

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF THE
SCHOOL INSPECTIONS ACT 1996**

ST ASAPH VP INFANT SCHOOL

*St Asaph
Denbighshire*

School Number: 570-3024

Date of Inspection: 4-6 March 2003

by

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Registered Inspector*

Date: 23 April 2003

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

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

The term "Reception" (R) is applied to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13, the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key Stage (KS) 1 of the national curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

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

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

CONTENTS

1. CONTEXT	1
THE SCHOOL AND ITS PRIORITIES	1
2. MAIN FINDINGS	1
THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT	1
3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	5
3.1 STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING.....	5
3.2 STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN KEY SKILLS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM	6
4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL	7
4.1 PUPILS’ SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT	7
4.2 BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES	8
4.3 ATTENDANCE.....	9
5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION	9
5.1 TEACHING	9
5.2 ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING	10
5.3 CURRICULUM	11
5.4 SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PUPILS’ WELFARE.....	12
5.5 PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SEN	12
5.6 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY, SCHOOLS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS.....	13
5.7 PARTNERSHIP WITH INDUSTRY	14
6. MANAGEMENT	14
6.1 QUALITY OF SELF-EVALUATION AND PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT	14
6.2 LEADERSHIP AND EFFICIENCY.....	14
6.3 STAFFING, ACCOMMODATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES	15
7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	16
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	16
PROVISION FOR THE UNDER-FIVES	16
ENGLISH	18
MATHEMATICS	19
SCIENCE.....	20
WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE.....	20
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY	21
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	21
HISTORY	22
GEOGRAPHY	22
ART	23
MUSIC	25
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	25
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.....	26
8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	26
8.1 PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION	26
8.2 KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION	27
APPENDIX	28
A. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL	28
B. SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	28
C. RESULTS OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENTS AND PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS	29
D. THE EVIDENCE BASE OF THE INSPECTION	29
E. COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSPECTION TEAM	30

1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

St Asaph VP Infant School is situated in St Asaph in Denbighshire. It draws the majority of its pupils from the immediate area surrounding the school which is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Approximately 25 per cent of pupils live in neighbouring towns and villages. There are 109 pupils on roll in full-time education. The pupils are taught in five classes. There is a reception class and classes for reception and Year (Y) 1 pupils, Y1 and Y2 pupils and a Y2 class. Additionally, there is a nursery class with 40 children who attend the nursery part-time. The pupils represent the full range of academic abilities and social backgrounds. The majority of children enter the nursery with language and social skills that are below average. Most transfer to the reception class or the reception and Y1 class in the year they will become five to begin their full-time education. Ten per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are nine per cent of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN). Nearly all pupils speak English as their first language. Three per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language. Their main languages are Tamil, Singhalese, Kanarese and Arabic. All pupils learn to speak Welsh as a second language in school.

The school was last inspected in June 1997.

The main aims of the school are to meet the academic and personal needs of all pupils within a Christian ethos. The curriculum areas that the school has been working towards this year are to maintain the high standards in reading and to improve the quality of pupils' writing.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

St Asaph's VP Infant School is an effective school with Christian ethos. The good features of the school far outweigh the shortcomings. From the key issues for action in 1997, good progress has been made in improving the accommodation, registration procedures, the appraisal of the staff and the teamwork of the staff who work with the under-fives. However, progress has been insufficient in improving standards, the quality of the school improvement plan and in monitoring the teaching and learning which continue to be key issues for action.

There is good provision for the under-fives overall with some significant strengths in the nursery provision for the children's personal and social development and their language, literacy and communication skills. The curriculum for under-fives successfully promotes the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age. Standards of achievement in the six areas of learning are as follows:

	Nursery	Reception
Language Literacy and Communication Skills	Very good	Good
Personal and Social development	Very good	Good
Mathematical Development	Good	Good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Good	Good
Physical Development	Good	Good
Creative Development	Good	Good

Pupils' standards of achievement in Key Stage (KS) 1 in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) are as follows:

Subject	KS1
English	Good
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Welsh	Satisfactory
Design and technology	Very good
Information technology	Good
History	Good
Geography	Good
Art	Good
Music	Satisfactory
Physical education	Satisfactory
Religious education	Good

Pupils achieve good standards overall.

- In 1997 standards for the under-fives were good overall but there were variations in the quality of standards in children's creative development. At KS1, standards were good in all subjects.
- Since then, there has been good improvement in children's personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy skills for the 3-4 year olds in the nursery. In KS 1, high standards have been maintained in reading and there has been good improvement in achievement in design and technology and pupils' listening skills. However, in music, physical education and Welsh, standards are not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection.
- In the 2002 NC teacher assessments for pupils in KS1, pupils attained high standards at the expected level 2 in English and average standards in mathematics and science when compared with all pupils nationally and those in other schools where a similar percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals.
- In reading the pupils exceeded the national results by 10 per cent at the expected level 2 and by seven per cent at the higher level 3. In writing pupils exceeded the expected level by four per cent but were below the higher level by five per cent. Writing is a particular focus for school improvement this year.
- In work across the curriculum, pupils achieve very good standards in listening and reading and good standards in writing, numeracy and information technology. In the absence of a policy for the development of key skills there are some inconsistencies in pupils' progress.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good overall and a strength of the school. Pupils are taught well to reflect on their own lives and those of others around them. Pupils are taught well the difference between right and wrong. Pupils happily work in pairs and in small groups. They respect the views, traditions and cultures of others. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to reflect in order to develop their own beliefs.

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- Relationships are very good between pupils and adults. Pupils enjoy school. They feel happy and secure and have very good attitudes to their work. Their behaviour is very good in and around school.
1. Attendance is satisfactory. Parents are well informed about the school's procedures for pro Raise the standards from satisfactory in Welsh, music and physical education to good and work towards raising standards in other subjects to very good.
 2. Refine the procedures for self-evaluation and planning improvement by:
 - setting further detailed, measurable, challenging, achievable and time-bonded targets in the SDP;
 - strengthening the procedures for monitoring the progress the school makes towards the targets set on the SDP.
 3. Strengthen the role of the deputy headteacher to take a full part as a senior manager and strengthen the roles of the subject co-ordinators by setting an achievable agenda for them to monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects.
 4. Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - providing opportunities for teachers to develop their subject knowledge in Welsh, art, music and physical education;
 - implementing a comprehensive scheme of work for art and music;
 - planning the activities for 4-5 year olds in more detail taking account of the vocabulary and concepts and skills to be acquired in climbing and balancing activities and in providing opportunities for children to make choices of materials in their creative activities;
 - matching work to the needs of the higher attaining 4-5 year olds in mathematics.

The school has already identified the majority of these issues for development. In addition to the above key issues, the school should note other areas for improvement in the report and act upon them. At the same time, the school must not lose sight of the many things it does well and maintain these positive aspects.

- noting good attendance. Registration is efficient and most pupils are punctual. There have been no exclusions.
- The quality of teaching is good. In four per cent it is very good, in 61 per cent it is good and in the remaining 35 per cent it is satisfactory. In the best teaching, the lessons are very well planned to meet the needs of the pupils. Clear objectives are shared with pupils and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. An effective plenary consolidates pupils' knowledge and understanding. The best teaching was observed in the nursery where it was very good.
- When teaching is satisfactory, the discussion with pupils during lessons did not fully extend their knowledge, understanding or skills. Some work was not matched as well as it could be to the individual needs of the pupils. Some teachers have insecure subject knowledge in art, music, Welsh and physical education and the English scheme of work is not consistently followed in Y2. There is a lack of detailed planning to guide the support staff of the 3-4 year olds. As a result children's thinking and learning are not always sufficiently extended.
- There are insufficient schemes of work in music and art to guide teachers' planning.

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- The quality of assessment, recording and reporting on pupils' progress and achievement is good overall. Pupils' progress in the core subjects is tracked regularly. There are effective procedures to analyse and set targets for groups of pupils from the data from tests and assessments. Parents are very well informed of their children's progress. Individual targets are not yet set for pupils to attain even higher standards. Although the staff know the pupils very well, occasionally the teachers do not sufficiently base their planning on data from the assessments made about pupils' learning.
 - The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, enriched by first hand planned experiences which meet the statutory requirements for teaching religious education and all subjects of the NC. There is a good emphasis placed on the development of pupils' personal development and their literacy skills.
 - The curriculum for children aged 3-4 in the nursery is very good. There is a rich programme of first hand activities that are very well planned to promote children's learning indoors and outdoors. The curriculum for children aged 4-5 is well planned overall and based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes and leads into the NC programmes of study. However insufficient emphasis is given to some aspects of children's mathematical, physical and creative development.
 - All pupils have full access to the curriculum. The curriculum is satisfactory in KS1. The lack of whole schemes of work and monitoring of teaching and learning results in some pupils making uneven progress in some curriculum subjects such as art, English and music.
 - The school takes good care of its pupils and successfully promotes the personal development and welfare of each child. The academic support for pupils is satisfactory.
 - There is good provision for pupils with SEN. The Code of Practice is fully implemented and there is good liaison with parents and outside agencies. The pupils achieve well, making good progress towards their individual targets.
 - The provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is good. The effective liaison between the school, parents and outside agencies helps the pupils make good progress.
 - The school has a very good partnership with parents and the community, local schools and other institutions. Parents receive very good information about the work of the school and their children's progress. The vast majority support their children's learning well at home. The parent-teacher association raises significant sums of money that benefits the pupils. There are strong links with the local clergy and religious community who regularly visit the school to take assemblies or to help with lessons in religious education. Parents think highly of the school and take advantage of the before and after school club, the playgroup and the family learning courses.
 - The school has a good partnership with industry. Pupils learn about the world of work from the visits from the local services such as the police and fire services and visits to the local shopkeepers. Visits are also made to the businesses community who support the school with some donations.
 - The quality of self-evaluation is satisfactory. The school development plan (SDP) has an overview of the current educational priorities. However, the plan lacks some rigour in detailing costings, timescales, personnel involved, action to be taken and success and evaluation criteria. This restricts the school's progress towards its targets.

- The leadership by the headteacher and teaching staff is satisfactory. The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership. The pastoral aims and values of the school are shared and supported by the staff, pupils, governors and the community. There is satisfactory direction set for the educational priorities for the school to raise standards. Although pupils' work is scrutinised, without monitoring of teaching and learning, the headteacher and the subject leaders have a limited view of pupils' learning across the school. The headteacher is working towards new initiatives for performance management and the school has recently gained the Investors in People Award.
- The management of the school is satisfactory. The deputy headteacher is supportive of the school development and works well alongside the staff but has an insufficient management role. The teachers are supportive of one another and work together to plan their lessons. They hold responsibilities for curriculum subjects. They seek to improve their expertise through professional discussions and in-service training (INSET). Pupils' work is discussed but there is no system for co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning which restricts their overall view of the development of their subjects across the school.
- The governing body is very supportive and understand the main strengths and weaknesses of the school. The lack of detail on the SDP does not provide the governors with an effective tool to monitor the ongoing progress towards the school's current targets. The governors take carefully considered financial decisions and seek best value for money before committing to expenditure. The finances are satisfactorily managed for spending on the overall school priorities. There is effective day-to-day administration. The school gives good value for money.
- There is a good level of staffing that benefits the pupils when they work in small groups. The staff have enhanced their professional expertise from INSET. However, some still lack subject knowledge in some subjects such as art, music, Welsh and physical education.
- The accommodation is in good condition and well maintained. The classrooms are adequate for the numbers of pupils on roll and are enhanced by the interesting and interactive displays of work which promote learning. Good use is made of the school grounds to study plants and mini-beasts for example.
- Good use is made of the learning resources to help pupils learn. The learning resources are generally of good quality and quantity, though there is a limited amount of computer software.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

Pupils achieve good standards overall in all classes. In the nursery, the pupils achieve very well in their personal, social and language skills.

- From observations of all classes, standards of achievement were judged to be satisfactory in 23 per cent of lessons and good or better in 77 per cent.
- The educational provision for under-fives successfully promotes the Desirable Outcomes of children's learning. Standards of achievement in the nursery for the 3-4 year olds are very good in the children's personal and social development and in their development of communication language and literacy. The 4-5 year olds achieve good standards in their

personal and social development and communication, language and literacy development. The under-fives overall achieve good standards in their mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative development.

- In KS1, standards are very good in design and technology.
- Standards are good in KS1 in English, mathematics, science, information technology, art and design, geography, history and religious education.
- Standards are satisfactory in Welsh, music and physical education.
- In recent years the standards of attainment at KS1 have been above the upper quartile mark in English and near the median quartile in mathematics and science. This is in comparison with all schools and those having a similar percentage of free school meals.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

The standards achieved overall in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information technology are good.

- There are strengths in pupils' listening and reading skills which are very good. Occasionally pupils make slower progress when they have not listened carefully enough to their teachers.
- Pupils' achieve good standards in speaking. They answer well in class discussions. Teachers prompt pupils effectively to explain their thinking which helps the pupils to organise their thoughts and to speak fluently at length.
- Throughout the school pupils are very attentive and listen carefully to the staff. They follow instructions accurately. During lessons, they often concentrate for long periods of time and respond well to the teachers in class and group discussions.
- Standards in reading are very good. The pupils enjoy reading a range of texts. There is a strong tradition in the school of maintaining high reading standards. the development of skills is very well planned. This is endorsed by the parents as they make a significant contribution to their children's progress when they read with them at home.
- Pupils' achieve good standards in writing. Their writing is well presented, evenly sized and spaced. Pupils' spelling and punctuation is of a good standard. They write successfully for a range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum. There are inconsistencies in pupils' achievement in the absence of a policy for the development of key skills.
- Numeracy skills are good and pupils apply them well across the curriculum. Pupils' skills in data handling are represented well as they construct graphs, tables and pictograms to record findings of their investigations in mathematics and science. In design and technology, they measure and estimate lengths of materials when constructing their models.
- Pupils use information technology successfully in other subjects to support their learning. For example, in English pupils use their word processing skills to edit their stories and prayers. In mathematics and science, pupils can make simple graphs and pictograms to represent their findings in investigational work. Pupils make good use of listening centres, programmable floor robots and digital cameras in their work.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. There is a strength in pupils' social development which is very good

- Pupils' spiritual development is good. There are good links with the cathedral and the local parish church. The clergy and members of the church community regularly take assemblies and contribute effectively to pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education and their spiritual and moral development.
- Pupils listen very well during assemblies and take part attentively in prayers and hymn singing. The school meets the statutory requirements for the provision of a daily act of collective worship. Pupils listen very attentively to the stories during assembly. However there are too few opportunities for pupils' to reflect and relate to the significant moral and social issues that underpin these stories in order to develop their own beliefs.
- Pupils are encouraged to explore the wonder of the world around them and take pleasure in the discovery and excitement of new learning across the curriculum. For example, in their investigations of electricity, pupils were excited to find out they could generate enough electricity to light a bulb when they discovered how to complete an electrical circuit.
- Pupils' moral development is good. During class discussions known as circle times, moral and social issues are discussed. Pupils know that their ideas are valued and respected by the staff. The pupils have a well developed sense of fairness and honesty. They are quick to help one another and show kindness and consideration towards others. The Christian aims of the school are clearly reflected in practice. Pupils are developing a growing understanding of how to live a Christian life as individuals and as a part of the school and the wider community.
- Pupils know of some major world faiths and celebrate some of their religious festivals such as Diwali. Pupils appreciate there are many ways of celebrating special occasions and that people worship in diverse ways. Pupils respect and learn from others in school that have beliefs, cultures and backgrounds that are different from their own.
- Pupils' social development is very good. There are very good relationships between the staff and pupils. This is characterised by a happy learning environment where there is mutual respect between staff and pupils. Pupils are not afraid to ask questions because they know that staff will willingly help them.
- The pupils are involved in formulating their class and school rules. They understand what is expected of them and abide by them. The majority are adept at working in small groups and are mature and sensible when taking turns and sharing resources.
- The pupils are eager take on small responsibilities within the classrooms. Year 2 pupils are appointed as councillors and meet with the staff and with members of the community such as the lady mayor to promote good behaviour in the school and to work for the benefit of others by seeking their views and taking positive action to improve school provision.
- The before and after school play club makes a positive contribution to pupils' social skills.

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- Pupils' cultural development is good. A particularly good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' knowledge of the local area. From entry into the nursery pupils learn Welsh. The trips and visits to places of interest enhance pupils' understanding in subjects such as history and geography and of the Welsh culture. Their appreciation of other cultures is enhanced through visitors to the school and through visits to art galleries and drama performances and through their study of subjects such as geography, history and religious education.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The behaviour of pupils in the classroom and around the school is very good.

- The pupils feel secure within a happy environment. The pupils are polite and courteous and readily help one another.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They enjoy their learning and most are supported well, particularly in their literacy skills at home.
- Pupils' very good behaviour is promoted very well during circle times. In these class discussions, personal and social matters that concern the pupils are discussed. The school council provides a platform for pupils' views and concerns. In the playground, boys and girls and those pupils from minority ethnic groups play happily together.
- There is a clear positive code of conduct which is shared between the pupils, staff, pupils and parents. The pupils take responsibility for agreeing their class rules and have a clear understanding of the expectations of the staff.
- There are very good relationships between the staff and the pupils based on mutual respect. The staff consistently encourage pupils in their work and build their confidence and self-esteem. All groups of pupils are encouraged to take a full part in all activities.
- There is rarely a need to resort to enforcing the school rules. On the rare occasions that pupils step out of line, matters are quickly and effectively sorted out between the school, pupils and their parents. The school has an effective anti-bullying policy. There have been no exclusions during the past year.

4.3 Attendance

Pupils' attendance at 93.7 per cent is satisfactory. Unauthorised absences are an exception.

- Punctuality is generally good and lessons start on time.
- The school fully complies with the National Assembly for Wales Circular 3/99 requirements for registration.
- The school has informed parents of its policy for promoting good attendance. Most parents are supportive in ensuring their children arrive on time.
- Parents inform the school appropriately if their child is to be absent and appropriate records are maintained. Any concerns about absence are followed up promptly by the school.

5 QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall. In lessons, 65 per cent of teaching was good or better and 35 per cent was satisfactory.

- The quality of teaching for children under five was mainly good with some very good teaching in the nursery. The nursery nurses make a significant contribution to the teaching in the nursery. In the reception classes the support staff make a satisfactory contribution to the teaching but they have less guidance and the lesson plans lack the detail of what is to be taught. This diminishes the quality of discussion that promotes learning and the children's involvement in making choices about materials and resources to use in creative activities.
- In KS1, the quality of teaching was good in 73 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 27 per cent. The non-teaching assistants and nursery nurses overall make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- The teaching of pupils with SEN is generally good.
- The teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language is good.

Good features of teaching include:

- High expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour;
- The good emphasis placed on pupils' development of personal, social and communication, language and literacy skills;
- Clear explanations and learning objectives shared with pupils so they know what is expected of them;
- The consistent building on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding;
- The teaching of new subject vocabulary;
- The teachers' good subject knowledge and the use of their expertise in most subjects;
- The teaching of pupils in small groups;
- Very good relationships between the pupils and the staff;

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- The planning under topic headings leads to successful links being made between subjects;
 - The match of work to the abilities of most of the pupils.

The shortcomings in teaching include:

- The insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning;
- Insufficient direction for the support staff who teach groups of 4-5 year olds;
- There is a lack of a challenge for the higher attaining 4-5 year olds in some mathematics lessons, creative activities and in music and Welsh for Y2 pupils.
- Insecure subject knowledge in art, music, physical education and Welsh.
- There is an inconsistent use of the scheme of work in English in Y2 and the lack of schemes of work in art and music.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress is good.

- Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' achievement, including baseline assessment for those under five are good. They are systematically carried out by all staff.
- Pupils with SEN are accurately identified from standardised assessment of reading skills and from teachers' observations of progress.
- Continuous and detailed recording of individual pupils' progress are kept, for example individual folders of samples of work and records of achievement which are used by staff to agree and moderate standards.
- The assessments that are made are used well to set targets for groups of pupils.
- Pupils do not have individual targets set in English and mathematics to help them attain higher standards.
- Teachers know the children well and reports to parents focus on the pupils' progress in the skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. Parents are invited to the school's open evening arranged to discuss the reports. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.
- The progress that pupils make in the core subjects is regularly tracked. Data gleaned from assessment is well used to identify groups of pupils such as pupils with SEN and higher ability. Occasionally, staff do not use this information well enough to match work to the abilities of individual pupils.
- Information is analysed in relation to gender but there is no significant difference in rates of progress between boys and girls.
- Where pupils' achievement is marked or commented on continuously and rigorously, as in the core subjects, pupils' achievement is good.
- The marking of pupils' work is positive and at its best helps pupils to understand their next learning steps.

5.3 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. It complies with the requirements of the NC and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, it varies in quality between subjects and classes.

- In the nursery, activities are very well planned and organised for the 3-4 year olds. The children have a good balance of activities planned for both indoors and outdoors in all areas of learning. In the reception class, the 4-5 year olds the curriculum is well planned overall. However, there is insufficient emphasis given to some aspects of pupils' creative and physical development and at times the lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils in mathematics. The planning for the under-fives leads effectively into the NC programmes of study.
- All statutory subjects are taught. Religious education is taught to the locally agreed syllabus. There is full coverage of the curriculum for most subjects but there is uneven coverage of the curriculum across the school. Art and music are not sufficiently supported by schemes of work or the guidance is not used well enough.
- The curriculum for KS 1 is satisfactory. It is planned around topics covering all subjects. The curriculum is enhanced by the effective link made between subjects.
- The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is planned well in most lessons and incidentally throughout the day apart from Y2 where planning is satisfactory. It is promoted well in other subjects such as geography, history and religious education.
- The planning for key skills is satisfactory overall. The development of skills is planned into all lessons. However, pupils' achievements become less effective in the absence of a policy and where there are inconsistencies in planning. For example, pupils in Y2 do not follow the same scheme in English as other pupils in the school.
- The school promotes social and educational inclusion well which reflects the aims and ethos of the school. There is a very good emphasis placed on the development of pupils' personal and social skills right from entry to the nursery. This is prompted very well through the school's system for promoting positive behaviour and through the provision of circle times which give pupils a platform to express their views and promotes positive action.
- The teaching of children in small groups in subjects such as design and technology promotes their personal, social and academic achievement well. Good emphasis is placed upon pupils' health education. Children eat healthy fruit and biscuit snacks at morning break-times and learn well how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported well by visiting staff from the Local Education Authority (LEA) and their teachers.
- The SEN Code of Practice is adhered to. Pupils receive good support from outside agencies and their class teachers and are included in all school activities.
- Homework is used well to extend pupils' understanding of their lessons and to develop their basic skills. Pupils often bring in artefacts, books or information from the Internet about their topics. This contributes well to the development of their research skills.
- The curriculum is enriched by frequent visits to the local environment to support pupils' learning in the topics that they study. The visitors from the local community such as the

fire and police services, the parent and religious community promote pupils' learning well.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The school makes good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils in its care.

- The personal and social guidance pupils receive at school is very good. Parents agree that the teachers know their pupils well and that their children can approach teachers and receive help when they need it. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive and supportive and are strong models of respect and concern for others.
- The parents, staff and pupils follow the systems which guide the code of conduct. The pupils feel safe and valued in the school. There is caring supervision during break and lunch times.
- Personal and social education issues are well addressed throughout the curriculum, including sex education.
- The academic support that pupils receive at school is satisfactory. The school's system of assessment, recording and reporting provides a solid framework for teaching and learning. However the lack of whole school schemes of work and monitoring of teaching and learning results in pupils making uneven progress in some areas of the curriculum.
- There are a number of support and guidance policies in place including Road Safety, Health and Safety, and Equal Opportunities on the grounds of race, gender, disability and ability. These are well implemented. Fire drills are held regularly. There is an accident book and a number of staff hold current First Aid qualifications.
- Child Protection procedures are fully understood by all concerned and appropriately implemented by staff.
- There is constructive liaison with other outside agencies. This is a school that welcomes and instils confidence into all pupils. Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into the life of the school. The building has been adapted to cater for pupils with physical disabilities.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language have additional support twice a week from a visiting LEA specialist teacher. There is a good focus on the development of basic skills and vocabulary. Work is provided for parents to help their children at home to support the good progress these children make.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Special educational needs pupils participate fully in a broad and well-balanced curriculum, including religious education.

- Nineteen per cent of pupils are listed on the school's SEN register. The pupils who have a statement of special needs are well provided for by specialist teachers and make good progress. Pupils on school action plus, and those nominated for school action, make steady progress in relation to their needs and abilities when withdrawn for small group or individual tuition and also in-class support.
- The SEN Code of Practice is correctly implemented by the headteacher in her role as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Individual Education Plans (IEPs), written by class teachers, are succinct, focused and regularly reviewed. There is regular and useful liaison with parents.

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- Governors fully comply with their duties in relation to SEN.
 - Most teachers have received satisfactory training to inform and guide their work with pupils who have a wide range of difficulties.
 - There is a positive working relationship with outside agencies including the Hearing Impaired Unit, the Educational Psychologist and Educational Social Worker.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The partnership with parents, the community, schools and other institutions is overall very good.

- The parents' views of the school are very positive. There is an 'open door' policy and parents feel free to talk to the staff without a formal appointment usually at the beginning and end of the school day.
- On entry to school, care is taken to inform parents and their children about the expectations of the school. The prospectus meets with statutory requirements is easily understood and is available to all parents. In addition, home visits before children start school and useful information promote a good start to pupils' education.
- Communication between parents and the staff is very good. The parents are kept very well informed about the work of the school and their children's progress through information about the topics pupils study, discussion with staff and annual reports. There are termly opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress with the teachers. The governors' annual report is informative and meets statutory requirements.
- The vast majority of parents support the pupils' learning at home well. There is a clear home-school agreement in place. There is a very good reading partnership. The reading diaries are effective in demonstrating how the parents can continue to hear their children read at home without repetition and provides a good form of daily communication where parents can write their comments.
- The Family Learning project promotes a close partnership with parents and gives parents the opportunity to sharpen their understanding of how their children learn basic skills in literacy and numeracy so they are in a better position to help their children learn at home.
- There are good links with outside agencies to support pupils' learning. Parents are kept regularly informed of the pupils' progress and how to support pupils' IEP's and how to help those who are learning English as an additional language.
- The parent teacher association raise significant funds to support the work of the school and meet the cost of school trips and visits.
- The parents and members of the community make a significant contribution to the pupils learning by supervising small groups of children in school or hearing them read.
- The school is used as a resource for students on initial teacher training courses and pupils from the nearby high school on work experience placements.
- There are close links with the cathedral and parish church who promote the Christian aims of the school well. Pupils show concern for the wider world as they are active in fund raising for charities and appeals.

- The visitors into school from the local services such as the fire-fighters and police; links to local shopkeepers and local businesses support pupils' learning well.
- The school has been instrumental in setting up a before and after school club. This has proved successful and assists pupils' social and personal development.
- There are good links between the playgroups, nursery and reception year and junior schools to promote a smooth transition in all phases of pupils' learning.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

The school and its governing body succeed in maintaining a good partnership with the world of work.

- The visits made to local industries develop pupils understanding of their topics and enhance their understanding of the world of work.
- The local business and industrial community provides valuable support by helping with donations. Service industries are particularly supportive of the curriculum and come into school to talk to the pupils.
- Staff development has been enhanced by the Investors in People Award.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- Appropriate curriculum targets have been set for improvement in the SDP based on the school's evaluation of the pupils' progress. However there is a lack of detail to demonstrate important considerations for yearly priorities. The targets do not have clear focus for resources implications, time scales and personnel involved with success criteria for tasks to be completed and evaluated.
- There are appropriate evaluations taken from results of national and LEA data on pupils' attainments and achievements. This data informs the overall curriculum priorities on the SDP. However a realistic view of pupils' learning in individual targets is inhibited by the lack of monitoring of teaching and learning. Although staff monitor pupils' recorded work and share their planning, they are less able to help and contribute effectively to the improvement of quality of teaching or to have a realistic view of the overall development of subjects across the school for which they have overall responsibility.
- Governing body meetings have effective minutes and have a general overview of the development of the school priorities. However, the SDP does not provide sufficient detail for governors to monitor the school's progress on a termly basis. In this respect the SDP is not an effective tool by which the governors can monitor and support the progress of the school towards its targets.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The overall leadership, management and the financial efficiency provided by the governors, headteacher and the teaching staff with management responsibilities are satisfactory.

- The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership and direction for the school. The aims of the school are reflected in the positive ethos of the school which is characterised by a commitment for equality of opportunity, high standards of personal development,

behaviour and good academic achievement. This is shared between the governors, staff, pupils and parents.

- The quality of the leadership to effect curriculum development is satisfactory. The day-to-day progress towards curriculum targets relies heavily on informal discussion with staff.
- The staff have benefited from the Investors in People Award. They have sought to improve the quality of their teaching which has been linked to their INSET needs. The headteacher is working towards implementing the system for Performance Management to raise standards.
- Responsibilities for subjects and aspects of the school's provision are delegated to the staff which is an improvement from the last inspection. They meet together regularly to plan their work and to monitor pupils' work. Curriculum discussions are informal. Although the staff know the pupils very well, neither the headteacher nor the subject leaders have monitored teaching and learning which restricts their understanding of how well pupils learn in lessons. The role of the deputy headteacher is not specific enough. She is unable to use her expertise to the best advantage.
- Art and music do not have sufficient curriculum guidance tailored to the needs of the school. This restricts the teachers' planning and their overview of standards in the school. Consequently without a sharp focus for improvement curriculum change and development is slow.
- The governing body is effective. The governing body are very supportive of the school. It has well organised into committee structures and governors understand their responsibilities. Governors are kept well informed about overall school events. However, they know less about the detail of curriculum development.
- The headteacher and the governors have a good overview of the overall school budget and monitor spending rigorously. There are few reserves. The main expenditure and planning has been to maintain the good level of staffing.
- The day-to-day administration and financial control are good and the issues from the last financial audit have been resolved. The school provides good value for money.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good.

- The school is adequately staffed. There are 5.5 full time equivalent teachers including the headteacher and four part-time support staff.
- Teachers are appropriately qualified for the classes they teach. They are well supported by committed learning assistants. Occasionally their effectiveness is diminished when there is insufficient planning for what is expected in lessons for the 4-5 year olds.
- The school has recently been awarded the Investors in People status. There are clear induction procedures with a named mentor to the needs of the school and professional development of teachers. In-service training is satisfactorily linked to the overall needs of the school and the staff, but some staff lack subject knowledge in Welsh, music, physical education and art.
- There have been changes in staffing since the last inspection.
- Overall the accommodation is in good condition and well maintained. Displays are interesting and helpful to learning.

- Classrooms provide sufficient space for the number of pupils and the demands of the NC. Other space in the school is imaginatively used. The large hall is an asset: it is well positioned and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' development.
- There is good outdoor provision with hard play areas and a field. There is a secure play area for outdoor activities for the under-fives.
- The school is well resourced with books and artefacts but the amount of computer software to both support and stimulate pupils' learning is limited.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

There is very good provision for children aged 3-4 and good provision for pupils aged 4-5 years. The expected Desirable Learning Outcomes are promoted well through the well planned curriculum.

The children aged 3-4 in the nursery make very good progress in their language, literacy and communication skills and in their personal and social development. In all other areas of learning children achieve good standards. Pupils aged 4-5 in their reception year achieve good standards in all areas of learning.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Good features

- The 3-4 year olds listen very attentively to the staff and talk about their personal experiences. They respond very well to instructions and concentrate and persevere with their tasks. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing books. Most are developing their speaking skills very well as they gain confidence in discussing their work. The 4-5 year olds extend their knowledge and understanding of language and literature as they use an increasing range of vocabulary to recall the events of the information book about 'rabbit'. Most are beginning to read and write. The children distinguish words beginning with the letter 'r' and identify simple words such as 'in', 'up' and 'the'. The majority pick out words that rhyme and complete a simple sentence with some help. Children know the difference between story books, information books and magazines. They know the meaning of 'author' and understand the purpose of the contents page. Children in both the nursery and the reception classes learn Welsh. The children respond well to the teachers' use of Welsh as they learn Welsh words, songs and phrases.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Personal and social development

Good features

- The 3-4 year old children respond very well to the daily routine. They listen to the staff and follow successfully instructions from adults. They take a full and active part during class and group discussions. Most are confident in choosing their activities and they help to tidy away their resources at the end of each session. Pupils play happily side-by-side and learn to take turns when sharing resources.

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- The 4-5 year olds work well together in small groups. They concentrate on their tasks, persevering to complete them during the time available. The majority listen and respect the views of others, for example when they discuss a rabbits' home and food. Children are independent in getting themselves ready for physical education.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Mathematical development

Good features

- The 3-4 year olds make good progress in their understanding of number to five and in counting to ten and beyond. They are developing their mathematical vocabulary well such as long and short as they make and compare their playdough worms. They are beginning to develop an understanding of capacity as they enjoy filling and emptying differently sized containers in the sand and water. The children know and sing number rhymes and songs in English and Welsh.
- The 4-5 year olds recognise and know the properties of most two and three-dimensional shapes. They understand the meaning of mathematical terms such as 'more than' and 'less than'. Most are able to solve simple mathematical problems with numbers to ten. The children make good progress as they learn to say and order the days of the week. The *Helpwr Heddiw* takes responsibilities well for recording for instance the date and weather in Welsh.

Shortcomings

- The higher attaining pupils aged 4-5 are insecure in their knowledge of learning and ordering the days of the week.
- The higher attaining 4-5 year olds do not consistently make sufficient progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Good features

- The 3-4 year olds show interest and excitement in exploring the world around them. They dig up worms in the garden and carefully observe their features and how they move. The children make wormeries in small groups to observe how worms feed and live. They make visits to places of interest around them to explore the work that people do and the natural environment. The majority use the computer with increasing control as they use a mouse to complete simple programs such as dressing teddy. The children are becoming confident in talking about their favourite pets, friends and families.
- The majority of 4-5 year olds broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world around them as they visit the immediate environment and talk to farmers, shopkeepers and visitors from the local services such as the police and fire fighters. They observe the changing seasons and the wonder of new growth. The children make good use of information technology to construct graphs and pictograms, as they research and collect data for their topics.

Shortcomings

- There are no major shortcomings.

Physical development

Good features

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- The 3-4 year olds develop their physical skills using large apparatus and wheeled toys. Children enjoy the daily benefits of exercise and planned outdoor activities in all areas of learning. During their indoor activities, the children handle with small equipment such as jig-saws, paintbrushes and building resources with increasing control.
 - Children aged 4-5 follow instructions very well to stop, move, and follow a simple sequence of movements. They continue to develop their skills in handling small equipment and tools during activities that require drawing, writing, cutting out and sticking.

Shortcomings

- The 4-5 year olds do not sufficiently develop their skills of climbing and balancing.

Creative development

Good features

- The 3-4 year olds respond well to a wide range of well planned creative activities. They explore colour, texture by mixing paints and discovering the properties of materials such as modelling materials. The children make good progress in expressing their thoughts, ideas and feelings in discussion by for example, painting, making models and responding to stories and music. Their role-play is well developed as they take on the roles of customers, waiters or waitresses and managers in their café.
- The older 4-5 year olds continue to make good progress in the reception classes. The children paint and draw in response to their current topics and stories. They use range of modelling materials that promotes their knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials. Pupils respond well to music and enjoy singing a range of well known songs and rhymes.

Shortcomings

- The 4-5 year olds do not make well thought out choices of materials and resources to use in their creative activities.

English

Standards of achievement in English are good.

Good features

- The majority of pupils, especially the boys, speak confidently and are keen to contribute to discussions in class. They talk about their ideas, and describe their news to large groups, very clearly and without inhibition, asking and answering questions maturely. They are eager to take part in role play and small group work. As a result of the good model of challenging language given by their teachers pupils have a broad vocabulary and are continually acquiring new words and expressions.
- They listen attentively and recall the sequence and events of a story in detail. Because they listen so well they are able to learn new information competently.
- Pupils are making good progress, overall, in reading, including a variety of different instructions, poetry and prose which they use very well to foster their own creative ideas. More able pupils are making very good progress. Those who are slower in reading are making good progress in knowing and using their phonic knowledge and selecting various clues to improve their accuracy and expression.

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- Pupils have good understanding of the conventions of books. Year 2 pupils know who wrote and illustrated a book and can find information within a book quickly. They are very sure who their favourite author is and justify their choice both in discussion and in their book review. They interpret the details of pictures well and, using accurate vocabulary and their imagination, can predict the outcome of a story.
 - Pupils are making good progress in writing according to their ability. Many write clearly paying attention to basic punctuation; they demarcate sentences accurately. Most pupils are making good progress in spelling responding well to the rigorous teaching they experience.
 - Older pupils have a developing understanding of how to write for different purposes, for example for very young children and persuasive posters. Whatever their ability pupils have sufficient confidence in their skills to write detailed and lengthy pieces.
 - Many have a clear, legible handwriting style and present their work with pride.
 - Pupils learning English with help from the staff and an LEA specialist teacher make good progress.
 - The pupils with SEN receive skilled help and make good progress towards their targets.

Shortcomings

- A few pupils do not make satisfactory progress when they haven't listened well enough to their tasks.
- Pupils' progress is inconsistent in Y2 when the scheme of work is not fully implemented.

Mathematics

Pupils achieve good standards in mathematics.

Good features

- Pupils use information and communication technology well to represent their mathematical data. Pupils interpret this information correctly in mathematics and other subjects to inform their thinking. Pupils consolidate their understanding of basic number skills through effective use of computer programs and games.
- Pupils take pride in presenting and organising their written work well.
- Pupils' use investigational and mental skills effectively to solve problems.
- Most Y2 pupils understand place value to 100. The majority of pupils accurately subtract and add one and two digit numbers.
- Pupils apply a range of mathematical skills such as measuring and recording in a graphical form in other subjects such as design and technology and science.
- In Y2, pupils' skills in telling the time are developing well. Most pupils know the difference between analogue and digital time and are able to record time in hours and half hours correctly using both forms.
- Pupils have a good understanding of pattern. The youngest pupils reconstruct patterns using two criteria. The oldest pupils devise their own patterns to solve mathematical problems.
- The majority of pupils know the properties and names of two and three-dimensional shapes.

Shortcomings

- Some average attaining pupils find difficulty in systematically finding answers to investigations.

Science

Standards in science are good.

- Pupils use the local environment successfully as they investigate plants and mini-beasts.
- Pupils enjoy science investigations and work very well as they carry out their investigations in pairs and small groups. Their joy in new learning is evident as they discover the results of their investigations, for example, as pupils grow and harvest potatoes or observe electricity lighting a bulb.
- Pupils are developing their investigational skills well. They predict, observe and record their findings. Pupils use their mathematical and information technology skills profitably to recoding their findings. Pupils in Y2 are developing concepts well about friction. Most pupils in Y2 understand the need for fair testing as they test their toy cars for speed on a variety of surfaces. Pupils know that conditions must be kept constant except for the surface the cars travel on. In Y2, pupils investigate electricity and investigate successfully how to complete a circuit to light a bulb. Pupils understand the dangers of using electricity. They understand the different sources of electricity and understand its use to power many home appliances that are vital for everyday living. Visits to for example, the Electric Mountain in Llanberis help pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of the use of electricity in industry.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Welsh second language

Standards of achievement in Welsh are satisfactory.

Good features

- Younger pupils build well on the Welsh they have learned in the nursery and reception classes and standards are good in early KS1. The rate of progress is satisfactory in Y2.
- Pupils have built up a confidence in speaking and singing Welsh through incidental greetings and songs in the Early Years.
- Younger pupils speak clearly and confidently in role-play, for example in a café, with good pronunciation and intonation.
- Pupils understand very simple instructions. They answer questions correctly, often in complete sentences. Pupils respond very confidently to work with the puppet when they practise a satisfactory range of language patterns with increasing competence.
- Pupils perform the *Helpwr Heddiw* duties eagerly. They ask questions of the other pupils dismiss them individually at the end of lessons and sort foodstuffs into likes and dislikes.
- Pupils can describe a limited number of weather conditions. They know their basic colours, and count up to 20.
- Many younger pupils can read familiar words and phrases competently and can copy written sentences correctly.

Shortcomings

- Older pupils are not confident in their speaking and listening skills. They do not make as good progress as younger pupils.

Design and technology

The standards are very good in design and technology.

Good features

- Pupils make very good progress in developing their knowledge skills and understanding of the subject.
- Pupils' apply very effectively their knowledge and skills when designing and making. They make very well-informed judgements about their choices of the materials they use and which techniques to employ when making their products.
- Pupils work very well in pairs and small groups to evaluate their work against their original designs. This discussion helps them to improve the quality of their work.
- Pupils enjoy designing and making products and adapt their designs as they learn from their experiences of joining materials. Pupils handle materials and tools with care and use their resources profitably.
- Pupils apply fruitfully their knowledge and skills from science, mathematics and art as they make a lighthouse that light up, make moving vehicles or construct adventure playgrounds.
- Pupils understand and use the correct vocabulary when they work. For example, pupils in Y1 understand the meaning of mechanism and lever. They made a simple lever for their Easter cards which they designed to incorporate a moving part.
- Pupils apply their skills in information technology very well in designing their artefacts. For example, the Y2 pupils have designed patterns and logos for their models and products.
- There is good improvement in pupils' standards of achievement since the last inspection.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

Standards in information technology are good.

Good features

- Pupils use information technology with growing understanding, confidence and independence to support their learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils sort and classify data well. They present for example, a variety of graphs of their favourite foods and eye colour.
- Pupils use CD-ROM programs very well to enhance their knowledge and understanding in subjects such as history and geography. For example, Y2 pupils develop their mapping skills effectively as they identify the main geographical features of the British Isles.

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- Pupils build up systematically their control skills. For example, pupils program a floor robot to follow a series of commands. This helps them to learn about direction and points of the compass.
 - Pupils select and move shapes and objects and use colour and line to create pictures, for instance in art and design and design and technology.
 - Older pupils are adept at using word processing skills to edit and refine their stories. Pupils use 'Starspell' successfully to improve their expertise in spelling. Pupils who are learning English and those who need additional support use information technology to improve their skills. They benefit from programs to help them understand vocabulary and to improve their competence in basic skills of writing, reading and mathematics.
 - Pupils have a growing awareness of the applications of information technology in the wider world. In their work the pupils make good use of listening stations and of video recordings in lessons. Pupils use a digital camera to support their learning. They are progressing well in their understanding of the use of email. Good use is made of the Internet to research their topics.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant weaknesses.

History

Standards of achievement in history are good.

Good features

- Younger pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the passing of time, the concept of 'then' and 'now' through discussions about their families and changes in their own development. Many record interviews, based on well constructed questions, with grandparents noting changes in everyday lifestyles. They also question the caretaker about changes in their own school from when he was a pupil.
- In one class pupils compare old and modern household objects and identify, through simple problem-solving, what uses were made of various artefacts.
- They learn about the lives of famous people such as Florence Nightingale, Guy Fawkes and Esgob Morgan.
- Older pupils have a good sense of chronology being able to sequence the Roman, Norman, Tudor and Victorian periods.
- Through observation of photographs and first hand experiences pupils are developing a good knowledge and understanding of local history. The pupils visit a rich range of places which enhance their learning and sense of living history.
- They record their work legibly in a variety of different forms.

Shortcomings

- No significant shortcomings.

Geography

Standards are good in geography.

- Pupils' past work demonstrates that they systematically acquire skills, knowledge and understanding that is appropriate for their age. For example, In Y1, pupils draw simple

plans and maps of their school and the immediate area. In Y2, pupils understand that maps are drawn to scale. They recognise and reproduce some common symbols to create a key for their imaginary treasure maps.

- Pupils make good progress in their geographical in their knowledge and understanding of places. Pupils in Y1 know the main features of the local area. Pupils in Y2 extend their understanding of the locality and Welsh culture as they visit local farms and castles.
- In Y2, pupils effectively use information technology to extend their understanding of the United Kingdom. They develop well their understanding of features such as cities, rivers and mountains in Great Britain.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how hot and cold climates affect the way of life for the people who live there. Pupils understand that differences around the world between cultures that affect how people live. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are encouraged to contribute to pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures within society.
- Pupils are beginning to have a good understanding of the relationship between people and the environment. This is enriched by visits to places such as 'Electric Mountain' to learn about hydroelectric power.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Art

Standards of achievement in art are good.

Good features

- Younger KS1 pupils make good progress in drawing a house, some from observation, and transferring their design on to polystyrene tiles. They can articulate the process and make evaluative comments on their finished products.
- Pupils look at the work of Mondrian and Pollock and draw simple line pictures on computer. They study the works of Picasso, Van Gogh and Monet and discuss the moods the artists convey.
- They pay close attention to the stained glass windows in the cathedral to develop their work further in line and colour.
- They create clay owls to a good standard to support their work in English.
- Older pupils produce very competent landscape and seascape paintings demonstrating a good sense of colour, line and form. They select their own artists upon which to model their work and develop their painting skills very well in response to the detailed small group tutoring they receive, for example they know that the horizon is not best represented by a straight line. They also blend colours well and are conscious of shading.
- Pupils use their art skills well in subjects across the curriculum. They also make good progress in response to visiting artists, for example murals work on Myths and Legends of Wales and enter their pieces in various local competitions.

Shortcomings

- Although the work that pupils produce is often good, at times very good, they do not experiment freely enough with their own ideas.

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- Pupils have limited skills when working in three dimensions.

Music

Standards of achievement in music are satisfactory.

Good Features

- Pupils sing with obvious enjoyment in assemblies and class singing lessons. They have a wide repertoire of songs in both Welsh and English. Pupils perform the action songs with gusto, singing clearly and in tune.
- They perform confidently and eagerly in school concerts and services in front of adult audiences. They also enjoy playing in a small class ensemble, waiting their turn and playing accurately on cue.
- Pupils are developing a good sense of rhythm; they can keep a steady beat and repeat different rhythm patterns using various parts of their bodies and un-tuned percussion instruments.
- They know the names of a small number of instruments.
- Younger pupils are making good progress in reading graphic scores, observing loud and soft when they compose, as a class, a sound accompaniment to 'The Three Little Pigs'.
- Older pupils listen to extracts of music such as 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' and make simple evaluations of what they hear.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not explore their own composition skills sufficiently. There is more emphasis on performance than on composing and appraising.
- Many pupils, especially in Y2, do not achieve high enough standards in composing and appraising music.

Physical education

Standards are satisfactory overall.

Standards of achievement in physical education are good in dance and satisfactory in ball games. No lessons were observed in other aspects of physical education but scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in a number of skills, including gymnastics.

Good features

- Pupils respond well to changes in the mood and tempo of the music.
- They work well individually and in pairs and small groups.
- They have good body awareness and use space well.
- Pupils are developing good ball skills, in their lessons in short tennis. They are improving their abilities in forehand and backhand strokes and moving well demonstrating good hand-eye co-ordination.
- Pupils change for physical education quickly and sensibly.

Shortcomings

- Pupils are not currently attending swimming because of the large class size in Y2 and as a result are not developing their swimming skills.

Religious education

Standards in religious education are good.

Good features

- Pupils know that Christianity is the main religion in this country. They have a good knowledge of Bible stories and parables such as ‘The Lost Sheep’.
- There are close links with the cathedral and parish church. Pupils often visit them or take part in religious celebrations. These visits and the contribution made by clergy and members of the religious community make a significant contribution to pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the subject and pupils’ knowledge of Welsh religious history.
- Through stories, pupils understand well concepts such as honesty fairness and truth. They discuss and relate to these concepts within their own everyday experiences. In lessons the pupils discuss right and wrong and apply this understanding to their lives. They know that their words and actions affect others. Pupils respect others’ views and show care and concern for others.
- Pupils know how to pray and write their own prayers to thank God for the natural world and their family. They learn and sing a variety of religious songs and hymns.
- The pupils learn of some other major world faiths. They appreciate that there are different ways of celebrating religious occasions.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed well through visits made by the clergy, visits to the local church and cathedral and during lessons.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The previous inspection of June 1997 identified the following issues for the school to address:

1. Further raise standards of achievement from good to very good in most subjects;
2. Consider how to arrange the activities for the under-fives so that teachers and nursery nurses can work more closely as a team, cooperating more on each activity with every group so as to ensure that all pupils are fully working towards the Desirable Outcomes in the six areas;
3. Ensure that each teacher has a role as subject(s) co-ordinator with a clear monitoring task;
4. Fully develop the teacher-appraisal system;
5. Provide opportunities for all staff, especially those dealing with under-fives, to improve their knowledge of creative development;
6. Review registration procedures;
7. Expand on the SDP so as to include pertinent details;

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8. Reconsider ways of incorporating the large toilet block into the protected area of the main building.

Progress since last inspection

Overall there has been insufficient progress from the last inspection.

- There has been good progress in improvements to the accommodation, registration procedures, the appraisal of staff and the teamwork of the under-fives.
- Overall there has been insufficient progress in raising standards, improving the SDP and monitoring teaching and learning.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

5. Raise the standards from satisfactory in Welsh, music and physical education to good and work towards raising standards in other subjects to very good.
6. Refine the procedures for self-evaluation and planning improvement by:
 - setting further detailed, measurable, challenging, achievable and time-bonded targets in the SDP;
 - strengthening the procedures for monitoring the progress the school makes towards the targets set on the SDP.
7. Strengthen the role of the deputy headteacher to take a full part as a senior manager and strengthen the roles of the subject co-ordinators by setting an achievable agenda for them to monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects.
8. Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - providing opportunities for teachers to develop their subject knowledge in Welsh, art, music and physical education;
 - implementing a comprehensive scheme of work for art and music;
 - planning the activities for 4-5 year olds in more detail taking account of the vocabulary and concepts and skills to be acquired in climbing and balancing activities and in providing opportunities for children to make choices of materials in their creative activities;
 - matching work to the needs of the higher attaining 4-5 year olds in mathematics.

The school has already identified the majority of these issues for development. In addition to the above key issues, the school should note other areas for improvement in the report and act upon them. At the same time, the school must not lose sight of the many things it does well and maintain these positive aspects.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	St Asaph VP Infant School
School type	Voluntary controlled
Age-range of pupils	3-7
Address of school	Upper Denbigh Road St Asaph Denbighshire
Post-Code	LL17 0RL
Telephone Number	01745 583416

Headteacher	Miss S P Williams
Date of appointment	November 1985
Chair of Governors	Mrs L Linaker
Registered Inspector	Mrs A Dawson
Dates of inspection	3-5 March 2003

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>					
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Total
Number of pupils	20	41	31	37	129

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	5	1	5.5

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	21:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	13:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	21
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>			
	R	KS1	Whole school
Spring 2002	93.91	93.74	93.83
Summer 2002	91.65	93.37	92.51
Autumn 2002	93.50	94.70	94.1

Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	N/A
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C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT RESULTS END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y2: 42					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	88	7	0
		National	0	4	13	62	21	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	7	57	36	0
		National	0	4	13	54	29	0
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	12	81	7	0
		National	0	5	13	70	12	0
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	100	0	0
		National	0	3	11	63	23	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	64	26	0
		National	0	2	9	60	29	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	12	71	17	0
		National	0	2	10	67	21	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	88	In Wales:	81

D Pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 and 365 of the Education Act 1996 or, in the case of the Task/Test were absent.

W Pupils who are "working towards" level 1, but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection took place over two and a half days. Three inspectors were involved and a total of 26 lessons were observed and further observations of groups of pupils were made. During this time all classes observed and all the subjects of the NC and religious education were inspected.

Discussions with pupils to ascertain their knowledge of the curriculum and their attitudes to learning took place on a regular basis. Pupils' work across the age and ability range was examined systematically and the school provided the inspection team with a comprehensive record of pupils' work and other school activities.

Discussions also took place with the headteacher and the staff, to establish their specific responsibilities and professional perspectives. School documentation was inspected and a discussion took place with the headteacher and administrative staff concerning financial matters. Responses to parental questionnaires and letters were examined.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mrs A Dawson	RgI	Context Main Findings Educational standards achieved by the pupils across the curriculum Teaching Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Curriculum Standards achieved in key skills Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement Leadership and efficiency Progress since the last inspection Key issues for action	Under-fives mathematics science design and technology geography information technology religious education
Mr G Morris	Lay	Attendance Behaviour and attitudes Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions Partnership with industry	
Mrs M Meredith-Jones	Team	Assessment, recording and reporting Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Provision for pupils with special educational needs Support, guidance and pupils' welfare	English Welsh second language art history music physical education

The visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, the headteacher and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.