

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

*St David's Catholic Primary School
St David's Lane
Mold*

School Number: 664-3308

Date of Inspection: 10-13 June 2002

by

*DR ERIC PEAGAM
Registered Inspector*

Date: 29 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.

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	3
3.1 STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	3
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.....	8
4.3 ATTENDANCE	8
5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION.....	10
5.1 QUALITY OF TEACHING	10
5.2 ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING.....	11
5.3 CURRICULUM	11
5.4 SUPPORT, GUIDANCE AND PUPILS’ WELFARE	12
5.5 PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	13
5.6 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY, SCHOOLS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS	14
5.7 PARTNERSHIP WITH INDUSTRY	15
6. MANAGEMENT	15
6.1 QUALITY OF SELF-EVALUATION AND PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT	15
6.2 LEADERSHIP AND EFFICIENCY	16
6.2 STAFFING, ACCOMMODATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES	17
7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	17
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	17
THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR UNDER-FIVES	17
ENGLISH	20
MATHEMATICS	21
SCIENCE.....	22
WELSH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE.....	23
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY	25
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	25
HISTORY	26
GEOGRAPHY	27
ART	28
MUSIC	28
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	29
8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	30
8.1 PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION	30
8.2 KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION	31
APPENDIX	32
A. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL	32
B. SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	32
C. RESULTS OF NATIONAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENTS AND PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS	33
D. THE EVIDENCE BASE OF THE INSPECTION	34
E. COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSPECTION TEAM	35

1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

St David's School is a Voluntary Aided Catholic school situated in Mold mainly serving the parishes of Mold and Buckley and is part of the provision for Wrexham diocese. There are 150 pupils on roll aged from three to 11 of whom 20 attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The pupils come from a range of backgrounds, mainly from the town, but with about a quarter from rural areas. Most, but by no means all of the pupils are from Catholic families. There is a full range of ability on intake, with a relatively small number of pupils (nine per cent) entitled to free school meals. There are no pupils from Welsh speaking homes and a very small number of minority ethnic pupils.

Current priorities for improvement include raising achievement in literacy and numeracy, particularly for pupils felt to be underachieving. The school also intends to improve its provision for design and technology, with particular emphasis on 'making', and developing effective use of information and communications technology (ICT) across the school with particular reference to the use of the Internet and using appropriate programs for improving spelling.

The school was last inspected in November 1996, when a number of significant weaknesses, mainly related to management and its impact on the school's provision were found.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

St David's is a good school providing well for pupils with a wide range of backgrounds and attainment on entry. It meets its core objectives well and is committed to promoting the development of all pupils, including those from other faith communities. Since the previous inspection in November 1996, the school has improved well so that it now has many strengths which significantly outweigh the few shortcomings. The school provides good value for money.

- Standards of achievement of the under-fives are good. Children make good overall progress towards the Desirable Outcomes in the six areas of learning appropriate to the early years. Standards in the individual areas of learning are as follows:

	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Good	Good
Personal and social development	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematical development	Good	Very good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Very good	Very good
Physical development	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Creative development	Good	Good

- In Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) are as follows:

Subject	KS1	KS2
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Very good	Very good
Welsh	Good	Good
Design and technology	Good	Good
Information technology	Good	Good
History	Very good	Very good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Music	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Physical education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

- The percentage of pupils attaining at the expected standard (NC level 2) or higher in national tests at KS1 in 2001 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, was in line with the national average in terms of those attaining at least level 2, but significantly above the national average for those attaining level 3, particularly in reading and science. However, overall results based purely on teacher assessments place the school below the average for Wales.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard (NC level 4) in English, mathematics and science at the end of KS2 in 2001 was above the average for Wales as a whole and at the average for similar schools. When the proportion of pupils attaining a higher level is taken into consideration, the school is achieving higher results than the majority of similar schools.
- The standards achieved in the application of Key Skills across the curriculum are as follows:

Key Skill	KS1	KS2
Speaking	Good	Good
Listening	Good	Good
Reading	Good	Good
Writing	Good	Good
Overall literacy/communication	Good	Good
Numeracy and application of number	Good	Good
ICT	Good	Good

- The school makes good provision for pupils' overall personal development. It is very effective in promoting moral development. As a result, the standards of behaviour and attitudes are good with the standard of social behaviour at times being very good throughout the school. However, there are limited arrangements to support cultural development, including the culture of Wales, especially through work across the curriculum. The average rate of attendance is good at over 93 per cent , but there are significant variations between classes. Overall, there is little unauthorised absence.

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- Teaching is a strength of the school. It is good in nearly four fifths of lessons, including nearly a fifth in which it is very good. This pattern is reflected across the school and in all subjects. It is particularly good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as well as in history.
 - The overall quality of assessment, recording and reporting on the pupils' progress is good and the information gathered is used effectively to raise pupils' standards of achievement across the school.
 - The overall quality, breadth and balance of the curriculum provided by the school is good. The early years curriculum is rich in content and experiences but there is some imbalance in its organisation, planning and presentation.
 - The school's provision for support, guidance and pupils' welfare is good overall but there is no enclosed outdoor play area and resources to support aspects of the development of children in the reception class.
 - The overall provision for pupils with SEN is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met well and the school works hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
 - The school has established a very good range of partnerships with parents, community, schools and other institutions. These make a valuable contribution to the life of the school, the quality of education provided and pupils' general development. Partnerships with industry, commerce and general service agencies are good. The school works hard to maintain the confidence of parents, including providing good information and ready access to staff, but is not always successful in achieving this.
 - The school is well led with a clear sense of mission that is shared by staff and governors. Good use is made of all the resources at its disposal and the budget is well managed and efficiently controlled. Self-evaluation and planning for improvement are good overall, but require some further development. Curriculum leaders are in place, but their role in monitoring and evaluation is insufficiently developed. The school has a good range of strategies for self-evaluation in place and uses available information well to analyse its strengths and areas for improvement. However, there is limited evaluation of performance data to establish what it is demonstrating.
 - The school is adequately staffed for the number of pupils and teachers are well qualified. Resources are good and used well. In many respects, accommodation is good, but there are shortcomings in the provision for early years.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Standards of achievement across the school are good overall and always at least satisfactory. In some subjects, they are very good. Standards observed in lessons were always at least satisfactory and in nearly nine out of 10 lessons, they were at least good. In one lesson in six, very good standards were observed. Standards were never unsatisfactory.

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- These good standards are confirmed by the work in pupils' books, the cumulative records that teachers keep and by conversations with pupils about what they know and can do.
 - Standards of achievement of the under-fives are good. Children make good overall progress towards the Desirable Outcomes in the six areas of learning appropriate to the early years. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children make very good progress, as they do in mathematics in the reception class. While standards in physical development and in personal and social development in the nursery are satisfactory, they are prevented from being better by the limited facilities available.
 - Standards in English and mathematics are good overall, with more able pupils attaining very well by the end of KS2. In science, standards are consistently very good across the school. The pupils have a good knowledge of facts and of what is meant by a fair test, while their investigative skills are developed consistently and well from the time they arrive in the school.
 - The percentage of pupils attaining at the expected standard (level 2) or higher in national tests at KS1 in 2001 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, was in line with the national average in terms of those attaining at least level 2, but significantly above the national average for those attaining level 3, particularly in reading and science.
 - Teacher assessment of overall attainment in core subjects at KS1 in 2001, in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard in all core subjects, showed the school as being below the average for Wales as a whole.
 - When compared with schools judged to be similar, teacher assessments in the core subjects placed the school in the bottom 40 per cent . However, in mathematics, where pupils undertook tests or tasks, the results of testing were significantly higher than the teacher assessments. The assessments in science were also low and out of line with those found in the school as a whole.
 - In national tests at KS2 in 2001, the percentage of pupils attaining at the expected level (level 4) or higher, was above the national average in each of the core subjects. In terms of pupils attaining higher (level 5), the proportion was significantly above average and, in science, it was very high.
 - Overall attainment in core subjects in KS2 in 2001, in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard in all core subjects, was above the average for Wales as a whole and at the average for similar schools. However, when the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels is taken into consideration, the school is achieving higher than the majority of similar schools.
 - Comparison with previous years' results to establish a year-on-year variation is not entirely reliable given the size of the cohort. Over the previous five-year period, the trend is upward and in line with the overall improvement in the local education authority (LEA) area and in Wales as a whole.
 - In the foundation subjects, the standards achieved in both key stages are generally good. They are very good in history. They are good in Welsh as a second language, design and technology, geography and information technology. In art, music and those aspects of physical education observed during the inspection they are satisfactory.

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- The standards in key skills across the curriculum are good; pupils achieve well in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy, and skills in ICT are well developed by, and effectively used in, work in other subjects.
 - Achievement is appropriately promoted through the setting of targets, which are set for individual pupils in English and mathematics. Pupils are made aware of these through written and oral feedback. School targets are constructed so as to ensure that appropriate progress is made during each year in each aspect of English while mathematics targets are derived from the National Numeracy Strategy documents.

3.2 Standards achieved in Key Skills across the curriculum

The overall standards achieved in the use of the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum have been significantly improved as a result of the school's concentrated efforts and are now good.

- Pupils' skills and good habits in speaking and listening contribute significantly to their learning in other subjects and promote their personal development well. Pupils learn to listen more carefully, speak audibly when responding in a whole class or group, give a clear account and show interest and understanding when listening to a variety of people.
- Good habits of attending and contributing to discussions are reinforced in KS2. Pupils become increasingly aware of the different types of speech required for different purposes and different audiences and engage in extended discussions. They demonstrate an increasingly complex and diverse vocabulary that includes the technical vocabulary required for subjects. By the end of KS2, pupils show great confidence when explaining things, speak at length, and do so with care and accuracy.
- Reading skills are well used across the curriculum. By the time they leave the school, most pupils read a very great variety of texts for pleasure and greater knowledge. They read fluently, critically, and with good comprehension and use these skills appropriately in other subjects.
- Pupils make good use of their developing skills in writing to communicate their understanding in other subjects. They produce narrative and creative writing using appropriate vocabulary, showing awareness of the reader and using basic punctuation. The wide range of writing is carefully supported by good habits in the use of dictionaries and other reference sources, and by the effective use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. By the end of KS2, much of their writing is mature and technically proficient.
- Numeracy skills are well used in other subjects, particularly in science and design and technology. Pupils collect and represent data, using tally sheets and select appropriate graphical forms for recording discrete and continuous variables. They measure carefully and accurately and use their knowledge of number and scale to make representative models.
- Use of ICT across the curriculum is good. Key Stage 1 pupils make symmetrical patterns and manipulate screen images to demonstrate stages in plant growth. Key Stage 2, pupils extract information from CD-ROM and use the Internet well to support learning in other subjects. They use spreadsheets, databases and control programs in mathematics and science and interrogate virtual maps to identify features of the area being studied in geography. Key Stage 2 pupils use sensor equipment to measure and track changes in light and sound levels during investigative work in science. Increasingly, pupils of all ages use word-processing and desktop publishing programmes to collate and present work in other subjects.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development overall. It is very effective in promoting moral development, but there are limited arrangements to support cultural development, especially through work across the curriculum.

- The prospectus sets out a clear mission statement that commits the school to promoting the academic, spiritual and personal development of the individual in a caring and Catholic environment. Within this, the fostering of faith through valuing the individual, promoting love and respect for God and encouraging a strong sense of community is a central focus which underpins the school's curriculum aims.
- The school has a high commitment to pupils' spiritual development that pervades its work, as set out in the school's mission statement, 'Living through Jesus in all that we do'. Acts of worship, including those in classrooms, promote an awareness of Deity and offer good opportunities for reflection.
- Provision for pupils' moral development is a particular strength of the school. The informal as well as the formal curriculum offers good opportunities to explore moral dilemmas and enable pupils to develop an understanding of the process for distinguishing right from wrong.
- Pupils show a good awareness of moral responsibility in their approach to environmental issues, both in terms of immediate and local concerns such as litter, and the impact on the lives of future generations of actions taken now. They have a very good concern for the needs of those who are less fortunate and contribute very well to a range of charities through direct fund-raising or, for example, supporting the 'shoe-box' appeal.
- The caring atmosphere throughout the school and the high quality of relationships support pupils' social development well. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop socially, which are built on as they progress through the school. In each class, pupils take regular responsibilities for duties including those of the '*Helpwr Heddiw*'.
- Pupils behave well in the playground and show respect for one another. They enter and leave the school in an orderly manner. They listen well to each other and the teacher, and take turns in contributing. They work well together, either formally with a 'talking partner' or discussing their work with others in working groups. Around the school, the operation of the 'playground buddies' scheme is seen by pupils as a good example of how they can support one another.
- Social development is well supported by the opportunity for visits as a group, including residential visits. In particular, Year (Y) 6 pupils benefit socially from the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to the Glan Llyn Centre.
- Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall, although there are weaknesses in some aspects. Some subject planning is designed to give pupils a good sense of cultures and beliefs from around the world, broadening their awareness and there is a good range of visits and visitors to support their

understanding of their own and other cultures. However, there is limited planning within subjects such as art and music, to enable pupils to explore the work of a wide range of artists and composers, and there is a similarly limited range of literary heritages represented by the texts available.

- The school plans to provide pupils with an awareness of, and an insight into, the culture of Wales, but these are limited in their extent and impact on pupils' understanding. The school holds an annual St David's Day Eisteddfod, but this has a limited impact on the on-going life of the school. As a result pupils have little awareness of the work of Welsh artists, authors or composers or the ways in which these have reflected or shaped cultural traditions.

4.2 Behaviour

The standards of behaviour and attitudes are good with the standard of social behaviour at times being very good throughout the school.

- Since the last inspection, a policy for school discipline has been introduced and established; the policy is comprehensive, gives clear direction and is implemented.
- The school's anti-bullying policy outlines the guidelines to be followed by staff. Pupils know the procedures that they need to follow if necessary and they are confident that the school responds positively when incidents are reported.
- The school closely records, monitors and follows-up instances of unacceptable behaviour; as a result, pupils are fully aware of the standards expected of them.
- Arrivals and departures are orderly in spite of a congested and constricted main entrance area to the school site.
- Attitudes towards learning in classes are good overall; a small number of pupils in some classes lack concentration and are reluctant to apply themselves to their tasks. However, others display high levels of anxiety about their performance and how this is judged.
- The school responds positively to the provisions of National Assembly Memo 3/99 in relation to Social Inclusion.
- There is a good learning atmosphere in the school; pupils are lively and active but the overall atmosphere is orderly and civilised.

4.3 Attendance

The average rate of attendance is good at over 93 per cent . There is little unauthorised absence.

- Registers are maintained in accordance with requirements and members of staff are conscientious in following procedures and pursuing attendance matters.
- Attendance is adversely affected by the long-term absence of a small number of pupils. In Y2 it was under 90 per cent every week during the term preceding the inspection and has been unsatisfactory in 19 out of 33 weeks in this school year.
- Registers reveal a high rate of holidays and occasional days' holidays taken during term time and as a result, some pupils are missing a significant amount of

school time. The school strongly discourages this practice but is not able to persuade all parents.

- The school day operates punctually, smoothly and efficiently and pupils do not waste any time in movement to their classes or in between lessons.
- An attendance policy has recently been drafted and is currently being considered by the governing body. However, the school does not yet have a policy for setting targets for improving attendance.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Quality of teaching

Teaching is good overall. In the great majority of lessons it is at least good and, at times, very good. During the inspection, no teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory.

- The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. It is good in nearly four fifths of lessons, including nearly a fifth in which it is very good. This pattern is reflected in both key stages.
- Teaching for children under five is also good overall, but the effectiveness of good teaching skills is reduced in some areas by the lack of co-ordinated provision for the early years and accommodation shortcomings.
- The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science is consistently good or very good and reflects good knowledge and skills on the part of teachers.
- In other subjects it is good in the great majority of lessons across the school, and in about one-sixth of lessons it is very good, particularly in history. Very good teaching is also seen at times in design and technology, music and physical education, in both of which the great majority of teaching is good. Insufficient direct teaching was seen to make judgements in geography or information technology, but what was seen was satisfactory or good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. There is a good overall balance of staff skills, all areas of the curriculum are well covered and teachers make effective use of in-service training (INSET) to ensure that any gaps are filled.
- Teachers demonstrate high expectations in terms of pupils' commitment to learning and their behaviour. Expectations of their attainment are appropriately high overall and pupils are encouraged to share these expectations.
- The pace in lessons is good, teachers organise pupils and resources well and lessons are well planned to fill the time available. Very good use is made of setting by ability groups, where this is appropriate, to provide work that is well matched to pupils' attainments and abilities.
- Planning is NC-related, detailed and appropriate for pupils' needs and ages. For pupils with special educational needs (SEN), it effectively addresses the targets in their IEPs. Teachers derive good support from the overall curriculum structure; planning across key stages is effective.
- Lessons generally begin with clear exposition; questioning is good and well judged. Activities are purposeful and pupils are given good encouragement to think about what they are doing in terms of what they are learning and how they can improve their work.
- Direct teaching is well balanced by discovery and experimental work that enables pupils to apply their knowledge and skills.
- Resources are well used; including good encouragement for use by pupils of information technology resources to support other subjects and teachers use these very well as an aid to teaching.

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- The quality of teaching overall is significantly enhanced by the contribution of classroom assistants who are very well briefed and enabled to carry out valuable independent support tasks as well as working with small groups, particularly in practical activities.
 - Very good informal day-to-day assessment ensures teachers know what pupils are achieving. This knowledge feeds well into formal assessment which is well used in planning.
 - The school policy on homework is followed and used effectively by teachers to extend pupils learning and promote independent research skills at a level appropriate to pupils' ages.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

The overall quality of assessment, recording and reporting on the pupils' progress is good and the information gathered is used effectively to raise pupils' standards of achievement across the school.

- The achievements of children in the nursery class are carefully recorded by the teacher and these are used during the first term of the reception year, together with the LEA assessment, to establish a baseline record for each individual child, and to inform the planning in the reception year.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are suitable comments to promote higher standards. In literacy and numeracy, the pupils agree short term targets with their teacher and their success in achieving these targets form a basis for praise or reminders in the teachers' comments.
- There is a detailed assessment timetable with a good range of assessment structures. The policy includes detailed lists of the records to be kept and each pupil has a Record of Achievement file that includes pupil self-assessment of achievement towards personal development and identified targets.
- There is a cohesive tracking procedure across the school and whole-school assessment booklets for each individual pupil throughout their time in the school are regularly used and are effective in evaluating whole-school, class, group and individual progress.
- Written reports to parents are informative and, in core subjects, appropriate targets for improvement are identified. The quality of the comments in foundation subjects varies from subject to subject and from class to class. There are good examples where the comments refer to specific achievements relevant to the year's studies and some targets for improvement are identified.
- The school does not as yet set long term predictions of pupils' achievements, in order to ensure that progress is regularly maintained, based on the information in the baseline assessment on entry to the reception class.

5.3 Curriculum

The overall quality, breadth and balance of the curriculum provided by the school are good.

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- The early years curriculum is rich in content and experiences within areas of learning for achieving the Desirable Outcomes. Provision for language, mathematics and aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are at times very good.
 - There is some imbalance in the early years curriculum in the organisation, planning and presentation. The provision for important aspects of the children's physical development, particularly in gross motor skills is underdeveloped and under-resourced.
 - In addition to the LEA-supported provision, the school offers a privately funded 'nursery plus' provision as well as before and after school clubs. These are highly valued by parents and make a good contribution to pupils' welfare. However, there is insufficient separation between the nursery and nursery plus provision to reflect the different status of each.
 - The curriculum for KS1 and KS2 is good and includes all subjects of the NC and religious education. The planning and organisation is good and supports high standards. Curriculum co-ordinators are in place for all subjects and members of the governing body are involved in individual subject overview. There are appropriate schemes of work in all subjects and where they are well established they promote high standards of achievement. More recently produced schemes are not yet fully effective in supporting high standards.
 - There is a good range of extra-curricular activities arranged by the staff and there are very good arrangements with outside agencies for complementing aspects of the school's provision, particularly in sport, music and art.
 - Planning for the development in key skills across the curriculum is good and promotes good standards across the school.
 - Where homework is set it is regularly marked and supports the learning, but the details of the school policy are not sufficiently clear to some parents.
 - Provision for the pupils' personal and social development is good throughout the school and the pupils show politeness towards others and care for younger pupils during play times.
 - The classroom support for pupils with SEN is of good quality and promotes the pupils' progress across a full curriculum. The school is successful in its commitment to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils across the curriculum.
 - The school is making satisfactory progress towards promoting the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* as in celebrating St David's Day. The pupils know the emblems and symbols of Wales, sing some Welsh songs and know the main features of Welsh folk dancing. Their knowledge and understanding of historical and geographical features of Wales is good, but there is not sufficient provision within the curriculum for the pupils to learn of the work of artists, musicians and writers living in Wales.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

The school's provision for these aspects of the life of the school are good overall but there is no enclosed outdoor play area and resources to support aspects of the development of children in the reception class.

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- The staff know the children in their care well and, generally, throughout the school, a positive and caring ethos is established where the pupils feel valued and cared for.
 - Health education is integrated well into the general curriculum and pupils respond positively to this aspect of their development.
 - The supervision around the school and in the playground is good and the established “buddy” system is effective in ensuring that all the children feel cared for when playing outdoors. The pupils move around the school as required safely and sensibly.
 - Child protection procedures are well understood; there are clear policies and practices for ensuring the overall safety of the pupils and staff at the school. Health and safety checks are carried out regularly.
 - There are many opportunities for the pupils to carry out responsibilities within the class and school and these are carried out well.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The overall provision for pupils with SEN is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met well and the school works hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

- The school has an appropriate policy and the governing body has made satisfactory arrangements to oversee the SEN work of the school.
- The headteacher, as the SEN co-ordinator, is well supported by the part-time SEN support teacher who mainly provides support for pupils in individual or group withdrawal sessions. Care is taken to ensure that pupils withdrawn for literacy support do not consistently miss work in other subjects.
- For other pupils, support is mostly provided in-class by support assistants who are well briefed about pupils’ needs.
- There are effective systems to ensure that pupils with SEN are identified early and appropriate work provided for them. Teachers carefully and regularly record the progress of pupils with SEN and these assessments and records contribute significantly to the effectiveness of SEN provision.
- In line with the Code of Practice, all pupils on ‘School Action’ and above have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). These are updated and reviewed regularly with parents and teachers being appropriately involved in the review procedures.
- The IEPs are of very high quality and closely match the needs of the pupils. Targets are set regularly, based on structured assessment and teachers and pupils are aware of what is expected
- The school has an effective system for promoting the learning of high-achieving pupils and is aware of the need to identify and support pupils with specific skills as well as those of generally high ability.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

The school has established a very good range of partnerships with parents, community, schools and other institutions. These make a valuable contribution to the life of the school, the quality of education provided and pupils' general development.

- The policy in relation to community links is comprehensive and is implemented effectively to the benefit of the school through its impact on a range of activities.
- The prospectus is available to all parents and distributed to parents of all new pupils. It is a concise and well-presented document and fully complies with National Assembly Memo 14/01. The governing body's annual report does not fully comply with Memo 15/01, but shortcomings are minor.
- Parents receive fortnightly newsletters and a constant flow of good quality correspondence and information. These keep parents well informed about school events and activities.
- The school operates an 'open-door' policy whereby parents are welcome to visit the school at any time or make an appointment to discuss problems at a mutually convenient time. In addition, parents are able to make contact with the headteacher and teaching staff at the beginning of the school day if they so wish. Parents appreciate this arrangement and value the school's approachability. Parents are also invited to attend assemblies.
- Parents are invited to three open meetings annually to discuss their children's work and progress. Additional meetings are occasionally organised during the course of the year; there is a very good response to parents' evenings.
- The Home/School Agreement was established three years ago and meets statutory requirements.
- Parents are encouraged to support school activities and a number of them give valuable assistance with activities and visits. The Friends of St David's School is highly supportive and annually raises a considerable amount of money towards activities.
- The school is very receptive to suggestions by parents and takes their concerns seriously. Any complaints are investigated and appropriate action taken when it is within the power of the school to do so. However, the school is not always successful in resolving issues in a way that satisfies parents and allays their concerns.
- Annual arrangements for receiving pupils into the school are effective and new pupils in most cases have had considerable contact with the school prior to enrolment as full-time pupils. Arrangements for the transfer of Y6 pupils to a number of secondary schools are well established and efficient.
- The school has extensive links with the community and in particular with the Church; pupils continue to attend Mass each week and attend services associated with Holy Days and other celebrations.
- There is a wide range of links with other schools through sporting and cultural activities, INSET and other professional groupings of teachers. There are also established curricular development groups.

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- Many placements are provided annually for young people on work experience programmes from secondary schools, NNEB courses, and students from the school of nursing but currently the school is not used as a resource for students on initial teacher training courses.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Partnerships with industry, commerce and general service agencies are good.

- Although there is no discrete policy for partnerships or improving pupils' knowledge of the world of work and economic and industrial understanding, the community links' policy makes provision for development of partnerships with industry, business and other agencies and institutions and the policy is implemented.
- The school is outward looking and makes good use of the community as an educational resource; purposeful visits are made locally and further afield in connection with project work and these enhance pupils' experiences.
- The local business and industrial community provides valuable support in many ways including fund raising, donations and benefits-in-kind and these links are woven into the school's programme of activities and effectively support pupils' learning.
- Service industries are supportive of the curriculum and members of staff have benefited from short placements and contact with industry.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

Self-evaluation and planning for improvement are good. The school has a good range of self-evaluation strategies in place and uses available information well to analyse its strengths and areas for improvement.

- The school has adopted a model for self-review promoted by the LEA and uses this effectively to monitor its development.
- The School Development Plan (SDP) is simple, well conceived and very focused. Targets are identified on a three-year rolling basis under each of eight headings to cover all aspects of the management and functioning of the school.
- Progress is monitored and targets updated to take account of new circumstances or initiatives. Overall, good progress is being made in all areas with planning to evaluate outcomes of initiatives this term.
- The action plan following the previous report has been evaluated and good progress has been reported on all key issues.
- Governors are fully involved in the SDP, which they see as the key tool in their management. There has clearly been significant recent improvement in the planning structure and they are confident that it provides a good basis for going forward. However, they are aware of the need to progress further in the systematic analysis of a range of effectiveness indicators in formulating targets

for action. This will include collating and analysing data on pupil progress to establish the real extent of 'value-added'.

- Parent governors attending the parents' meeting were surprised at some of the issues raised and recognise the need for closer monitoring of some areas of the school's work in order to plan for improvement.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

The school is well led with a clear sense of mission that is shared by staff and governors. Good use is made of all the resources at its disposal and the budget is well managed and efficiently controlled.

- The headteacher demonstrates good leadership and is well supported by teaching and support staff. Governors subscribe actively to the school's mission statement, which has recently been reviewed and renewed. They have consulted widely in determining the principles and practices the school has adopted.
- The governing body is very conscientious and meets very often (up to 20 times each year) which results in a considerable burden on members. The governors are significantly under strength and this in turn increases the workload. At times, the expectations of what should be included in the agenda and the level of detail in reporting lead to confusion about the relative roles and responsibilities of headteacher and governors.
- There are good procedures for setting the budget and these relate well to the objectives in the SDP. There is an appropriate balance between staffing and other costs although the budget is adversely affected by the significant proportion of staff at the top of the salary scale
- Significant additional amounts are raised through lettings and donations as well as through fund-raising by the Friends of St David's.
- Careful financial management has ensured a prudent carry-forward and provision of part-time support for writing in KS1 and SEN in KS2 as well as ensuring non-contact time for subject co-ordinators to review schemes of work.
- Policies are now in place for monitoring the school's work through observing teaching and scrutinising planning and children's work. Work has been scrutinised in the first round, but the rest has yet to be implemented.
- The role of subject co-ordinators has been significantly enhanced, but there is as yet no monitoring of the teaching within each subject.
- Governors are aware of statutory assessment requirements and ensure that these are met. They examine and review outcomes, but so far, there is limited evaluation of what the results indicate.
- Governors monitor the use of the building and the costs associated with its use well. There are plans to bring the nursery into the main building and release the outside accommodation for other use and to 'mothball' one classroom to save on cleaning, heating costs etc.
- Financial planning and management is secure and conducted through the finance committee. Good structures are in place to ensure that the school gets value for

money, but evaluation of cost-effectiveness of spending decisions in terms of the effect on learning and progress is not yet established.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

The school is adequately staffed for the number of pupils and teachers are well qualified. Resources are good and used well. In many respects, accommodation is good, but there are shortcomings in the provision for early years.

- There is a satisfactory ratio of teachers to pupils. There is a stable staff with a good balance of experience and recent training and the match of teachers' qualifications to the needs of the school is good.
- There are good procedures for the induction and support of new teachers including established mentoring arrangements for newly qualified teachers. In-service training is provided to meet school and individual needs.
- The school makes effective use of peripatetic teachers in specialist areas, particularly music and SEN and there is a good range of support staff who are well deployed.
- Accommodation is good overall with mainly good-sized classrooms. There are also a good number and range of additional teaching areas. However, there is no enclosed play area for early years children and the school lacks a suitable covered outdoor play area.
- There are good outside play areas including a spacious playground and a very good school field. The school has raised over £700 for a project to develop the playground and has received advice from a specialist planner.
- Plans for building improvements in the SDP include car parking, ongoing internal decoration, and ventilation of the Infants' toilet and improving the entrance area.
- There are also two demountable classrooms, one of which is used by the after school club. These are in poor condition and the eventual replacement of the 'after school' mobile is planned for 2003/4.
- The school is well resourced as result of careful investment and good care is taken of the resources. Good use is made of community resources to augment those within the school.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards Achieved by Pupils

The educational programme for under-fives

The educational programme for the under-fives is appropriate and promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning well. Standards achieved are good in language, creative and personal and social development, although there are shortcomings in social development in the nursery; they are good in mathematics in the nursery and very good in the reception class. Standards are also very good in both classes in knowledge and understanding of the world. In physical development, the standards are satisfactory. The curriculum is stimulating and the teachers and nursery nurses co-operate well in order to meet the needs of all children. The

planning and organisation is satisfactory overall with some shortcomings in the timetabling and organisation for the three to four-year-olds. Nursery children attend part-time for a morning session and those in the reception attend full-time. The school makes additional privately funded provision and this is insufficiently separated from the main nursery provision. There is no enclosed play area outside the reception class.

Good features

Language, literacy and communication skills

- Nursery children enjoy recalling the exciting activities of the morning in the form of questions and answers. Their speaking skills are good and they make their needs known, share personal news and use a wide range of vocabulary to describe their activities. They understand the purpose of books and their early marking and drawing skills are developing well within play situations.
- Reception children listen closely to adults and to other children and they use appropriate vocabulary to express their ideas and to respond to questions regarding their various activities. They recognise the shape and sound of letters and use picture clues well to support their early reading skills. Their writing skills are developing well and they label their work, copy sentences and the more able are beginning to write independently.

Personal and social development

- Children in the nursery class play together busily and take part eagerly in all full class activities led by the teacher. They take responsibility for their own hygiene and help to tidy up resources at the end of a session. They demonstrate care and respect for all living things and respond positively to new linguistic experiences. They are eager to explore new learning.
- Reception-age children work as part of a group and independently and are able to concentrate for appropriate lengths of time. They are able to take turns and to share resources fairly and persevere in their learning, seeking help where needed. New cultural and linguistic experiences are absorbed well and the children show sensitivity towards the needs of others.

Mathematical development

- Three to four-year-old children are able to recall a range of number rhymes, songs, stories and counting games. Mathematical concepts such as 'empty' and 'full', 'longer' and 'shorter' are understood well within the play activities in which they are involved. They count, sort and match familiar objects up to at least five and understand the use of money.
- Four to five-year-olds count orally to twenty and understand the value of these numbers. They carry out simple additions to 10. Two-dimensional shapes are matched and fitted to form interesting pictures and the children understand simple symmetry. When studying money and coins the children concentrate well on an appropriate video and carry out a range of games to consolidate aspects of coin value, memorising shopping lists and matching of coins to a good standard.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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- Nursery children have very good understanding of the seasons and of living things through their activities in growing a wide range of plants in their garden, through close observations of insects and by taking care of the class goldfish. They observe patterns and changes and the effects of the weather on growth. They are beginning to understand the idea of time both within the school day and also the changes over time in their own growth and development. They talk about their observations and discoveries using a purposeful vocabulary confidently.
 - Reception children make independent use of the listening station and class computer to further their studies and take part in meaningful discussion of what they have learnt. They recognise and name sea creatures and farm animals and keep a record of the weather over a period of a week. A visit and trip on a canal increases their understanding of methods of travel in the past as well as learning about the wildlife on the canal side. They understand that textiles are woven threads and describe different materials. They talk about their observations and ask relevant questions as to why things happen and how things work, such as the need for plugs and switches to work household objects.

Physical development

- The three to four-year-old children are developing well in their skills in the use of small tools and toys within their activities in the class. They collect and handle objects carefully and show increasing control when pouring liquid or sand. In outdoor activities using large wheeled toys they are developing an awareness of the needs of others and the need for simple rules.
- The four to five-year-olds use a range of tools and objects confidently and with increasing control and use construction kits and malleable materials safely. They move around the school and classroom areas safely and show consideration of the needs of others. When using the school hall the children make very good use of the available space and show good control when moving and changing direction. They co-operate well in pairs and show increasing ability to throw and catch, or bounce and catch a ball effectively.

Creative development

- Three to four-year-olds respond eagerly to rhythm in music and know and sing a good range of songs. They use their imagination well when involved in creative play both indoors and in the outdoor playhouse. The results of their explorations with a range of materials, media and colour form a colourful and lively display in their classroom.
- Reception-age children develop their skills in model making using play dough well to create three-dimensional animal shapes. As well as using a range of art materials to illustrate and record their work, the children are making increasingly skilful use of art programmes on the computer. The standard of singing as a class is good and individual children sing in tune and with suitable confidence. They identify a good range of musical instruments when listening to music.

Shortcomings

Personal and social development

- Children in the nursery class have not sufficiently established a routine where they know that they will each have turns in all the varied activities on offer and, at times, they demand high levels of individual attention and reassurance at the beginning of group activities.

Physical development

- Children in the two early years classes do not use a range of balancing and climbing apparatus in order to fully develop their large motor skills. Reception children do not sufficiently develop their skills in using and controlling large wheeled toys.

English

Standards of achievement in English are good in both key stages and in all aspects of literacy.

Good features

- In KS1, pupils communicate effectively when making their own needs or ideas known and discuss current topics thoughtfully. They listen attentively to the teacher, follow instructions appropriately and join in class discussions eagerly, using an increasingly wide vocabulary.
- Reading standards in KS1 are good; pupils know and use various support strategies when approaching new text. They appreciate the regular opportunities for reading from a good selection of books appropriate to their age and development and are beginning to seek out information on a range of topics to support their learning across the curriculum.
- Standards in writing are good and pupils in KS1 develop quickly from copying text to writing words, phrases and sentences independently. Their handwriting is legible and increasingly accurate in formation and size. Their illustrations add well to their written text in communicating their ideas. They show good awareness of the need to sequence events when recalling stories or writing of their own experiences.
- In KS2, speaking and listening skills are good and pupils communicate and interact effectively with one another and with the teacher. They speak clearly and increasingly sustain discussion within the class or as a group using appropriate language and taking account of the contributions of others.
- Standards in reading in KS2 are good overall and the pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy according to their age and ability. They have a clear understanding of what they read and respond orally to text of varying complexity in order to develop their own literacy skills as well as to inform their learning across the curriculum. They increasingly understand the implicit meaning in poetry and fictional work, as well as making good use of library books and electronic texts for information. They regularly use dictionaries and index and contents pages efficiently.

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- Standards achieved in writing by the end of the key stage are good and the pupils write in a variety of forms and for different purposes and audiences. They each have specific targets in order to develop their writing skills and these targets are regularly reviewed and updated when achieved. Pupils understand the value of careful planning for all their written work and in particular in story writing where characters, events and descriptions are thoughtfully prepared.
 - Pupils have good understanding of the conventions of writing and their handwriting is legible and presentation is generally good. Class books on various topics are attractively produced with appropriate use of ICT to enhance pupils' work. Spelling is good; pupils understand word families and make regular use of dictionaries. There is very good variety in pupils' writing experiences; they produce good work in descriptive passages, in poetry and in factual accounts and understand the difference between biography and autobiography well.
 - Older pupils revise and redraft parts or all of a piece of written work and are increasingly able to reflect independently on what they have written.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Mathematics

Standards achieved in mathematics are good in both key stages.

Good features

- From the time they arrive in the school, pupils develop good understanding of number and apply this to a range of problems in mathematics. They learn to select the correct mathematical process for the task they are set and conduct increasingly complex investigations, applying what they already know to new situations.
- By the time they are seven, pupils order successfully numbers up to a hundred, add and subtract mentally to ten and, with single digits, perform these operations up to one hundred. They collect, display and interpret data using information technology.
- They use quarters and halves as applied to clocks and pupils with higher attainments use fractions to solve problems involving money. They begin to develop understanding of the language of direction and plot simple co-ordinates.
- By the end of KS2, pupils develop the ability to talk about mathematical problems using appropriate vocabulary, for example, to explain the process of multiplication using repeated addition, and to carry out operations using the technique. They recognise that some operations are the inverse of others, and learn that the order of operations can be significant in complex calculations.
- The majority of pupils develop a thorough understanding of the four basic rules of number. They add and subtract three-digit numbers, round up or down to check calculations and complete long multiplication using hundreds, tens and units.
- Pupils are involved in collaborative practical investigations and apply their numeracy skills in the solution of problems. They understand and explain the role of hypothesis in investigation. Pupils are confident in applying their mental

strategies to different applications, and are secure in their knowledge of multiplication tables.

- They understand the principles underlying probability calculations, differentiating between random outcomes and the demonstration of a sustainable conclusion.
- Pupils find fractions of simple numbers and calculate averages of a set of numbers. They recognise a range of three-dimensional shapes, describing their features and characteristics, distinguishing the number of corners, faces, and the shape of the surface.
- They find lines of symmetry and know that some shapes are not symmetrical, while others have multiple lines of symmetry. They know the difference between the area and perimeter of a shape, and calculate the area by using appropriate formulae. They recognise and identify different types of angles.
- They measure accurately in centimetres and metres and convert between the two measurements. When displaying data in a graph, they differentiate between discrete and continuous variables and make sensible judgements about the appropriate scale required to present a given range of data.
- They develop a good understanding of decimal fractions and percentages and apply these to problems involving money, area and volume.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Science

Standards achieved in science are very good in both key stages. Their knowledge and understanding is very good and their investigative skills are very well developed.

Good features

- By the end of KS1, pupils carry out investigations well. They make careful observations and record their findings effectively in writing and diagrams. They have a growing understanding of what constitutes a fair test and when carrying out investigations make accurate predictions about what they think might happen.
- Their knowledge of living things is good. Pupils know what plants need to survive and predict what will happen if water and light are taken away. They put the stages of growth into their proper sequence. They understand the importance of eating a healthy diet and taking regular exercise.
- Pupils accurately categorise materials according to their properties, recognising that there can be a range of criteria for classification and that some materials may share some but not all properties with others. They explain how some changes that occur as the result of objects becoming hotter or colder are permanent, whilst others, such as melting ice are reversible.
- Through their studies of physical processes, pupils know how light travels, and can explain how a shadow is formed. They know that light is able to travel through some materials but not others. They construct and explain simple electrical circuits. They examine the insulating properties of a range of materials.

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- By the end of KS2, the ability of pupils to plan, carry out and record practical investigations is well developed and they achieve at higher levels than are found nationally. They have a good understanding of how to plan a fair test and take this carefully into consideration when planning an experiment.
 - Whilst planning an investigation to establish the extent to which light can penetrate materials, for example, they are aware that the distance from the torch needs to be constant. They confidently plan out their ideas and correctly select the elements of the test that they could keep the same and those they would need to change. They record their observations carefully in charts and graphs.
 - Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of living things. They explain the importance of healthy eating and exercise and have a secure knowledge of the main parts of the human body and their functions.
 - Pupils' knowledge of materials and their properties is good, and they understand and explain precisely the properties of solids, liquids and gases. They conduct experiments to compare the viscosity of liquids by measuring their rate of flow. They have a very good understanding of the differences between chemical and physical changes.
 - Pupils have a good knowledge of physical processes and know how to construct complex electrical circuits in series and parallel, including switches. They explain the way in which light travels in a straight line, and describe the relationship between the sun, moon, earth and other planets. They know that the sun is a light source, but that the moon merely appears to be.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Welsh as a second language

Standards of achievement in Welsh as a second language are good across the school and the pupils and staff use Welsh incidentally during the school day with increasing confidence and competence.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 ask and answer questions orally in Welsh within familiar contexts with clear pronunciation and accurate sentence structures. Their ability to count confidently in Welsh adds enjoyment to a variety of word games and pupils are developing well in their ability to carry out simple dialogue.
- They read together from class books in Welsh and respond very well to the use of word cards in question and answer situations on various topics. They copy simple text to accompany illustrations in Welsh.
- In KS2, pupils add to their available vocabulary and adapt known sentence patterns to a range of topics. They begin to use past and future tense effectively particularly when describing their own likes, dislikes and experiences.
- Pupils read aloud from shared class reading books of appropriate levels confidently and accurately and after discussion and oral practice, they write out their own books using different characters and situations within the same sentence pattern and structures successfully.

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- When carrying out writing activities in Welsh, pupils make purposeful use of the displays of vocabulary within their classroom and succeed in producing a range of writing in Welsh on a variety of topics.
 - Pupils respond enthusiastically to their experiences in learning Welsh as a second language and are suitably proud of their achievements.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Design and technology

Standards achieved in design and technology are good in both key stages. Pupils develop good skills through design in work associated with projects to support learning in other subjects.

Good features

- Key Stage 1 pupils use a range of conventional classroom tools with confidence and safety. When constructing simple mechanisms using levels and pivots, they draw on a range of techniques and produce 'flying fish' and 'scissors' from card.
- They make elaborate structures, such as large wheeled vehicles for aliens from construction kits, showing good understanding of simple methods of transferring motion.
- When working to a simple design brief, such as making a shadow puppet, they draw up a work plan showing what materials they will need and the sequence of activities.
- Key Stage 2 pupils produce well worked up designs, with detailed work plans and carefully labelled diagrams. They examine a range of everyday support structures when considering how to make a photograph frame stand up and produce a good range of solutions.
- When designing and modelling a special chair or a playground shelter, they develop a clear design brief, working to specifications which demonstrate their ability to design for a specific purpose or context. They evaluate their results and compare the outcome with their intentions.
- They develop an understanding of the technology associated with food when they examine and compare the qualities of different types of bread.
- They use a good range of different materials, including textiles, wood, card and recycled materials, and explain the different joining techniques they would use for different purposes.
- They apply their knowledge and experience well in approaching design problems or when explaining the way in which they would use a cam to change rotary motion into linear motion as part of a 'design a toy' project.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Information technology

Standards achieved in information technology are good in both key stages. Pupils increasingly learn to manage the ICT environment independently through work to support learning in other subjects.

Good features

- Key Stage 1 pupils use computers well, to produce their own pictures and writing and search for information. They generate attractive poster displays in religious education and sequence pictures in science.

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- They make effective use of their ability to select and manipulate images on screen to support the acquisition and reinforcement of basic numeracy and literacy skills.
 - By the end of Y2, pupils have good mouse and keyboard skills. They type using upper and lower case letters and appropriate punctuation. They use editing keys and employ correct terminology such as 'cursor' and 'monitor'. They open and close files, saving and printing their work.
 - Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in information handling and presenting this using word processing and desktop publishing applications. They format their work well, paying attention to colour, the appearance of text and where it is placed on the page, and create a poster using clip art combined with text.
 - They have good skills for retrieving information from CD-ROM and more experienced pupils access and search the Internet effectively for specific information. They copy and paste information and graphics from one application to another.
 - They employ ICT well in science lessons, using sensor equipment to record changes in the environment and reporting their conclusions using ICT-generated graphs and diagrams.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

History

Standards achieved in history are very good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 are developing a good sense of the passage of time within their own experiences and are acquiring and using their own vocabulary to describe past events.
- They understand that they can learn of past events by asking older people for information, by visiting places and from stories based in the past as well as from books and photographs. They compare and contrast aspects of the daily lives of people and children in the past, such as holidays, and reflect on how some facets seem attractive but also appreciate the difficulties of life then, as compared with today. After studying toys from the past and comparing with those of today they arrange toys in chronological order successfully.
- In KS2, pupils study a wide range of periods in time and begin their studies by gathering together the information they already have on a given era and establishing what they wish to discover. They show very good research skills and know where to seek information from a range of primary and secondary sources.
- Methods of recording their findings range from factual accounts to adaptation of facts to support creative writing in which pupils show good understanding of events from the past, such as a Roman banquet using all their gathered information on Roman times as background to their work.

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- In their studies of the Second World War, pupils empathise well with the evacuees and devise good questions and answers on their lives and experiences.
 - They understand the purpose and usefulness of time-lines covering various lengths of time and are establishing very good practices for studying any period in history. They record their work in a good variety of methods including creating a series of models of castles.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography

No lessons were observed during the inspection period. Account was taken of evidence in pupils' books, planning documents and discussion with pupils. On this evidence, standards of achievement in geography are good in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment make good progress in acquiring and developing geographical skills.
- Key Stage 1 pupils gain a sound knowledge of maps and plans. They understand the notion of a bird's eye view, and identify and label squares on a matrix using simple co-ordinates. They know the purpose of maps and atlases, and know that maps come in different sizes and different scales.
- Pupils have an understanding of directional commands including north, south, east and west, which they use effectively when describing Little Red Riding Hood's journey to Granny's house, or planning their route from home to school.
- Pupils increasingly make good use of geographical vocabulary to classify and describe man-made and natural physical features in the locality. They characterise different places as attractive or unattractive and give reasons. They learn about the geography of Wales and its position in the world. They develop a good knowledge of climatic conditions in other locations and compare and contrast the geographical features of other localities, such as Tocuaro in Mexico with their own.
- Key Stage 2 pupils confidently and accurately locate places and points of interest on maps using co-ordinates. When producing their own maps, they carefully consider scale and distance, showing good ability in translating one to the other.
- They conduct surveys and represent data on simple graphs to compare conditions in different locations. They use their skills and knowledge well when they produce advertising material extolling the benefits of holiday in Wales.
- Pupils understand the role of rivers in determining the location of settlements, successfully identifying the benefits and disadvantages of living on a river bank. They relate this to their own knowledge of the past behaviour of the local river. and opportunities for fieldwork further extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.

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- By the time pupils reach the end of the key stage, they have studied, in some detail, a range of places in other parts of the world. Older pupils discuss with confidence the effects of climate and physical conditions on the lives of the people who live there.

Shortcomings

- There are no significant shortcomings.

Art

Standards achieved in art are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils in KS1 experiment with a good range of media and techniques and work together well to produce attractive displays of art work to reflect their studies across the curriculum.
- They sketch local buildings and carry out other observational drawing effectively and with increasing skill and they appreciate the different effects produced when using different media such as charcoal and pastels.
- Their ability to use a range of tools such as scissors and glue is good and supports their work using textiles to create a collage well. They convey the four seasons well, making use of different techniques.
- Pupils study the work of famous artists, and appreciate that all works of art are not permanent. They collaborate very well in groups to discuss and plan how to arrange natural objects to convey an idea. These are then effectively recorded as a photograph.
- Older pupils design and make a range of headgear for different purposes. They measure, cut and attach a basic shape well and discuss the requirements to suit a specific purpose.
- In KS2, pupils' art work reflects a growing awareness of the value of presentation in their studies across the curriculum, such as a display in three dimensions of a Roman feast, or art work linked to the study of living things and endangered species.

Shortcomings

- The pupils' experiences are varied but do not sufficiently consistently build on their previous experience as they do not follow a progressive programme of study in art. They are not sufficiently familiar with the work of creative artists working in Wales.

Music

Standards achieved in music are satisfactory in both key stages.

Good features

- Standards of singing in both key stages are good with the pupils singing mostly in tune and giving due attention to stance and breathing. The older pupils gain

valuable experiences in singing by practising and taking part in external singing events such as the Junior Voice Jamboree Concert.

- Pupils in KS1 identify high and low sounds in a piece of music very well and use named notes to compose and perform a short piece of music. When listening to Peter and the Wolf they recognise and name some of the instruments used and they are familiar with a range of percussion instruments and use them effectively to respond to rhythm and beat. They give good reasons for selecting particular instruments for a specific purpose, such as a metal sound for a girl's voice.
- They compose, perform and evaluate a piece of music as an accompaniment to a story effectively.
- In KS2, the pupils use a selection of tuned instruments to form a simple composition. More able pupils record their work in old notation style and other pupils use a letter to identify a musical note.
- The pupils are familiar with the instruments and sections of an orchestra. They design and make some simple non-tuned instruments and describe the sound produced using different materials well.
- Pupils who attend a recorder club, and those who have individual music lessons from peripatetic teachers or privately have a good understanding of musical terminology, are able to read music and have a deeper understanding and knowledge of note values and these pupils support the learning in the classrooms.

Shortcomings

- The pupils do not sufficiently build on securely established previous learning as they are not following a progressive programme of study in accordance with full NC requirements. This is an identified area for development in the SDP.

Physical education

It was not possible to see the full range of physical education activities during the inspection. On the basis of what was seen and other evidence, standards are satisfactory at both key stages.

Good features

- Pupils achieve well in swimming with all pupils achieving the 25-metre benchmark and many achieving above it.
- The youngest pupils achieve well when practising their skills with bats and balls. Hand-eye co-ordination is very good. Pupils throw, catch and steer balls, allowing for the effects of wind. When playing a team game, they are aware of rules and the need to co-operate.
- Older KS1 pupils build satisfactorily on these skills and participate effectively in team games.
- Younger KS2 pupils achieve well both in terms of the skills they develop and their understanding of the role of exercise in healthy living. They take the warm-up activities seriously and demonstrate a good knowledge of the reasons why it is necessary to ensure that muscles remain warm as well as explaining the effect

that exercise has on the human body. They relate activities to the body parts they will use and anticipate the correct warm-up exercises for specific activities.

- They find space, demonstrate a good understanding of how each of a range of throwing techniques might be used in field events, and improve their individual movements.
- Pupils evaluate their own and others' performances and build on each other's ideas well. They work together in a group and show confidence in demonstrating their work.
- Older KS2 pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills for use in team games as they practise ways of travelling with a ball, keeping control and distributing it accurately. They work together in small groups developing and improving passing skills, and translate these skills into simple relay games.
- Higher-attaining pupils achieve well in competitive games and the school has a good record of success in a range of inter-school sports competitions, including swimming and athletics.
- A small number of pupils develop good gymnastic skills as a result of participation in the gymnastics club that takes place after school.

Shortcomings

- Pupils do not build securely on the good foundations laid at the beginning of each key stage, so that their progress is insecure.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection

The school was last inspected in the summer term 1996 and the inspection report identified key issues for action, covering the need to:

- establish secure management structures and responsibilities, including appointing a headteacher;
- implement effective systems for planning and monitoring of expenditure;
- produce an effective SDP with clear targets for raising achievement particularly in KS2;
- improve the management, planning and monitoring of the curriculum;
- introduce a programme for professional development of staff;
- meet statutory requirements in policies and publication of required documents.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved well.

- All key issues have been addressed as well as a number of minor issues identified in the report.
- The leadership and management are now securely established and there are good systems in place to ensure the efficient working of the school including

meeting statutory requirements. Governors have become much more involved in the life of the school and the budget is well managed and controlled.

- There has been a significant improvement in learning outcomes, demonstrated by school self-review, and evaluation within the SDP indicates a significant improvement in provision. These in turn are reflected in the higher standards in a number of subjects observed at this inspection. Standards overall in KS2 are now good.
- Curriculum issues have been addressed, schemes of work are in place and monitoring of teaching has begun. Literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced which have had a good impact on learning
- Appropriate arrangements for staff development are in place and planning is well advanced to meet the impending requirements for performance management.
- Curriculum arrangements are much improved in terms of planning and assessment.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

In order further to enhance the quality of education and to continue to raise the educational standards achieved there is a need to:

- ensure that provision for early years is integrated and that there are appropriate facilities for both the nursery and reception classes. In addition, the privately funded element of the nursery should be separate and distinctive;
- make more effective use of information about the progress of individual pupils to set and monitor targets and to provide a secure basis for establishing the effectiveness of the school's educational provision;
- develop a policy for establishing targets for improving attendance and address areas where attendance is lower than the overall percentage;
- extend the role of curriculum co-ordinators to provide regular and consistent monitoring of teaching in each subject as well as the outcomes and planning;
- address any shortcomings identified in subjects or aspects of the school that are otherwise satisfactory or good.

APPENDIX

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	St David's Catholic Primary School
School type	Voluntary Aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	St David's Lane Mold Flintshire
Post-Code	CH7 1LH
Telephone Number	01352 752651

Headteacher	Mrs C Pilling
Date of appointment	February 1997
Chair of Appropriate Authority	Rev Fr A Morrin
Registered Inspector	Dr Eric Peagam
Dates of inspection	10-13 June 2002

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	10	31	20	19	19	26	17	18	160

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	6	4	7.7

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	21:1
Average teaching group size	25
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.3:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>					
Term	Nursery	Reception	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Spring 2002	84	93	91	91	92
Summer 2001	87	93	95	97	95
Autumn 2001	80	94	88	96	93

<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

END OF KEY STAGE 1:2001

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2001			Number of pupils in Y2: 24						
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4+
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0		0	17	54	29	0
		National	0		4	13	62	21	0
Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0		0	21	42	38	0
		National	0		4	13	54	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	4	0	17	42	38	
		National	1	0	3	13	53	30	
Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0		0	13	75	13	0
		National	0		5	13	70	12	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	4	4	79	8	
		National	0	0	5	10	75	9	
Speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0		0	17	50	33	0
		National	0		3	11	63	23	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0		0	21	33	46	0
		National	0		2	9	60	29	0
	Task/Test	School	0	0	0	4	54	38	
		National	0	0	2	6	56	36	
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0		0	25	17	58	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:	71	In Wales:	80
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D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2001

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2001	Number of pupils in Y6: 20
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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	5	1 0	4 0	4 0	0	
		National	0	0	1		0	1	6	1 9	4 8	2 5	0	
	Test/Task	School	0	3	0	0				5	1 0	3 0	5 0	
		National	0	2	2	0				4	1 4	4 7	3 1	
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	5	1 5	3 5	4 0	0	
		National	0	0	1		0	1	4	1 9	4 7	2 8	0	
	Test/Task	School	0	3	0	0				5	1 5	3 5	4 0	
		National	0	2	1	1				4	1 8	4 2	3 2	
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	5		3 5	5 5	0	
		National	0	0	1		0	1	3	1 5	5 2	2 9	0	
	Test/Task	School	0	3	0	0				0	5	2 5	6 5	
		National	0	2	0	1				2	1 3	5 1	3 1	

- D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
B Pupils not entered for the tests because they are working outside the set levels of the tests
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

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:	75	In the school:	75
In Wales:	68	In Wales:	68

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors over a period of three and a half days, and the report was based on evidence from:

- pre-inspection meetings held with the headteacher, staff and the governing body;
- the analysis of 44 returned parents' questionnaires and a meeting with 22 parents;
- the observation of 33 lessons or part-lessons and observation of extra-curricular activities;
- a scrutiny of pupils' work and hearing pupils read;
- an examination of assessment records and reports to parents;
- observation of registration procedures;
- the scrutiny of school documentation, teachers' plans and assessment records;

- observation of pupils' behaviour in and around the school at break-times, lunch-times and before and after school;
- attendance at assemblies;
- discussions with the headteacher and other staff;
- post-inspection meetings with senior management and governing body.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect responsibilities	Subject responsibilities
Dr E Peagam	Rgl	Standards of achievement Key Skills Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Quality of teaching Special educational needs Self-evaluation Leadership and efficiency Resources	mathematics science design and technology information technology geography physical education
Mr J James	Lay	Attendance Behaviour Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions Partnership with industry	
Mrs E Hughes	Team	Curriculum Assessment, recording and reporting Support, guidance and pupils' welfare	under-fives English Welsh history art music

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.