.

189. Pupils in both key stages write for a wide range of different purposes. By the end of key stage 1, they write well-sequenced stories with good openings and sensible endings. More able pupils use an increasing range of vocabulary to extend their sentences and begin to use adjectives to make their sentences more interesting. All pupils understand the need to write in sentences and use punctuation. They spell more familiar words accurately and make reasonable attempts to spell unfamiliar words using plausible phonetic attempts.
190. Pupils continue to make good progress with their writing skills throughout key stage 2. By the end of the key stage, pupils write detailed descriptions of characters and settings. They extend and develop their ideas using generally good sentence structure and punctuation. Speech marks are used correctly and most spelling is accurate. Subjects and verbs usually agree, they organise their work into paragraphs and use adverbs and adjectives correctly to engage the reader's interest.

Shortcomings

191. Pupils' standards of handwriting and presentation of work are variable. The good skills demonstrated in their handwriting books are not transferred to their writing across the curriculum.
192. In key stage 2, pupils' responses when interpreting texts are often limited to literal interpretations.

Subject 3: Mathematics

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

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

Good features

193. Year 1 pupils show a good understanding of the value of money and can identify various coins correctly and state the overall value of two coins added together.
194. Pupils in year 2 estimate lengths with reasonable accuracy and use non-standard and standard measures to verify their estimates.
195. They use mathematical language extremely well to ask specific mathematical questions about shapes such as cylinders and cones.
196. Pupils in year 3 recognise and confidently deal with numbers up to 1000 and use relevant mathematical resources effectively to enhance their learning.
197. They use mathematical terms confidently and accurately and have a good understanding of number bonds and of place value within tens and units.

They can locate three digits to indicate a given number and independently solve subtraction problems involving money values under one pound.

198. Year 4 pupils measure lengths accurately and can change measurements from centimetres, to metres or kilometres.
199. Pupils in the year 5/6 class recognise geometric shapes, such as parallelograms, and use correct terminology to describe similarities and differences in their properties.
200. They know and apply multiplication tables correctly to solve given problems, and state the connection between fractions and decimals, explaining clearly their similarities.

Shortcomings

201. Pupils in both key stages do not make sufficient use of ICT to support and extend their learning.

Subject 4: Information Technology
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Key Stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

202. No formal lessons in information technology were observed during the inspection. Evidence of standards achieved was gathered through examination of pupils' completed work and through observation of their use of information technology skills in discussions with pupils.

Good features

203. Year 1 pupils use a mouse effectively to draw recognisable shapes and use the appropriate tool to change the colour of the lines.
204. By year 2, pupils can input their names correctly using the keyboard.
205. In year 3, pupils use basic word processing skills confidently to input text, change the font, the size, and the colour of the text.
206. Pupils in year 4 can model how to write an answer to a question using the interactive whiteboard.
207. Pupils in year 5 can create effective Power Point presentations on topics of their own interest, using word-processing skills, sounds and information from the Internet.
208. In year 6, some pupils can log-on to the computer, access the Internet and copy an image into their document. They confidently input appropriate text to accompany the image.

209. More able pupils in year 6 are able to open, close and restore a window, find a given document within a folder, and use a spell-check facility correctly.

Shortcomings

210. In key stage 1, younger pupils find it difficult to use basic features on the keyboard, whilst older pupils lack confidence in using ICT equipment independently, appropriate to their age and ability.
211. Some pupils in lower key stage 2 are unable to change colour and font to improve the presentation of the text or use effectively some important components of the keyboard.
212. Older pupils in key stage 2 find difficulty in editing texts using relevant tools and do not make sufficient use of ICT for research and investigations.

Subject 5: Design and Technology

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

Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

213. In key stage 1, pupils develop their design and technology skills effectively through a planned programme of work. They clarify their ideas through discussion and plan them by drawing and modelling. Pupils make suggestions as they make their models and evaluate their finished work.
214. Pupils in years 1 and 2 visit the folk museum at St Fagan's to study the history of Welsh homes and schools and successfully make models when they return to school. They use a variety of different techniques for joining parts and use good basic measuring skills. They have a good understanding of simple pneumatics through making jack-in-the-boxes using balloons and straws.
215. In year 2, pupils use tools safely to make a moving puppet using levers and sliders. They have gained an understanding of how mechanisms such as axles and simple gears make vehicles move. They extend their skills by using the design and making process to make hats, carrier bags and a variety of models using construction kits. Pupils begin to understand control technology by programming the 'Roamer' to follow a path.
216. In key stage 2, pupils further develop their skills. Year 3 pupils prepare a range of ingredients to make bread. They understand how pulleys can help to lift weights through their project to make a well. They appreciate that different materials have different strengths and properties by testing cars to destruction.
217. Year 4 pupils research designs for T-shirts using the Internet. They evaluate fabrics and apply decorative techniques appropriately. They demonstrate

their knowledge of linkages and levers well, with their models of robots. Pupils make good quality cushion covers making print blocks to decorate them with interesting designs. They measure and use tools, including glue guns, confidently and safely.

218. Older pupils in key stage 2 continue to develop their skills through model making. They work with textiles and have a very basic knowledge of control technology.

Shortcomings

219. Pupils in key stage 2 do not show progression in recording and communicating their designs. For example, they do not use graphic packages in ICT or use scale in their drawings.
220. In key stage 2, pupils do not apply their knowledge of electrical circuits to their models, for example in model vehicles and fairground rides, and they have a limited knowledge of how the application of control technology can be used in models.

Subject 6: Religious Education

Key Stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

221. In both key stages, pupils gain a sound understanding of Christian beliefs and practices, festivals and ceremonies. Their visits to the local church and from the vicar help to deepen their understanding.
222. Pupils in year 1 recognise and understand some of the features of special times such as birthdays. They are beginning to reflect on special times in their lives and on the importance of their relationships with other people in helping to make them special.
223. By the end of key stage 1, pupils can recount some key details in the Christmas story, such as the annunciation. They understand important aspects of the baptism ceremony, including the pouring of holy water on the baby's head and making the sign of the cross.
224. Pupils in the year 3/4 class can describe the purpose of important features of a church, such as the altar and the font. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the symbolic significance, for Christians, of bread, wine and candles and are becoming increasingly aware of how worship is expressed through special objects and in special places.
225. Pupils in the year 5/6 class enjoy learning about other faiths. They know that Muhammad was a prophet who was born in Mecca and is the leader of

Moslems. They have good recall of some of the beliefs, customs and practices associated with the Moslem faith and offer some thoughtful responses to key points that they read about his life story.

226. By the end of key stage 2, pupils understand the purpose of prayer for people who have a religious belief. They also understand that religions have rules that guide believers in their everyday lives and help them know the difference between right and wrong.

Shortcomings

227. Pupils in key stage 1 recall few stories from the Bible and show only a little awareness of religions other than Christianity.
228. In key stage 2, pupils record a limited amount of their knowledge and understanding in religious education through writing, use of ICT and other means.

School's response to the inspection

The governors and staff have considered the outcomes of the inspection and are pleased that the findings acknowledge that Somerton Primary is a school with a number of strengths and that it has continued to improve since the last inspection.

Inspectors found that the overall quality of teaching has good features and no important shortcomings. This reflects the hard work of staff to ensure the children receive good quality teaching. We are pleased to note that the inspection team also acknowledged the effectiveness of our support staff to implement programmes for pupils with special needs.

The governors and staff were delighted the inspection team found the positive relationships that staff establish with pupils to be a strength of the school. The clear expectations of behaviour and the way staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy were also identified.

It was pleasing to see that the inspection report acknowledges the strong teamwork in the school and the positive influence upon pupils' personal, social and educational development.

The governors and staff are happy with the outcomes of the inspection and feel it truly reflects the positive ethos of our community-focused school.

Action plans will be put in place to address the recommendations outlined in the report. The staff and governors will implement the appropriate action and monitor the progress. A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents.

The school would like to thank the inspection team for the professional and courteous manner in which members of the team conducted their duties throughout the inspection.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of School	Somerton Primary
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of School	Hawthorn Avenue Newport South Wales
Post-code	NP19 9AB
Telephone number	01633 272504
Head teacher	Mr Andrew Croker
Date of appointment	September 1991
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Cllr. John Guy
Registered inspector	Ms Stephanie James
Dates of inspection	10 – 11 October 2005

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	14	20	18	12	23	30	16	22	155

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	2	8

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	17.8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	7:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	23.8%
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.3 :1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Whole School
Autumn 2004		92.6%	90.5%
Spring Term 2005		92.6%	91.5%
Summer Term 2005		92.4%	90.5%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	70%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2005			Number of pupils in Y2		26			
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
English:	Teacher Assessment	School			20	68	12	
		National		4	13	63	20	
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School			20	64	16	
		National		3	11	63	23	
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School			32	68	0	
		National		5	15	69	11	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School			8	60	32	
		National		4	14	55	27	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School			4	72	24	
		National		2	11	63	24	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School			4	44	52	
		National		2	10	65	23	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment			
In the school	80% (2005)	In Wales	80% (2004)

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 2005	Number of pupils in Y6	18
Percentage of pupils at each level		

			1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher Assessment	School		6	22	50	22	
		National	4	4	13	42	37	
	Test/Task	School						
		National						
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School		11	17	50	22	
		National	2	3	16	43	36	
	Test/Task	School						
		National						
Science	Teacher Assessment	School		6	6	67	22	
		National	3	1	8	51	39	
	Test/Task	School						
		National						

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English			
By Teacher Assessment		By Test	
In the school	72% (2005) *	In the school	
In Wales		In Wales	72% (2004)

* In 2005, levels attained by pupils were determined by teacher assessment and not by test, as in previous years.

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

Four inspectors spent a total of seven inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection. A peer assessor also spent two days in the school.

These inspectors visited:

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

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

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

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- five responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection and
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work.

The inspection team held post inspection meetings with the staff and governors.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Stephanie James Registered Inspector	Context Summary Recommendations Key Questions 1 and 2 Early Years Religious Education Appendices
Cliff Brace Team Inspector	Key Questions 3 and 5 Contributions to key question 4 English Design and Technology
Glyn Griffiths Team Inspector	Key Questions 6 and 7 Contributions to key questions 1, 2 and 3 Mathematics Information Technology
Charles Brentnall Lay Inspector	Key Question 4 Contributions to key questions 1 and 3

The contractor was:

Evenlode Education Ltd
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CB2 4XU

Acknowledgement

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

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

**Somerton Primary School
Hawthorn Avenue
Newport
NP19 9AB**

Summary for Parents

School Number: 680/2030

Date of Inspection: 10 – 11 October 2005

by

**Stephanie J James
W267/78911**

Date: 12 December 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T059/05

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Basic information about the school

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A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

Somerton 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 Somerton Primary School took place between 10 – 11 October 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Stephanie James 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 **standard** inspection.

Summary

Somerton Primary School is a caring school where pupils make good progress in the core subjects, often from a below average starting point, because of the generally good quality of teaching they receive. The school has addressed most of the shortcomings identified in the previous inspection in 1999.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

During the time of the inspection, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed in the six areas of learning and subjects were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	61%	35%	0%	0%

Sixty five per cent of pupils' standards in lessons observed were judged to be grade 2 or above, which is in line with the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2007. Standards in 100 per cent of lessons were grade 3 or above, which exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government's target that standards should be at least grade 3 or above in 98 per cent of lessons by 2007.

In the early years, overall standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Areas of Learning in the Early Years

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	2
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	3
Physical development	2

The overall quality of 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.

Children under five make good progress and achieve good standards, with no important shortcomings, in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy through their activities in all six areas of learning.

In key stages 1 and 2, overall standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	2	2
Mathematics	2	2
Information Technology	3	3
Design and Technology	2	3
Religious Education	3	3

Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, regardless of their background, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science so that standards achieved are in line with national expectations by the end of key stage 2. Standards achieved are above average when compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools (those with in excess of 49 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals).

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress relative to their abilities and achieve well because of the school's excellent provision for them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress in their linguistic skills.

In key stage 1, pupils' use of the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy in subjects across the curriculum is good, with no important shortcomings. In key stage 2, pupils achieve good standards, with no important shortcomings in their speaking and listening skills. Their use of reading, writing and numeracy in subjects other than English and mathematics, however, is less well developed because of the limited number of opportunities they have to develop and apply them.

Throughout the school, most pupils develop a functional understanding of how to use information and communication technology (ICT) for a variety of purposes, but they do not use

their research and investigative skills sufficiently regularly to achieve high standards of competence.

From the early years to the end of key stage 2, pupils successfully develop their understanding of, and confidence in using, the Welsh language.

In key stage 1, 2005 SAT results compare favourably with both Local Education Authority (LEA) and national averages. Over the last three years, the performance of boys has steadily improved in all three core subjects and they outperformed girls in 2005. The performance of girls has been more erratic, but the relatively small size and changing nature of each group of pupils makes it difficult to draw reliable conclusions from the data. There is, however, a gap between pupils' attainment in mathematics and science, and that in English, largely due to their poor language skills on entry to school.

In key stage 2, apart from a dip in standards in 2004 due to a large number of pupils with SEN, above average achievement in comparison with similar schools in the LEA and in Wales has been maintained or improved. By the end of the key stage, the gap in pupils' performance in English, and mathematics and science has closed. There is no marked difference in the pattern of performance between boys and girls in mathematics and science.

Pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential in the core subjects, but do not always achieve as much in the foundation subjects because less time is devoted to those subjects.

Children under five are happy in their learning and demonstrate an increasing ability to concentrate for prolonged periods when engaged in activities they have chosen themselves. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 build well on this sound foundation and demonstrate good personal and social skills.

Standards of behaviour are generally good. The majority of pupils are well behaved and show courtesy and consideration for others.

Whole school attendance equals the LEA average but is below the national average. A small, but significant, number of pupils arrive late at the start of the school day.

Pupils are interested in, and respect, cultural and religious diversity and are aware of equal opportunities issues. Their involvement in the local community and visits to places of interest help them understand the wider world. Their knowledge of the world of work is less well developed.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
3%	69%	28%	0%	0%

The percentage of lessons awarded a grade 2 or above is in line with the national picture. No lessons received a grade 4 or 5, which is better than the national picture.

Teachers effectively stimulate and challenge pupils to achieve their potential, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. They conduct the majority of lessons at a good

pace, use a range of stimulating resources and mostly succeed in gaining pupils' commitment to their work. They demonstrate secure knowledge of the subjects they teach.

A particularly good feature of the quality of teaching is the positive relationships that teachers establish with pupils. They have clear expectations of behaviour, which they make explicit to pupils and consistently apply the school's behaviour policy.

Some features in the teaching of children under five are outstanding. The early years co-ordinator is a very good role model in her teaching of language and literacy. She has an excellent understanding of young children's literacy development and makes the most of opportunities to maximise children's learning in this area. Nursery nurses and other adults are very effectively deployed and fully understand their role in enhancing children's learning.

Teachers plan thoroughly and have clear objectives for what pupils have to learn. They usually share objectives with pupils at the start of lessons, so that they know what is expected of them. Lessons are structured effectively and build well on pupils' previous learning. Opportunities are sometimes missed, however, for pupils to conduct independent research and develop their investigative skills.

In those lessons where there were some shortcomings, whole class discussions were too prolonged, resulting in pupils becoming restless and losing concentration. There were also insufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently and too little time given for them to become really absorbed in their tasks, or to finish them.

Teachers treat all pupils equally and fairly, successfully promote the Welsh language and give good support to pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language. However, there are some instances where tasks are not modified quite so well for pupils of all abilities.

Assessment procedures are good overall, although more could be done to ensure learners understand what they need to do to improve. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring the progress of pupils with SEN. Reports to parents are clear, comprehensive and suggest how parents can support their children.

The school's mission statement and aims give direction to the curriculum and this is reflected in the emphasis placed on the teaching of the core subjects. The curriculum also ensures that foundation subjects are included within the planning and provision of all lessons across all the key stages, although the amount of time devoted to these subjects does not always allow pupils to develop a deep knowledge and understanding of some aspects of them.

The curriculum in the early years is very well planned, coherent and provides a wide range of relevant and worthwhile experiences for children. Planning for the development of children's linguistic and mathematical skills is particularly detailed and effective in meeting their needs. Opportunities for them to explore their creative potential, however, are sometimes over-directed.

In key stage 1, planning for the development of pupils' key skills is good. In key stage 2, although key skills are identified in planning, there are insufficient opportunities to ensure that pupils develop and apply their key skills systematically, particularly in the foundation subjects. The school acknowledges that this is an area to be developed.

Good provision is made for pupils' personal and social development. The school endeavours to involve pupils in activities and experiences that promote self-reliance, responsibility and respect

for others. It promotes the development of a healthy lifestyle with good emphasis on healthy eating issues. Collective worship reinforces the school's aims to promote good personal values but does not always encourage pupils to reflect and explore wider issues of a spiritual nature.

The quality of the links with the local community is an outstanding feature. The school's close involvement with community organisations and regeneration schemes are an important part of its work. Parents offer good quality support in the classroom in a range of activities. There are good links with local schools and colleges. Induction arrangements are good for both nursery children and between key stages 2 and 3. Visits to places of educational interest provide a valuable addition to pupils' learning experiences.

Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig, the Welsh dimension, is promoted well throughout the school and is incorporated in most subjects across the curriculum.

The additional learning needs of pupils identified on the special needs register are very successfully met within an ethos of equal opportunities and inclusion.

The school's policy to promote race equality is well implemented. It effectively promotes equality of access and opportunity for all and works diligently to tackle social disadvantage. The curriculum successfully raises pupils' awareness of sustainable development, global citizenship and environmental issues. Pupils support a number of charities, which helps them understand the plight of those less fortunate than themselves.

There are some opportunities for pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills. However there is scope for further improving this aspect of learning.

Pastoral care of pupils is given high priority. Pupils feel safe and secure whilst in school. The head teacher and staff know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Most children start their education in the school's nursery, where the arrangements to settle them work very well. They benefit from a gentle introduction to school life. Pupils who joined the school at other times report that they settled in quickly and were welcomed.

The support and guidance of all learners is achieved through a structured and co-ordinated programme that includes health education and the careful tracking of pupils' academic progress. The school makes effective use of specialist services.

The school's provision for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being has good features that outweigh shortcomings. A safety and security issue was brought to the attention of the governing body.

Staff are trained in first aid and there are good procedures in place for meeting the needs of pupils who are unwell or who have an accident. Health and safety audits are regularly carried out within the school and risk assessments are undertaken before educational visits take place. Appropriate procedures are in place for child protection.

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good with outstanding features. The procedures for identifying pupils with SEN are comprehensive and systematic. Programmes of work contain manageable and achievable targets. Pupils, parents and carers are involved in the discussion and evaluation of their targets. Pupils with SEN receive equal access to the curriculum.

There are effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' behaviour. The school also has effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, bullying or any form of harassment.

The school recognises the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and treats all of them equally, with dignity and respect. Appreciating all people for who they are is built into the personal and social element of the curriculum. Parents feel that their children are well supported.

Leadership and management

The school has clear aims and objectives, which are reflected in the planned curriculum. The head teacher and staff are very committed to the care and wellbeing of the pupils. Parents and carers feel able to discuss any queries or problems they may have with the head teacher and staff.

There is a strong ethos of teamwork in the school. The head teacher monitors the work of the school informally, spends a great deal of time in classrooms and knows individual pupils very well. All staff work well together to promote the good relationships that exist between themselves and pupils. The quality of leadership shown by curriculum leaders in key areas is good. The work of the school senior management team is currently hampered by long-term staff absence, but committed curriculum leaders are ably carrying out school development in the core subjects.

Communication is generally good throughout the school and efficient administration procedures ensure its smooth running.

The school's performance management procedures promote teachers' professional development and help to improve the quality of the school's provision.

The governing body is very supportive, well informed and actively involved in the life of the school. It fully meets all regulatory and legal requirements.

The school monitors its performance by means of an open culture established between staff and governors. Governors effectively monitor staff performance by visiting classes and observing teaching and help establish priorities for the future.

Leaders of core subjects have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in the subjects for which they are responsible. However, foundation subject leaders do not have sufficient first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning. They therefore do not always establish rigorous, specific, focused criteria by which to measure progress, strengths and areas for development in the subjects for which they are responsible. Whilst portfolios of pupils' work aid the self-evaluation process in the core subjects, similar portfolios are at an early stage of development in the foundation subjects.

Staff are well qualified to teach the curriculum and meet the needs of all pupils. They take advantage of opportunities to develop their professional expertise through attending a number of courses. Part-time and temporary staff contribute positively to the quality of provision. The commitment of the staff is a strong feature of the school. Changes in staff have resulted in class reorganisation, and the school has yet to plan successfully for this change, within its staffing structure.

Subject leaders effectively manage budgets and monitor resources for the subjects for which they are responsible. On the whole, resources are adequate. There is a limited number of computers, but those that are available are not always used as efficiently as they could be, with the result that there are shortcomings in pupils' information technology skills.

The new Early Years Centre for nursery and reception children is spacious and well designed, appropriate for the needs of young children and very well resourced.

Some parts of the school building, particularly the accommodation for pupils in key stage 2, are in a poor state of repair. The outside area adjacent to the school hall is dangerous due to uneven surfaces, poor drainage and low walls. Shortcomings in the accommodation sometimes detract from the quality of teaching and learning. However, teachers manage to minimise the impact of these shortcomings on standards achieved. The caretaker and her cleaning staff work hard to maintain standards of cleanliness.

The main playground has been enhanced through the building of a multi games area. This provision extends valuable opportunities for pupils and young members of the community to participate in sport.

The school has a deficit budget brought about by falling rolls, which makes it difficult to plan for necessary expenditure. It is continuing to work with the LEA to resolve the budget deficit. Standards achieved by pupils in the early years and in the core subjects indicate that, overall, the school is providing adequate value for money.

Recommendations

The school now needs to:

- R1 Improve the quality of planning, development and application of pupils' key skills across the curriculum in reading, writing and numeracy in key stage 2 and in the use of ICT throughout the school;
- R2 Raise the profile of the foundation subjects;
- R3 Further develop the role of curriculum leaders in the self-evaluation process, particularly those who lead foundation subjects;
- R4 Address the safety and security issue brought to the attention of the governing body;
- R5 Continue to take action to reduce the deficit budget.

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.

Acknowledgement

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