

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

***St Mary's and St Patrick's Roman
Catholic Voluntary Aided School
Monica Street
Maesteg***

School Number: 672-3311

Date of Inspection: 20-23 May 2002

by

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Registered Inspector***

Date: 10 July 2002

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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.

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1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

St Mary's and St Patrick's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided School serves the town of Maesteg and other areas of the Llynfi valley extending from Llangynwyd in the south to Caerau in the north. About half of the area is described as neither economically prosperous nor disadvantaged with a quarter being prosperous and a quarter being disadvantaged. As a voluntary aided school the inspection of acts of collective worship and religious education are subject to a separate diocesan inspection under section 23 of the Education Act.

The number on roll at the time of the inspection is 228 pupils, with 60 pupils, representing 26 per cent of the school population, on various stages of the Code of Practice for special educational needs (SEN). There are eight classes, including the nursery with 30 children, of whom 27 are full-time and three children are part-time in the morning and afternoon, respectively. There have been no exclusions of pupils from the school in the last three years. About 25 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils in the school for whom Welsh is the first language.

The School Development Plan (SDP) covers a three-year period from 2001 to 2003 and identifies the following priorities: to raise the standards of achievement in Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2 and, in particular, raise the number of pupils attaining level 3 in mathematics and science; to improve the performance of boys and raise the standards of reading for pupils with SEN; to raise the standards of assessment and record keeping; to improve further the communication with the local community; to raise standards in religious education, geography, physical education and in design and technology in the early years, and to improve the pastoral and welfare care and especially to develop pupils' personal and social skills.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

- St Mary's and St Patrick's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided School is a popular school with parents and its life and work epitomises the school's motto of "We are a Catholic family learning together." The headteacher, staff and the governing body are committed to providing its pupils with a happy family atmosphere and in securing the best opportunities for pupils to achieve their potential. The school has improved its performance from the time of the last inspection and has responded positively to the key issues identified in the last inspection report.
- The provision for the under-fives has been considerably improved and the overall standards achieved by the children are good as is the progress made by them in the six Desirable Learning Outcomes.
- The quality of the educational standards in the six areas of learning for children under five is as follows:

Language, literacy and communications skills	Good
Mathematical development	Good
Personal and social development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Creative development	Good

Physical development	Satisfactory
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- Standards in the National Curriculum (NC) subject areas, excluding religious education are as follows:

Subject	KS1	KS2
English	Good	Good
Welsh as a second language	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Design and technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Satisfactory
Music	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Physical education	Good	Good

- The standards in the use of key skills across the curriculum are good in speaking and listening and satisfactory in reading and writing. In numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) they are satisfactory with some good features in ICT in some curriculum areas. There is no whole-school policy to ensure consistency in the use of key skills across the curriculum.
- The 2001 NC tests for KS1 indicate that the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 in English was below the national average and in mathematics were above. In science, the teacher assessments indicate that the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 were above the national average. At level 3, however, the test results indicate that pupils achieved above the national average in reading and well above in writing but below in mathematics and science.
- The NC tests for KS2 in 2001 indicate that the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 in English, mathematics and science were above the national averages. The analyses of the attainment of boys and girls in the NC assessment tests showed that the girls perform better than the boys overall. The school is very conscious of this and class teachers are implementing procedures to try to improve the motivation of the boys.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and for their social development is very good. Pupils' participation in school assemblies and their work in history and geography help to consolidate their spiritual, moral and social development. The Welsh dimension is also a notable feature in their topic work and pupils study contrasting cultures to help deepen their understanding of cultural differences.
- Pupils' standards of behaviour within the school are good. Pupils respond positively in class and show high levels of concentration and perseverance. They are considerate and relate well to one another and to adults. Pupil attendance levels are satisfactory as is their punctuality apart from a minority who were several minutes late arriving during the inspection.
- The quality of teaching is good in 73 per cent of the 71 lessons seen and satisfactory in the remaining 27 per cent of lessons. Good teaching exists when lessons are carefully planned, delivered at a good pace using a good range of quality resources and carefully worded questions challenge the pupils to think for themselves. Where the teaching is

satisfactory, minor shortcomings include a slow pace, over prescribing with pupils having too few opportunities to investigate for themselves and unclear learning objectives.

- Curriculum provision for the under-fives and for pupils in KS1 is good and is satisfactory at KS2. In KS2 the curriculum is broad and relevant but is less balanced with insufficient time given to design and technology, art and music. The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is successfully featured in many subject areas throughout the school. The provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory bearing in mind the distance some pupils travel to school. The personal and social education provision is good and is mainly an integral part of the cross-curricular work that is ongoing in all classes. A minority of pupils are withdrawn from classes for either reading support or for instrumental tuition and consequently do not receive their entitlement to a full curriculum when they miss certain aspects or subjects.
- The school's procedures for assessment, recording and reporting are satisfactory. The present written policy does not adequately reflect current practice and is in need of review. Standardised tests are used to set targets for the whole school and to identify pupils in need of support. Co-ordinators make insufficient use, however, of the data to set specific targets for individual pupils, especially in the foundation subjects.
- The quality of support, guidance and pupils welfare is good. Pupils with SEN receive good provision. They achieve good standards and make good progress. Pupils have a variety of language and, in some cases, mathematical activities that are appropriate and effective. Pupils particularly enjoy reading and are making good progress.
- Child protection procedures are in place and are well known to all staff. The policy for health education includes that for sex education and all aspects related to health are dealt with across the curriculum.
- Partnership arrangements with parents, community and other institutions are good. Strong links exist with the parents and other external agencies, including industry. The information provided to parents is of very good quality. However, the information given in the school prospectus and in the annual governors report to parents are incomplete and do not satisfy statutory requirements. Pupils visit local companies and older pupils have attended business run projects designed to improve their creative writing and communication skills.
- The quality of the staffing and learning resources is good. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory. Teachers have good opportunities to enhance their expertise by attending a good range of in-service training courses. They subsequently share their professional experiences with other staff members. The school premises are adequate in size and the caretaker and cleaning staff maintain them to a high standard of cleanliness. External doors to the school during school hours are not always locked thereby making it insecure. An exit door at the top of the stairway that leads on to an open roof area cannot be considered an emergency exit. Learning resources are good though the school has no library to help develop pupils' research and reference skills.
- Procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are satisfactory. The SDP is the main evaluation policy along with references to evaluations within other policies. There is no separate self-evaluation statement to either explain the rationale for the identified priorities in the SDP or to give reasons why the school is moving in a certain direction.
- The headteacher provides good leadership. He works with an unobtrusive purpose and enjoys a very good relationship with the governors, staff and parents. The issues

identified in the last inspection have been successfully addressed except for the still underdeveloped monitoring role of the subject co-ordinators in relation to the teaching and learning in the foundation subjects.

- Financial expenditure is limited since the school's budget is in deficit but all expenditure is carefully considered by the governing body. They ensure that any expenditure relates directly for the benefit of the pupils and contributes towards raising the standards in pupils' achievement. In this respect, the school offers very good value for money. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA) is also very supportive and raises substantial sums of money to help purchase additional learning resources.
- The day-to-day running of the school and the routine administration of the school are very good.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

- Children under five achieve good standards in the five of the six desirable learning outcomes and satisfactory standards in one and they make good progress generally.
- In KS1, standards of pupils' achievement are good in English, mathematics, science, information technology, Welsh, history, geography, art and physical education. In music and design and technology, standards of pupils' achievement are satisfactory.
- Pupils in KS2 achieve good standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology, history, geography and physical education. Standards achieved in Welsh, design and technology, art and music are satisfactory.
- Overall, the standards achieved represents an improvement on the standards in the previous inspection especially in Welsh, design and technology and information technology.
- The NC teacher assessment and the test result for KS1 pupils in 2001, indicate that in English the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 (the expected level) was below the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The test result, however, of the percentage of pupils achieving level 3, indicate that they were above the national average in reading and well above in writing.
- In mathematics, the teacher assessment and the test result indicated that the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 was above the national average. At level 3, however, the test results for mathematics indicated the percentage of pupils achieving this level was below the national average.
- In science, the teacher assessment indicated that the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 was above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving level 3 in the NC Assessment test in mathematics and the teacher assessment in science was below the national average.
- In KS2, the NC Assessment test results for 2001 indicated that the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 (the expected level) was above the national averages in English, mathematics and science. The teacher assessments at level 4 and level 5 did not match the test results and were overly optimistic.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

- Pupils achieve good standards in speaking and listening and, at times, in ICT and overall, standards in this subject are satisfactory. The use of ICT is inconsistently applied across the curriculum. Standards in reading, writing and the use of numeracy across the curriculum are satisfactory.
- Pupils listen carefully to instructions and to each other when involved in collaborative work in class. The majority of pupils speak confidently and at length during whole class discussions or when in small groups. Older pupils in KS2 are developing a mature ability to present varying points of view orally in class debates and when considering the pros and cons of issues related to the environment.
- Reading and writing across the curriculum is uneven and in certain curriculum areas, both reading and written work is unduly restricted by the use of work sheets, albeit of a good standard. In some subject areas, such as design and technology, art and music, the amount of written work is limited.
- Numeracy skills are promoted in certain areas, especially in KS1 as a cross-curricular aspect but overall it is not a well-developed feature across the curriculum.
- Information and communications technology is a prominent feature in some curriculum areas. Where it occurs regularly the standard of pupils' achievement is good. In some cases, it is inconsistently applied due to limited resources and in others it is simply at an early stage of development.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Pupils' social development is very good and is a distinctive feature in the life and work of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. This represents a continuing good provision from the last inspection.

- School assemblies are conducted in a happy family atmosphere. Pupils are reminded daily through class prayers and in references across the curriculum to the spiritual dimension. They are very aware of their Catholic tradition and respond positively to Christian customs and practices. Pupil participation in school assemblies helps to consolidate and reinforce their spiritual awareness and their work in subjects such as history and geography enables them to empathise and show concern and care for others less fortunate than themselves in the past and present.
- Pupils establish their own class rules and are very aware of the importance of distinguishing between right and wrong. In their personal and social development, pupils learn about self-control and self-discipline as well as the need to practise the virtues of respect and consideration for others.
- In terms of their social development, pupils interact with one another in positive ways. The older pupils are always considering the needs of their younger peers. Much of the work done in class involves pupils in working collaboratively in pairs or small groups. Pupils are regularly encouraged to evaluate their own and others' contributions.
- The Welsh dimension and the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is a notable aspect of pupils' work. In English, pupils study the Mabinogion tales; in history and geography they are aware of

their local area and of its role in Welsh history. Pupils make regular visits to St Fagan's as part of their topic work across the curriculum and such visits help to broaden their understanding of Welsh traditions and customs. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is satisfactory. Older pupils study India as a contrasting country and this helps to deepen their understanding of how other people live and how their lifestyles differs from their own.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

The standard of behaviour within the school is good and represents a consistent provision from the time of the last inspection.

- The school has a policy for discipline and a separate policy to recognise and deal with bullying. Both policies are applied effectively, resulting in a calm and orderly environment.
- Pupils settle quickly to their tasks and show high levels of concentration and perseverance.
- The staggered arrangements for playtimes and lunchtimes ensure sufficient playground space to eliminate boisterous play.
- No pupils have been excluded in the last school year. A very small number of pupils, with the potential to display behaviour problems are well supported and any problems quickly minimised.
- Pupils are considerate, courteous and relate well to one another and to adults. No incidents of bullying, aggressive behaviour or racism were observed during the period of the inspection.

4.3 Attendance

Attendance levels are satisfactory having averaged 91.7 per cent during the previous term. This figure is similar to those achieved during 2001 and slightly higher than that at the time of the last inspection.

- Over the above period, unauthorised absence averaged 0.6 per cent.
- The Education Welfare Officer visits fortnightly to discuss with staff ways of improving pupils' attendance.
- Pupils' punctuality is satisfactory. However, a small number of pupils were seen to arrive several minutes late during the inspection. The wet weather and the late arrival of transport were possibly the cause of this lateness.
- There is a 'good attendance' incentive scheme, in which individual pupils with full attendance during the term receive a certificate.
- Most registers are completed in accordance with statutory requirements. However, during the inspection, one register was not filled in at the proper time.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

The quality of the teaching was judged to be good in 73 per cent of the 71 lessons seen and satisfactory in the remainder. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection where the teaching was good in 40 per cent of the lessons seen.

Where the teaching is good:

- lessons are carefully planned with clear objectives and are progressively developed;
- teachers are confident in manner and the relationships with the pupils are very good;
- teachers ensure lessons are delivered at a good pace with a good range of activities and where alternative activities are readily available;
- teachers use good probing questions that make pupils think for themselves;
- teachers offer good advice without denying pupils the opportunity to develop independence in their learning;
- the work set is well differentiated and encourages pupils to develop their investigative and problem solving skills.

Where the teaching is satisfactory minor shortcomings include:

- a lack of pace in lessons and pupils receiving and staying on the same class task for too long;
- teachers over prescribe the content and pupils have too few opportunities to investigate by choosing either their own materials or other variables;
- unclear learning objectives at the beginning of lessons and pupils becoming less sure of the purpose as the lesson went on;
- the absence of a plenary session at the end to ensure that pupils understand the work they do.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The schools' procedures for the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' achievements are satisfactory. This reflects some of the judgements made at the time of the last inspection, particularly in relation to the assessment of the foundation subjects.

- Records of assessments for children under five are linked to the expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes. The school has adapted the local authority's scheme for recording progress and all adults involved with this age group are involved in observing children and recording progress.
- The statutory Baseline assessment is carried out during the first seven weeks of the reception year and this information is reported to parents during the next parents' evening.
- The school has a written policy for assessment, but this needs to be revised to reflect current practice.

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- Regular use is made of standardised tests and the information is used to set targets for the whole school and to identify pupils in need of additional support. However, insufficient use is made of the data available to set specific targets for individuals or groups of pupils.
 - Marking comments vary in quality and usefulness. In the best practice, comments reflect the learning objective and inform pupils what they need to do to improve their work. In one class the lesson objective is made clear to pupils at the start of each lesson.
 - Lesson plans do not always clearly identify assessment opportunities, thereby making it difficult for teachers to focus clearly on what is to be assessed.
 - Teachers know their pupils well and work is differentiated to meet their needs in the core subjects.
 - Records of ongoing teacher assessment are inconsistent and focus primarily on the core subjects. As a result, predictions of levels for the end of key stages are often inaccurate. There is little formal assessment in the foundation subjects.
 - All pupils identified on the SEN register have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). These mainly set targets in English but some also include targets for mathematics.
 - Records of Achievement are kept for individual pupils. At present the examples of work kept are insufficiently annotated to be of value.
 - Written reports to parents are provided annually. They meet statutory requirements and focus appropriately on pupil attainment. Parents have two opportunities during the year to formally meet teachers and to discuss the progress of their child.

5.3 Curriculum

The curriculum for the pupils under five and for KS1 is good and is broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' needs. In KS2, the curriculum is satisfactory and is broad and relevant but is less balanced, with insufficient time allocated to design and technology, art and music. Unlike the last inspection report all subject schemes of work are not only fully in place but are subject to continuous review as working documents. Overall, the curriculum fulfils statutory requirements.

- The quality of the curriculum for the under-fives is good and meets the Desirable Learning Outcomes. The provision is good though children in the reception class do not have regular access to the use of large toys as part of their structured play activities.
- Curriculum policies and subject schemes of work are in place and many have been subject to recent review. It is customary for the subject co-ordinators to review all policies and schemes of work as part of a regular cycle of audits.
- The personal and social education curriculum programme is well planned and reflects ACCAC's recommendations. The arrangements for including it in the curriculum are good. Curriculum planning with short, medium and long-term targets has successfully provided a sense of continuity and progression in pupils' learning. However, the quality of individual teachers lesson plans is inconsistent and this affects the quality of the teaching especially where objectives are less clear.
- Subject co-ordinators undertake what the school describes as retrospective monitoring, focussing on what has been taught. This type of monitoring plays a part in identifying standards but is less effective than the direct monitoring of the teaching and learning. Only this latter method helps to inform the co-ordinators of what needs to be done

immediately to improve the standards. Consequently, subject co-ordinator's role is insufficiently developed and they are not monitoring the teaching and the learning as it happens.

- A minority of pupils are withdrawn either for reading support sessions or instrumental music lessons and consequently do not receive their full entitlement to a full and balanced curriculum because of the time they are out of the classroom.
- Homework is used well to support the learning for all pupils. The work set helps to extend pupils' learning experiences. The parents expressed satisfaction with the nature and quality of homework.
- The provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, overall, considering the distances some pupils have to travel to school.
- The curriculum is enriched and broadened by the numerous visits pupils make to places of educational interest and by the many visitors who come to the school, including a significant number of parents who offer assistance to teachers in class.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The quality of support, guidance and attention to pupils' welfare is good.

- Pupils work in a calm and well-ordered atmosphere. The school provides a friendly and stimulating environment in which pupils feel happy and secure.
- The teachers and other staff know the pupils and their parents well. There is good informal, daily contact between parents and teachers, particularly in the early years' classes. The family numeracy scheme is successful in providing worthwhile opportunities for parents and children to learn together.
- The school has a policy for personal and social education, including sex education, which emphasises the need to integrate these aspects into the whole curriculum. Some discrete lessons are taught in personal and social education and these are effective in raising awareness in particular areas, for example, childcare.
- The headteacher has overall charge of child protection and all teachers and non-teaching staff, have a copy of the guidelines. Very few incidents have been identified over a period of several years.
- Pupils are well supervised at all times and mid-day supervisors carry out their duties conscientiously.
- All adults provide good role models. The relationships between pupils and staff are both warm and mutually supportive. Teachers are effective in supporting and in encouraging pupils to concentrate on their work.
- Older pupils take on a caring role with younger pupils. This encourages them to take on responsibility and consider the needs of others.
- Personal achievements are recognised and celebrated during assemblies when children are presented with awards and certificates. Children's work is attractively displayed to show that their efforts are valued.
- Care is taken to ensure the safety of pupils both within lessons and during games and recreational activities.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN

The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good. This represents a significant improvement on the last inspection.

- There are currently 60 children on the SEN register, 16 on Stage 1, 27 on Stage 2, and 17 on Stage 3. No pupil has a statement in accordance with the Code of Practice.
- The policy for SEN outlines procedures accurately for identifying pupils in need of support and emphasises the need for a broad and balanced curriculum.
- A support teacher is present for seven sessions each week and provides reading support to small groups of children. There is effective liaison between the school and outside agencies. The role of the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) is well defined and the liaison arrangements with other teachers and parents are very good.
- The reading support provided is effective and sensitively carried out. A good range of teaching strategies and differentiation at an individual level ensures that pupils make good progress. In many cases, support can be reduced or is deemed to be unnecessary after a period of time.
- The IEPs are written and reviewed jointly by the support teacher, the SENCO and the class teacher. All identify suitable targets for reading and some also include targets for mathematics. Pupils' reading targets are being effectively addressed during withdrawal sessions.
- Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and are involved in review meetings.
- Although the funding for SEN is allocated for children in KS2, the school identifies those who need support much earlier and strives to include them within the programme. This is of benefit to those pupils who are included in KS1.
- All the pupils who receive additional support either when withdrawn or when in class are achieving good standards. They have an appropriate variety of language activities aimed at building up their phonic knowledge as well as their understanding of syntax and punctuation. Reading resources used by the pupils are relevant to their needs and they enjoy visible success when reading books.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The school has a good partnership with parents and organisations in the local community. This partnership enhances the quality of education provided and helps pupils' personal development in positive ways.

- The majority of the parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and/or responded to the questionnaire expressed positive support for the school. Such views were confirmed by further brief discussions with parents during the actual inspection.
- The school provides information of good quality for parents through letters, reports and meetings. However, the information given in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents does not satisfy statutory requirements. The pupils themselves produce a termly newsletter of good quality. Under half the parents have responded to the home-school agreement.

- There is a very active PTFA which raises significant funds to help the school. Four parents regularly help in class and others assist with extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Twelve parents attend an adult literacy/numeracy group for one and a half days each week to improve their understanding of their children’s educational requirements. This clearly benefits pupils’ progress.
- There is a very strong link with the Catholic church, whose priest is a governor of the school. Pupils regularly visit the church for services and in support of the curriculum.
- There are good links with local agencies and the medical services. The school nurse and health visitor regularly come to the school to monitor pupils’ general health and to help to deliver the sex education and healthy living programmes. The community policeman visits several times each term to talk to pupils about ‘stranger danger’ and other matters concerning their personal safety. Pupils also regularly attend the “Crucial Crew” scheme run in association with the police and fire services.
- There is a very good partnership with other primary schools in the area and with the comprehensive school. Teachers exchange visits and share information and resources. Pupils attend taster days and social events at the secondary school and the students attend St Mary’s and St Patrick’s for their work experience. Additionally, students from a nearby teacher training college come to the school as part of their training.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

The school has a good partnership with local companies enabling pupils to learn something of the world of work around them. This is an improvement on the judgement made at the time of the last inspection.

- About forty local shops and other businesses support the school through the donation of money and/or materials.
- Pupils make many visits to local companies. They include pupil visits to local superstores, as part of a ‘Food in Focus’ scheme, and to several construction companies. Pupils have also recently attended business-run projects designed to improve their creative writing and communication skills.
- Several people from local companies come to the school to talk about their jobs and company operations.
- One member of staff has recently attended a business-related course.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

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

- The SDP represents the school’s self-evaluation policy and there are many other references to self-evaluation throughout other policy documents. It does not, however, include a rationale to explain the basis for the priorities identified in the SDP nor to indicate clearly the reasons why the school is moving in a certain direction.
- Since the time of the last inspection, the headteacher has actively promoted staff attendance at a series of in-service courses run by the local authority. This is the way the

school claims it has practised its self-evaluation, since the courses were specifically aimed at helping schools raise standards in pupils' achievements.

- The majority of the staff in attending in-service courses are acquiring more confidence in teaching the NC subjects, notably, literacy, numeracy and information technology. The subject co-ordinators, in particular, have fed back to staff the information acquired at these courses at school based in-service training. All staff have received the New Opportunities Fund training in information technology.
- Another aspect of the school's self-evaluation is the way the school has begun tracking pupils' progress and setting regular tests, as part of their system for assessing, recording and reporting. The collecting of samples of pupils' work in pupils' records of achievement is at an early stage of development but is also a means for the school to evaluate its performance.
- Overall, the rigorous and qualitative analyses of pupil's performance in terms of tests and the work pupils do in class are at an early stage of development and do not as yet inform whole-school issues or individual pupil performance.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The quality of leadership and the efficiency with which the school is managing its expenditure are good. This represents a continuation of the good leadership qualities expressed in the previous inspection report.

- The headteacher works with unobtrusive purpose and has a very good relationship with the staff. He is a firm believer in involving all his staff in management issues and consequently, all staff work together successfully as a team. The headteacher also encourages his staff to enhance their professional expertise and knowledge and understanding by attending a broad range of in-service training courses.
- The headteacher works closely with his governing body who in turn are very supportive and are very actively involved in scrutinising and approving policies and schemes of work. They have effective measures in place to eliminate all forms of bullying, sexism and racism.
- The governors are very keen to secure a purposeful, safe and happy environment in the school. They are deeply committed to the mission statement that underpins the life and work of the school. Governors have specific roles and are clear about their responsibilities visiting the school frequently to monitor their responsibilities.
- The issues identified in the last inspection report have been successfully addressed. The headteacher and governors are involved in implementing the action plan and in evaluating their initiatives in response to the key issues. The headteacher and the co-ordinators of the core subjects monitor the work regularly.
- The role of the subject co-ordinators has improved since the last inspection. All undertake annual audits within their subject areas. In the core subjects, the co-ordinators are involved in monitoring indirectly the standards in the teaching and the learning. The headteacher monitors regularly the work in design and technology and Welsh. The monitoring of the work in the foundation subjects is still, however, not been fully implemented.
- The SDP covers three years from 2001 to 2003. It is a detailed document and it identifies the priorities for the school from, analyses of the NC Assessment test results and from the

monitoring procedures undertaken since the last inspection. The SDP also itemises the action to be taken for each initiative, the success criteria that apply and the implications in terms of resources, costings, training and monitoring arrangements.

- Financial expenditure is carefully considered by a sub-group of the governors and submitted to the whole governing body on a regular basis. The school budget is in deficit and fixed costs account for most of the total. The school is heavily dependant on support from a very active PTFA who raise substantial sums of money through various social functions. The school also receives significant support from the local authority officers. Where there is any available funding the expenditure relates directly to the school's SDP and to improving and raising standards. The school offers very good value for money.
- The day-to-day running of the school is very good and the routine administration and organisation is very good. The school secretary knows the pupils by name and is a prominent figure in the life and work of the school.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The quality of staffing and learning resources is good. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory.

- Staff are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the demands of Desirable Outcomes and the NC. They are deeply committed to the success of the school.
- Teaching staff have good opportunities to attend courses to further their professional development. They share good practice and skills with one another through staff meetings and in reporting their experiences in in-service training. Staff new to the school have a mentor and they are advised and monitored well.
- The part-time pupil support teacher and classroom assistants provide effective support to pupils. During the inspection, two trainee teachers were also present and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school secretary, who is also clerk to the governing body, canteen staff and dinner supervisors provide good support to the school and its pupils. The caretaker and cleaner keep the premises to a very high standard of cleanliness.
- The school premises are adequate in size and well used to promote pupils' learning.
- The external play areas are sufficient to enable pupils to play and exercise during break times and in physical education lessons. The covered area for the nursery children is particularly useful and encourages their social development.
- There are good quality and attractive wall displays throughout the school.
- The failure to lock the building's external doors during school hours makes it insecure. Also, the exit door at the top of the stairway cannot be considered an emergency exit since it leads only onto an open roof area. During the inspection, both these points were brought to the attention of the headteacher who is taking appropriate action.
- The resources to support teaching and learning are good and include new computers. The school effectively uses local resources including museums and businesses to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- There is no school library. This clearly inhibits pupils' ability to become familiar with and have regular access to a suitably wide range of books and limits their development of research and study skills.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards achieved by pupils

Provision for the under-fives

The educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate and promotes the Desirable Learning Outcomes. There are two classes for the under-fives: one catering for full-time nursery children with a few part-time places and the other for full-time reception with a small number of Y1 children. Good standards are achieved in five of the areas of learning and are satisfactory in physical development. This is a significant improvement compared with the previous inspection report.

Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

- Speaking and listening skills are good. Children answer questions clearly and respond well to books, pictures and photographs. They know a number of rhymes and can recite them with confidence. By the end of the reception year, children are able to make good use of adjectives to describe objects and situations.
- Early writing is supported through role-play and emergent writing shows increasing development. Children in the reception class write for a purpose, for example, invitations to a party. Story writing is developed through drawings on a writing frame and they understand the need for a beginning, middle and an end.
- Children are aware of books and enjoy joining in with familiar and repetitive refrains. Older reception aged children are introduced to a reading scheme and make good progress.

Personal and Social Development

- Children's personal and social development is good. They play well together in a variety of situations and take turns in a range of activities.
- They are competent in helping to put away resources and tidy the room at the end of each session.
- They understand the need for rules and are considerate of one another.

Mathematical Development

- In the nursery, children are aware of numbers and are able to count up to five and show a corresponding number of objects. They can recite number rhymes and use their fingers to correspond with each number.
- By the end of reception, children are able to count to 20 and are beginning to add and subtract numbers to 10.
- Work in pattern and shape is well established in the nursery. Children are able to identify pattern and create their own repeated patterns using two colours.
- Children in the reception class can identify 2-D and 3-D shapes and undertake advanced work in transforming large shapes into two smaller ones, for example, cutting a large square to form two triangles.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- Children in the nursery learn about the world around them from a wide range of experiences. With the help of adults they plant and grow vegetables in the school garden and are able to recognise and name them.
- Photographs are used to record visitors to the classroom. Children talk with confidence about activities such as, making bread or safety aspects learnt with the community police officer.
- Experiences in the reception class are extended and exciting activities such as handling different types of sand enable them to describe the properties of materials accurately.
- Both classes have access to a computer and children grow in confidence in using the controls.
- Children make models and they handle them with dexterity.

Physical Development

- Children's fine motor skills are developed through a range of activities using scissors, sticking, handling dough, threading, painting and drawing. The more able children handle fine materials successfully.
- Children in the nursery class have daily opportunities to practise their gross motor skills in the outdoor play area where they become competent at peddling bikes and climbing on apparatus.
- Children in the reception class are allocated time for physical education and they practise ball skills and team games. Their skills are developing at a satisfactory level.

Creative Development

- Children have ongoing opportunities to record, through painting and drawing. Children in the reception class draw and paint competently.
- The use of role-play in both classes means that children dress up and take on the role of characters from the stories heard or other familiar situations.
- They learn songs quickly and sing enthusiastically and with good intonation.
- In both classes, children have access to musical instruments. In the reception class, children use them effectively to create musical pictures to represent objects such as shooting stars.

Shortcomings

- Children's physical development is limited in the reception class since they do not have daily opportunities to develop their motor skills by using large toys.

English

Standards of pupils' achievement in speaking and listening, reading and writing are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils listen intently to stories read to them and enjoy performing role play activities involving nursery rhymes and other stories. When speaking, pupils do so willingly and with some confidence. They quickly learn new words and abler pupils are

quite articulate when they speak. Pupils are comfortable in expressing their ideas and they talk meaningfully when in pairs or small groups.

- Pupils reading skills are well developed across the key stage. Younger pupils have good knowledge of letters of the alphabet and the common combination of the sounds of new words. Able pupils towards the end of this key stage read fluently, accurately and with confident expression. Pupils are encouraged to read their own work aloud in class and they learn how to speak clearly and to speak in public.
- Pupils understand the elements of a story and know what an author and an illustrator does. They can also name the characters in stories and describe the main events and sequence them accurately.
- At the early stages of writing, pupils enjoy a variety of pre-writing activities to help them to form letters, spaces and words correctly and to a good standard. They copy writing patterns and keep inside the line when forming letters. They soon learn how to use simple punctuation when writing sentences and can identify simple parts of speech.
- Pupils learn how to construct sentences with a beginning, middle and an end. They write sentence trains and identify rhymes in poems. They are beginning to appreciate how writing differs for different purposes. For instance, when writing invitations to other pupils to come to their Jubilee party and preparing a menu. Pupils in KS1 write about their favourite stories and write about why they like them.
- Younger pupils in KS2 enjoy listening to poetry. They successfully identify adjectives in poems and they understand alliteration and use it effectively when devising their own poems. They respond enthusiastically to whole-class discussions and often respond to questions by speaking at length.
- Pupils throughout KS2 are making good progress in their reading and the books chosen appropriately match their needs. They enjoy reading the Big Book together out loud and their concentration levels are sustained by the use of Big Books that are attractively illustrated and colourful.
- Pupils have a good understanding of punctuation and parts of speech. Younger pupils identify a range of synonyms to replace the word "said" when it is used after a text in direct speech.
- In both key stages, pupils are able to identify books by their genres and older pupils are aware of the way books serve different purposes. They can distinguish between fiction and non-fiction. They investigate book blurbs and identify their main characteristics as part of their work on persuasive writing. They offer good quality descriptions to describe the books they have read. In devising their own book blurbs, pupils learn how to write using the "cliff-hanger" text technique.
- Pupils know the meaning of technical terms such as, prepositions, definitions and synopsis and apply them correctly when designing their own mini-dictionaries.
- Generally, pupils have a good understanding of the nature and purpose of language and how it is used for different purposes and for different audiences. They look at advertisements and study catchy slogans, for instance, before inventing their own.
- Pupils' written work in both key stages is of a good standard and is invariably neat and tidy. Pupils regard good quality presentation of written work as a matter of pride and esteem. They write dialogue confidently and produce mini-plays. Their imaginative stories are vibrant and enjoyable to read. Pupils written poems, book reviews and letters

in real contexts are of good quality. Older pupils also write good quality newspaper articles, plan biographies and write interview accounts based on questionnaires as well as writing about different cultures and traditions.

- In both key stages, pupils use the right strategies for spelling.

Shortcomings

- There were no shortcomings in the work seen.

Mathematics

Pupils' standards in mathematics are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils develop a suitable mathematical vocabulary and their grasp of number bonds to 10 is good.
- Pupils make good use of number lines to add and subtract numbers and are able to explain their methods clearly.
- Pupils' mental skills are developing well and they can count accurately in twos, threes and fives. By the end of KS1 they can count backwards from 100 starting on any two digit number. They grasp new concepts quickly and carry out calculations accurately.
- Pupils have a good understanding of 2-D and 3-D shapes and describe their properties with accuracy.
- They undertake practical activities with enthusiasm and show a good understanding of concepts in measuring.
- In KS2, pupils gain confidence in more complex processes and deal with large numbers up to 10,000 with confidence. They have good recall of multiplication facts appropriate to their age group.
- Pupils use their investigative skills well and can explain their work clearly to others. They understand rotation and use this knowledge in their investigations.
- Work undertaken by the pupils in shape is good, showing an increasing knowledge of concepts and vocabulary such as nets when dealing with 3-D shapes.
- Pupils understand co-ordinates and are able to apply their knowledge in a variety of situations. They can correctly give the co-ordinates for 2-D shapes drawn on a grid.
- Pupils have good understanding of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages and apply this knowledge accurately in practical activities.
- By the end of KS2, pupils represent data in a number of different formats e.g. bar graphs, frequency tables and pie charts. They are able to interpret charts and tables accurately as well as constructing charts to represent given data.

Shortcomings

- There were no shortcomings in the work seen.

Science

Standards of pupils' achievement in science are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils categorise vegetables and talk about their main features. They understand terms such as root, plant and stem and use these features to group the vegetables.
- Pupils use a range of sources, including ICT, to research topics such as mini-beasts and their habitats. They show good knowledge of topics studied and record their findings in a number of ways.
- Good use is made of writing frames and pupils use these well to structure and record their investigations.
- Pupils use their observation skills to note similarities and differences. Good use is made of cross-curricular links to consolidate learning when they draw or paint the subject of their observation.
- In KS2, pupils undertake detailed studies of teeth and how to care for them. They accurately name and identify the different teeth and record their findings by labelling their diagrams.
- As they progress through KS2, pupils are able to record their results in tables and charts. They interpret the information and communicate this accurately to others. Most pupils form a hypothesis and draw conclusions from their results.
- Pupils set up fair tests to measure the insulation properties of materials either to keep objects cold or hot. They can read the scale on a specialist thermometer accurately and calculate the rate of cooling or melting.
- Pupils are able to access knowledge for a given topic from a number of sources, including the Internet, books and CD-ROM. They use these sources to write detailed accounts of the planets and galaxies, and they provide accurate accounts for others to read.

Shortcomings

- There were no shortcomings in the work seen.

Welsh second language

Pupils' standards of achievement in Welsh in KS1 are good and satisfactory with good aspects in speaking and in remembering a broad range of conversational language patterns in KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils are responding positively and are growing in confidence in using simple greetings and in responding to commands they hear in Welsh incidentally throughout the day and in Welsh lessons. Their good listening skills help pupils to pronounce words and phrases with accuracy and good diction.
- Pupils sing Welsh songs they have memorised and related to class topics, enthusiastically.
- In looking at texts, pupils use illustrations to help them identify the right word in Welsh. Pupils have accumulated a good vocabulary of words related to themes such as foods,

clothes, weather and parts of the body and pet animals. They count up to ten and beyond and can name the colours of the rainbow as well as other shades of colour.

- Pupils have the confidence to engage in a simple conversation in front of others, who in turn, are willing to help them out if necessary.
- In KS2, pupils are familiar with a growing number of questions about their likes and dislikes, colours, pets, the farm, themselves and other class themes.
- Pupils are sufficiently confident to ask adults simple questions. They use a simple text to help them maintain a sustained dialogue. They use language games and flash cards to build up a working vocabulary.
- Older pupils recall their home telephone numbers in Welsh confidently and accurately. They offer positive and negative responses to questions.
- Pupils write effectively about themselves, where they live and short descriptive portraits of their friends. Older pupils write sentences expressing their favourite activities and interests and about where they are going on their holidays. They also write a brief dialogue depicting a simple conversation with their mother at home.

Shortcomings

- In KS2, pupils' reading and writing skills are limited.

Design and Technology

Standards in design and technology are satisfactory in both key stages.

- In KS1, pupils initially draw their ideas and designs in order to make them at a later stage. For example, they draw a design for a biscuit for a Jubilee party and plan how they will decorate it.
- When working with clay, pupils evaluate their designs and modify them so that they are better able to work with this medium.
- Pupils are encouraged to plan their work carefully before making and to evaluate final results. The recording of this process is, in the main, satisfactory.
- In KS2, pupils undertake projects in food technology such as mixing various ingredients to produce their own yoghurt. They plan the product and its packaging in detail and evaluate the final product by tasting it. Pupils record their findings but their evaluations of their food designs tend to be superficial.
- Pupils work with construction kits to meet a challenge such as designing a flying object. Some reach good levels and some have won a recent challenge competition that now enables them to go forward to a national round.
- Pupils work on simple structures and they join materials together to make simple frames for a ball bearing game. They construct joints using specialist tools and most complete tasks satisfactorily.
- Pupils use the tie-dye techniques well to add effects to materials. They complete work to a good standard and also use materials to sew clothes to represent planets and galaxies.
- During a study of shoes, pupils achieved good effects by painting footprints set in plaster of Paris. Some work is undertaken in disassembling items and some satisfactory results have been achieved in making shoes.

Shortcomings

- At present, pupils' understanding of mechanisms and structures are underdeveloped.

Information Technology

Standards of achievement information technology are good in both key stages. The recent expansion of resources has had a positive effect on standards.

Good features

- Pupils quickly gain confidence in using computers and, in KS1, produce pictograms to represent given data.
- Pupils are aware of the need to save work and by the end of the key stage save and retrieve information for themselves.
- All pupils experience a wide range of programmes and use a word-processing package and graphics to record work in several subject areas.
- Pupils use CD-ROMs to research topics and to consolidate knowledge. They use a key as an index and to lead them to the information they require.
- In KS2, all pupils use e-mail and use it to communicate with a partner school or to gain information. They ask specific questions to local miners, for example, to elicit their opinions on the proposed opencast development.
- As they gain confidence most pupils change font and size to vary the presentation of text. Older pupils import pictures into texts and use a newspaper style layout.
- All pupils in KS1 and KS2 have access to the Internet. This is used effectively to gather information on a range of topics including work in history, geography and art.
- An interactive white board has recently been installed and is currently shared between two classes. Good use is made of this facility and children are quickly gaining confidence in its use. For example, they produce pie charts for given data.
- The school has a digital camera and it is used by pupils to record visits and activities. They are able to print out individual slides or access them on the screen as reference for further classroom work.
- Pupils use spreadsheets to collect data and are then able to convert this into graphs that they interpret accurately.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' knowledge of aspects of LOGO and adventure simulations are limited.

History

Standards of pupils' achievement are good in both key stages.

Good features

- In both key stages, pupils understanding of chronology is consolidated by the use of appropriately designed time lines that realistically cover a particular span of historical development, such as, in KS1, the Jubilee theme covering 1952 to 2002.

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- In KS1, pupils' learning of historical features such as travel are broadened by the close linking of the topic to geographical concepts when pupils categorise forms of transport as well as the types of transport that existed between 1800 and 2002.
 - In KS2, in covering periods of history including, the ancient Romans, The Tudors, The Victorians and the Second World War, pupils use their investigative skills effectively to collect information from primary sources.
 - Pupils use their observational skills successfully when looking at photographs and a range of historical artefacts and write detailed and accurate accounts of events and of how people lived in the past.
 - In the work on the Second World War, pupils are developing high order skills when asked to evaluate the meaning of evacuation to the children concerned. Their written work displays an empathy for those living at the time. Other imaginative forms of written work cover other human issues, such as, what the children who were evacuated would miss in moving from the city to the country.
 - Pupils are acquiring a real appreciation of the human aspects of history and of how the events of the past have shaped and determined the future.
 - In the study on the Tudors, pupils display good knowledge and understanding about the Tudor monarchs and they make good use of CD-ROMs and the internet to develop their independent learning skills and they research aspects confidently and competently.
 - For each of the historical periods studied, pupils make many visits to places in Wales that depict past times and thereby acquire a good understanding of the Welsh dimension. They also appreciate the contribution made by eminent Welsh people, such as, R Trevithick to industrial Wales.

Shortcomings

- There were no shortcomings in the lessons seen.

Geography

Pupils achieve good standards in geography in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils in studying local buildings under the theme of houses and when on a school trail can compare and contrast their structures and purpose. When they undertake an investigation of the different types of houses in the locality pupils appreciate some of the human features associated with them in terms of the rich and the poor.
- Pupils have a good understanding of place and of location when studying places in Wales and in visiting St Fagans, Afan Argoed, The Brecon Beacons and Cardiff and Swansea museums.
- In KS2, pupils look at the amenities in Maesteg and look at OS maps of various scales which they understand and are able to locate important buildings. In both key stages, pupils undertake a study of the local park and in discovering the various areas in the park, consider their different purposes.
- Pupils consider the environmental changes that have occurred in the town. They devise questionnaires and interview many people about proposals to build a new secondary

school in the town, to move the local library and the possibility of open cast mining on the nearby hillside.

- Pupils in both key stages are able to read maps and to use co-ordinate readings to locate certain places correctly.
- In looking at a contrasting locality, pupils study the town of Porthcawl in Wales and the village of Thengapalli in India. They can discuss meaningfully the characteristics of natural and man made habitats and develop their own ideas and opinions about contrasting lifestyles. Pupils compare and contrast the physical and human features of India with the United Kingdom effectively.

Shortcomings

- There were no shortcomings in the work seen.

Art

Standards of pupils' achievement are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils have opportunities to record experiences across the curriculum effectively through drawings and paintings.
- Pupils handle clay and tools successfully to create a decorated tile. The end results are generally good.
- Pupils study book illustrations and use these to produce their own accurate paintings of dinosaurs. These are effectively displayed.
- Work in collage is well established and good results are achieved.
- In KS2, pupils develop their techniques in colour mixing in preparation for their future work on Monet.
- Pupils search the Internet for information about Leonardo de Vinci and successfully copy his portrait of a warrior, using pencil and collage techniques.
- One class in studying the work of Seurat use ICT to reproduce the effects of pointillism. Their outcomes clearly show that they have understood the technique.
- Pupils select, control and experiment with a range of materials and are gaining confidence in processes and techniques, especially in 2-D work.
- Pupils use art effectively to illustrate other subjects in the curriculum. They produce effective charcoal drawings of houses and painted Tudor houses.
- Older pupils study the designs on packages and use their observational skills to copy some of them. They offer good reasons of why they think particular designs are effective.

Shortcomings

- Children have insufficient knowledge of Welsh artists.
- Pupils have limited skills in using sketchbooks to record observations and experiment using line, tone and texture.
- The development of pupils' skills in KS2 is uneven and the progression in their learning is not always secure.

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- Pupils' ability to use clay and other 3-D media is underdeveloped in KS2.

Music

Standards of pupils' achievement in music are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils learn new songs quickly. They sing with enthusiasm and their intonation is good.
- They can name common untuned percussion instruments and enjoy producing sounds with them.
- In KS2, pupils continue to sing well and they make worthwhile contributions to the church and community by singing in a number of venues.
- Pupils' ability to compose is developing in some classes where pupils create sound pictures to depict mood or to accompany a story. They can record their work correctly using graphical scores.
- Pupils in one class are learning to play the recorder and read staff notation effectively.

Shortcomings

- Pupils' composition and appraisal skills are under developed.
- Pupils are not aware of Welsh composers or of musical works from other cultures.
- The development of pupils' musical skills is uneven across the school.

Physical Education

Pupils' standards of achievement in physical education are good in KS1 and KS2.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils perform warm up activities outdoors by jumping, hopping and running effectively. They use space well and listen to and act promptly to instructions and commands.
- Pupils' bodily throwing and running skills are developed by activities involving them throwing beanbags into hoops in competitive team games and also passing through hoops and moving along a direct line and back again.
- Pupils' bodily movements are developed by activities involving them in weaving in and out of obstacles. They show good dribbling skills and their ball control improves as the lesson progresses.
- In KS2, pupils in practising team activities, such as, passing a ball back through the line or passing a baton develop good relay skills.
- Pupils evaluate each other's techniques to help them make improvements, for instance, when sprinting they learn how to develop long strides and how to move their arms to improve their speed. In this context, pupils are developing self-discipline and are achieving good standards.

Shortcomings

- There were no shortcomings in the work seen.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

In the previous inspection report six key issues were identified. The school needs to:

- i. **maintain and build upon its current strengths, including the high quality of its spiritual and community life and the generally sound, and sometimes good standards achieved in the classroom.**

Staff are constantly reminded to maintain good relationships and develop mutual respect between themselves and pupils. This was confirmed at the pre-inspection parent's meeting where there was overwhelming support for the way the staff related to pupils. With reference to classroom standards, non-contact time was made available soon after the inspection for the staff to look at good practice. This issue was regularly referred to in staff meetings and improvements were made to termly and fortnightly lesson plans. In-service training courses attended by the staff identified further needs and further appropriate training was given. The headteacher and the senior management team observe lessons and are able to identify areas for development and since that time continuous evaluations are undertaken. The school has, since October 1997, introduced an improved newsletter to parents and at the governors meetings, this particular item is included on the agenda once a term.

- ii. **review aspects of organisation and teaching in the early years to provide a richer and more progressive range of experience for pupils.**

The early years was re-organised to avoid duplication of experiences. Staff changes were introduced and a more efficient unit based planning undertaken. Clear objectives were set to ensure continuity and progression in the children's learning experiences. The assessment and recording system was improved and brought into line with the whole-school assessment policy.

- iii. **seek ways of improving pupils' achievements in design and technology overall, in Welsh and information technology in KS2, and in some aspects of geography.**

In design and technology, the co-ordinator attended a course focussing on subject schemes of work. This was followed by a school based in-service course to increase the staffs' knowledge and enthusiasm for design and technology. The curriculum planning was improved in order to secure coverage of NC programmes of study requirements. The co-ordinator was given non-contact time to monitor the work in classes. The headteacher since then monitors the planning on a fortnightly basis.

In Welsh, there was an increase in the use of incidental Welsh. The school used the county advisory service. More signs and notices were placed around the school and more workcards and flashcards. Non-contact time was provided for the co-ordinator and the headteacher monitored the fortnightly plans.

In information technology, a database was developed across the curriculum using spreadsheets. Computer simulations provided opportunities to explore patterns and relationships. A new CD-ROM was purchased. The headteacher and co-ordinator monitored the work on a regular basis.

In geography, less use was made of hypothetical examples and more use of relevant maps in work on route finding and river studies. The staff ensured that pupils' understanding of

causes, distribution and location in respect to our country and other countries was established. The headteacher monitors the work regularly.

- iv. **give greater prominence to NC attainment levels in assessment and recording procedures and make better use of this information to enhance pupils' progress.**

The school undertook a review of the NC attainment levels. The headteacher and staff reviewed the targets and analysed the results. They monitored termly assessments to identify any weaknesses. Pupils were targeted early to enhance their progress.

- v. **within resources available, provide more effective learning support for pupils with SEN and more specific targets within IEPs.**

Reading support was re-organised. Class teachers were given additional support from the SENCO. The headteacher worked with small groups or individuals. The IEPs were redone and specific learning objectives set. A more effective screening system was introduced. The headteacher also monitored progression in the termly assessments.

- vi. **develop more specific whole-school targets and success criteria and take full account of these in the monitoring of pupils' and teachers' work.**

Termly assessments were introduced in the core subjects and in reading. Individual pupil records helped to ensure that pupils were being tracked and to ensure they received progression across the curriculum.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

In celebrating the school's improvement from the last inspection and the good standards achieved, the headteacher and governing body need to:

- improve the standards from satisfactory to good or better in design and technology and music and, in Welsh and art in KS2;
- develop the use of reading, writing and numeracy as basic skills across the curriculum and secure more consistency in the use of ICT;
- refine and develop further the system for assessment, recording and reporting, especially in the foundation subjects;
- reconsider the arrangements for those pupils with SEN who miss out on certain elements of the NC;
- ensure that the school prospectus and the governors annual report to parents complies fully with statutory requirements;
- attend to the security issues identified in the report.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	St Mary's and St Patrick's Roman Catholic
School type	Voluntary Aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Monica Street Maesteg Bridgend
Post-Code	CF34 9AY
Telephone Number	01656 732349

Headteacher	Mr Brendan Kehoe
Date of appointment	September 1990
Chair of Governors	Mr Keith Lewis MBE
Registered Inspector	Mr Ben Wigley
Dates of inspection	20-23 May

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	30	25	29	25	24	31	32	32	228

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	9	1	9.7

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	28:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	28
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	29:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>			
	KS1	KS2	Whole school
Summer 2001	90.5	91.6	90.2
Autumn 2001	92.4	93.0	93.6
Spring 2002	91.2	92.4	91.7

<i>Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection</i>	0
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C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2001			Number of pupils in Y2: 24					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	16	54	30	0
		National	0	4	13	62	21	0
EN: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	16	42	42	0
		National	0	4	13	54	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	21	42	37	
		National	1	3	13	53	30	
EN: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	12	58	25	0
		National	0	5	13	70	12	0
	Task/Test	School	0	8	12	50	30	
		National	1	5	10	75	9	
EN: Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	58	33	0
		National	0	3	11	63	23	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4	71	25	0
		National	0	2	9	60	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	4	71	25	
		National	0	2	6	56	36	
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	88	12	0
		National	0	2	10	67	21	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	84	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.

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2001			Number of pupils in Y6: 29										
Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	22	0	56	22	0
		National	0	0	0		1	1	6	19	48	25	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0			22	11	67	0	
		National	0	2	1	1			5	14	47	30	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	11	11	44	34	0
		National	0	0	0		0	1	4	20	47	28	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0			11	11	55	23	
		National	0	2	1	1			4	18	42	32	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	11	11	34	44	0
		National	1	0	0		0	0	3	15	52	29	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0			0	11	68	22	
		National	0	2	0	1			2	13	51	31	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	82.0	In the school:	82.8
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

- D Pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 and 365 of the Education Act 1996.
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence.
N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence.
B Pupils not entered for tests because they are working outside the levels of the tests.
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

- Three inspectors spent a total of 10 inspector days at the school and 71 lessons were seen.
- Responses from 114 returned questionnaires were analysed.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff, governing body and parents.
- School policy documents, schemes of work and other evidence were read, analysed and discussed with the headteacher and staff.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff and pupils at the school.
- A range of pupils’ work was examined.
- Subject co-ordinators were interviewed by inspectors.
- Post inspection meetings with the headteacher and staff and governing body were held.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr Ben Wigley	RgI	Context Main findings Educational standards achieved by pupils Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Teaching Curriculum Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement Leadership and efficiency School improvement	Welsh English history geography physical education
Mr Stephen Page	Lay	Attendance Partnerships with parents and community, schools and other institutions Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	
Ms Gillian Harrison	Team	Behaviour and attitudes Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Provision for pupils with SEN	mathematics science design and technology information technology music art

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.