

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

**St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School
Ringland Circle
Newport
NP19 9PQ**

School Number: 680/3306

Date of Inspection: 3–4 October 2005

by

**Dr Jim Hewitt
79243**

Date: 5 December 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T086/05/P

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St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School took place between 3 and 4 October 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dr. Jim Hewitt undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a standard inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. St Gabriel's Roman Catholic Primary School caters for pupils between 4 and 11 years of age, and is situated in Ringland, a large local authority housing estate on the eastern fringe of Newport. The school's catchment area is the Parish of St Gabriel's which includes both private and local authority housing; however, the majority of pupils are from the Ringland and Always estates which are Community First areas. The present head teacher was appointed to the school in September 2005.
2. There are currently 120 boys and girls on roll, slightly more boys (55%) than girls, and they are organised into five mixed-ability classes. The number on roll has been stable for the past three years. There is a limited amount of movement of pupils between the school and other parts of Newport or the United Kingdom.
3. Children take up full-time placement in the reception class in the September following their fourth birthdays having attended nursery provision at locations other than the school. The teacher's initial assessments indicate a wide range of ability on entry. English is the home language of 99 per cent of pupils. No pupils speak Welsh as their home language, and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language; very few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Twenty five per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is just above the local education authority (LEA) average and well above the national average. The school identifies 15 pupils (13%) as having special educational needs (SEN) which is below the national average; of these, one pupil has a statement outlining his special educational needs. The National Curriculum is not modified or disapplied for any pupil.
4. The school was last inspected in December 1999.
5. During the time of this inspection, Religious education was inspected separately, complying with Section 50 of the Education Act 1998.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's stated aims and objectives are to:
 - make St. Gabriel's school a happy, secure and stimulating learning environment in which all members of the school community can grow in self-esteem and develop their potential as human beings;
 - provide a broad, balanced and relevant education which caters for the whole child in a secure and caring; environment in which individuals are encouraged to develop to their maximum potential;
 - ensure that the Catholic identity of the school is reflected in every feature of school life: the day-to-day organisation; its curriculum, staff development and the relationship between school, parish and home;
 - ensure that the programme of religious education is given full regard both in terms of classroom studies and the overall life of the school;
 - work in partnership with parents in the best interests of their children and ensure that parents feel that they are an important part of the Catholic school and community.

7. The school's priorities for improvement outlined in the school improvement plan for 2005/6 are to:
 - raise the standards of speaking and listening in key stage 1;
 - raise the standards of spelling across the school;
 - continue to implement the information and communications technology (ICT) skills ladder across the school;
 - continue to implement key skills across the curriculum;
 - use the self-evaluation process to embed further the subject leaders' role;
 - improve the quality of lunchtime provision;
 - support the special needs co-ordinator in managing his leadership role effectively.

Summary

8. St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School is a caring and effective school with the potential to raise standards further by maintaining and building on recent improvements. During their time at school, pupils make good progress particularly in English, mathematics and science and show maturity in their personal, social and moral development. On leaving to start the next phase of learning, pupils prove to be a credit to themselves and the school; reflecting the commitment and hard work of the staff.

Table of grades awarded

9. The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

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

Standards

Subjects and Areas of Learning Early Years

10. Reception age pupils begin school with very different life experiences and skills but quickly adjust to school life and benefit from good Early Years provision overall.
11. In the Early Years, standards of achievement in the six areas of learning are as follows:

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

12. Pupils make good progress through their school career, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

13. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, standards of achievement in the subjects identified for inspection are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	2	2
Science	2	2
Information technology	3	3
History	3	3
Art	3	3

14. During the time of the inspection, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	60%	36%	0%	0%

15. Pupils' standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are well above the Welsh Assembly Government's current all-Wales targets.
16. The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right. These relate specifically to the lack of resources and space for children's physical development. In the other areas of learning, children reach a good standard with no important shortcomings.
17. Across the whole curriculum, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening and reading are good. In writing, numeracy, and information and communications technology, standards are also good but some shortcomings have been identified. Pupils have good standards and make good progress in developing personal and social skills. However, their creative skills, ability to solve problems and bilingual skills in using Welsh as a second language across the curriculum are not as well developed. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales is limited.
18. The school's results in English, mathematics and science have shown consistent improvement over the past four years. The results for 2005 were very good; particularly at key stage 2, where all pupils achieved at least level 4 in each subject. At both key stages, the school exceeded local and national averages in each of the three subjects. The number of pupils gaining the higher level 3 in key stage 1 and the higher level 5 in key stage 2 exceeded the national average in each subject with the exception of English at key stage 1 and science at key stage 2.
19. When compared with similar schools, based upon the number of free school meals provided, St Gabriel's is in the top 25 per cent of schools for all the core subjects except English at key stage 1, where it is above the average. Boys tend to outperform girls at mathematics and science and girls achieve better results in English.

20. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and usually perform well. Overall, pupils do well in acquiring new knowledge and the school is helping them to develop their ideas and increase their understanding in many areas. Most pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and achieve well in relation to their starting points and meet or exceed the targets set for them by the school. Pupils are at an early stage, however, in evaluating their own progress, setting targets and developing strategies for improving their performance.
21. Pupils are well motivated and behave well; they work productively, show good attitudes to learning and make effective use of their time. They collaborate well and can work independently although they are given insufficient guidance in developing their investigative, enquiry and experimental skills. Pupils show maturity in their relationships with others and understanding of right and wrong. Their understanding of equal opportunities issues is developing well and they have respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions with British society.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	68%	28%	0%	0%

23. The quality of teaching is good overall and teaching for the children under five is consistently good. A particular strength of the teaching is in the establishment in all classes of good relationships and high expectations by all adults of pupils' behaviour and response.
24. Overall, staff successfully challenge and motivate their pupils. They have good subject knowledge and successfully use a wide range of teaching methods to involve all pupils, including those with SEN, actively in the learning process. In the main, lessons are planned to meet the needs of groups of pupils of all abilities and ages. In the best lessons, teachers skilfully and imaginatively capture the interest of their pupils. However, there are some occasions where activities are not sufficiently challenging or structured effectively for pupils to develop their independent working habits. In lessons judged to have some shortcomings, the aims of the lesson were not made clear at the outset, or there were missed opportunities for the development of key and bilingual skills.
25. Statutory tests and assessments are undertaken appropriately and the legal requirements are fully met. The school records and reports pupils' achievements to parents and other relevant parties; although some parents would value more information about how well their children are doing in the different subjects.

26. Assessment of the progress of children under five in the reception years is good. The information gathered is used appropriately in planning lessons that match children's individual needs. In key stage 1 and 2, while there are good assessment systems in place in English and maths, other subjects do not have formal, whole school systems to track individuals' progress. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and become involved in the setting of their next targets is a very recent development and not yet embedded throughout the school.
27. Pupils receive equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Children in the early years have access to a wide spectrum of well-planned activities, which ensure continuity and progression in their learning; although provision for the aspect of physical development of building upper body strength and agility is less well developed. In the main, key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils receive a diversity of experiences and a range of opportunities well matched to their stage of development and particular learning needs.
28. There is a good emphasis placed on the teaching and learning of English, mathematics and science but emphasis on the development of the other 'Foundation' subjects has been given less emphasis in recent years. Whilst teachers are generally aware of the need to include key skills in their planning, there is as yet no means of ensuring their development throughout the curriculum in a meaningful and systematic way. Although *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* features in a number of subjects, opportunities for involvement are insufficiently promoted.
29. The school actively promotes pupils' broader personal, social, moral and spiritual development well. However, some opportunities for the development of entrepreneurial skills are missed. There are good links with parents and with the local and wider community. Opportunities for pupils to take part in extra curricular activities, educational visits and initiatives to help in the community are also good.
30. The quality of care, support and guidance is good. The school gives a high priority to the pastoral care of all of its pupils regardless of social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background. Boys and girls have equality of access to all the school has to offer and are developing a good awareness and respect for the diverse cultures in British society. The school works closely with outside agencies to support a range of identified needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) works closely with mainstream staff, support staff and governors to ensure SEN pupils follow a co-ordinated individual programmes and engage fully in the life of the school.

Leadership and management

31. The school's Christian Catholic aims and values are explicit and reflected in all aspects of school life and in everyday practices.
32. The new head teacher provides strong leadership across the school. He has clarity of vision and a sound understanding of the order of priority for change. The school takes due account of local and national priorities. There is a well-established performance management system.
33. The governors are committed to providing the best possible support for the school, its pupils and staff. They take a keen interest in the progress and welfare of its pupils. They have a secure understanding of their responsibilities and are kept well informed by the head teacher. The governing body meets most statutory requirements although there are some omissions in the School Prospectus.
34. The established process of self-evaluation has led to some initiatives which, have helped to move the school forward. But the current link between self-evaluation and planning for school improvement has not yet been systematically developed. Overall progress in addressing the key issues for action identified during the last inspection has been good but with some shortcomings.
35. Subject leaders and co-ordinators work hard and support their colleagues well but most have not had the opportunity to audit their subjects thoroughly or make strategic decisions about the deployment of resources.
36. Staff in the school are well qualified, experienced and are well deployed. School administration is efficient although there hasn't been a full financial audit since 1999. Accommodation and resources are attractive and well maintained although there are some shortcomings in provision for the physical development of children under five and in resources in some subject areas.
37. The head teacher and governing body have suitable regard for the principles of best value and they carefully monitor the impact of spending decisions. Last year the school's budget reserves were over seven per cent, which is above the audit commission's recommendation of between three and five per cent. Indications are that the budget reserve will fall this year to within that recommendation. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

38. In order to improve standards further, it is recommended that the school should:
- R1 Establish a clear cycle of thorough self-evaluation and precise planning for improvement with critical and, where possible, quantitative evaluation of the results. Ensure that curriculum subject leaders, governors, and all other stakeholders contribute fully to the process.
 - R2 Further develop school assessment procedures, and ensure that pupils are involved in setting and reviewing precise targets to improve their own learning.
 - R3 Improve the provision to further pupils' key skills, including bilingualism and their independent learning skills.
 - R4 Improve the accommodation and resources for children under five and improve resources in the foundation subjects and information communication technology.
 - R5 Ensure statutory requirements are met in relation to the information provided for parents.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

Subjects and Early Years areas of learning

40. During the time of the inspection, standards of achievement in the lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	60%	36%	0%	0%

41. In the Early Years, standards of achievement in the six areas of learning are as follows:

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

42. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, standards of achievement in the subjects identified for inspection are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	2	2
Science	2	2
Information technology	3	3
History	3	3
Art	3	3

43. When children join the reception class they bring a differing range of life experiences and display a wide range of ability. Their ability levels on entry to school are similar to or below the local average. Educational provision in the school, especially teaching, ensures that pupils progress well, and by the end of key stage 2 pupils achieve average standards overall in their knowledge, understanding and skills when compared to their often below average starting point. However, their achievement in English, mathematics and science is good and showing a continuous trend of improvement.
44. The under-fives make good progress and achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy

and information and communication technology. They play and work well together and have a clear understanding of the rules of behaviour. Their personal and social education skills are good. Their creative skills are developing well through singing and using simple instruments and through painting. They are developing bilingual competence well and use Welsh quite naturally for greetings, during registration and for counting.

45. The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right. Weakness in provision relates specifically to children's physical development and the lack of opportunity to take regular exercise.
46. Pupils with additional learning needs including those with SEN or potential behavioural problems and those looked after by the local authority make good progress. They integrate fully with other pupils and cope well with the work given.
47. When withdrawn for support work, SEN pupils enjoy their lessons; they understand the need for support and comment positively on their progress.
48. Pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 build well on the sound foundation laid in the early years and continue to make good progress and achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking and listening and reading. There are some shortcomings in the standards achieved in their application of mathematical skills, their use of ICT and their use of writing across the curriculum. Their creative and problem-solving skills across the curriculum are under developed.
49. Standards in bilingual competence are average. For example, pupils use both English and Welsh during acts of collective worship and both languages feature prominently in school and class displays of their work. However, while good examples of pupils using incidental Welsh were seen across the school as a whole; this is inconsistent and progression is not always evident.
50. Pupils in both key stages make good progress towards, and frequently exceed the targets and goals the school sets for them in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
51. Key stage 1 National Curriculum assessment results is much improved over the past three years and compare favourably with both LEA and national averages. In 2005, results in the three core subjects were above the averages. The percentage of pupils who achieved the core subject indicator (at least the expected level 2 in all three core subjects) was also above the national average. In mathematics and science, the number of pupils gaining a higher level 3 was above the national average.
52. When compared with similar schools, (those between nine per cent and 16 per cent of pupils entitled to receive free school meals) results at key stage 1 are well above average in mathematics and science, with the school being in the top 25 per cent, and above average in English.

53. Results in key stage 2 National Curriculum assessment tests have improved significantly from the previous year. However, the group of pupils for 2005 was small with only 14 pupils taking the tests and this makes statistical comparisons somewhat unreliable. Nevertheless, results in all three core subjects were above national and local averages. All pupils achieved the core subject indicator (at least level 4 in each of the core subjects). In English and mathematics, the number of pupils gaining the higher level 5 exceeded the national average; but science was slightly below average.
54. When compared with similar schools, results at key stage 2 in 2005 are well above average with the school being in the top 25 per cent in English, mathematics and science. Results in 2005 are based solely upon teacher assessment.
55. At both key stages, boys slightly outperform the girls in mathematics and science whereas girls outperform the boys in English. Over recent years, assessment results have shown a steady upward trend and there has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels.
56. Despite the school's best efforts, whole school attendance during the three terms preceding the inspection was 91.6 per cent. This is below the national average. Unauthorised absence is above average. Attendance for the current term so far shows an improvement. It is currently 92.2 per cent. A small but significant number of pupils throughout the school are late arriving each day.
57. The development of personal, social and learning skills are good overall. In general, pupils have good attitudes to work and school life. In class, the great majority settle quickly and show interest and enthusiasm in their lessons and for the most part make appropriate use of time. When given the opportunity they work well with others. Their capacity to work independently is however insufficiently developed.
58. Pupils are at an early stage in evaluating, for themselves, how well they are doing. They are developing an understanding of the importance of personal targets, of how well they are progressing and are beginning to talk about their own performance and how they might adjust their work to bring about improvement.
59. Behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. Pupils respond well to positive strategies to promote good behaviour and show respect to each other and to adults. No incidents of aggressive behaviour nor bullying were witnessed during the inspection. One pupil was temporarily excluded during the twelve months prior to inspection but has since returned successfully to school.
60. Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of equal opportunities. Their awareness of features relating to diversity are however insufficiently developed although they are beginning, mainly through religious education, to develop an understanding of world faiths.

61. Pupils rightly have a pride in themselves and each other, in their work and the school community as a whole. They take advantage of every opportunity presented to them to display responsibility for their own actions and in doing so take their first steps to good citizenship.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	68%	28%	0%	0%

64. The percentage of lessons, awarded a grade 3 or better, is above the National Assembly for Wales target.

65. A notable strength in the teaching is the good working relationship between staff and pupils. Teachers manage their pupils well making good use of humour and praise to maintain pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Teachers encourage pupils to give of their best and to work hard. However, teachers do not always challenge and stimulate the more able pupils.

66. Teaching assistants are well prepared and effectively deployed in lessons so that all pupils are made to feel valued. For example, in the mixed reception and year 1 class, staff have high expectations of the children; and successfully encourage them to work independently and to be helpful to each other.

67. In the early years, adult led activities successfully capture and sustain children's interest; staff interact well with children, skilfully engaging them through good questions and encouragement. However, the lack of space, the inadequate outdoor play area and lack of climbing equipment inhibits the teacher's ability to provide appropriate and sufficient physical activities.

68. In the lessons judged as outstanding, teachers skilfully and imaginatively capture the interest of pupils and challenge their thinking. For example, in one excellent lesson in upper key stage two, the teacher created a fascinating scenario through which pupils engaged in an interesting moral debate relating to the most justifiable course of action to take in a very extreme situation.

69. In lessons judged to have shortcomings, the aims of lessons were not made sufficiently clear to the pupils. There was lack of opportunity for structured independent enquiry, and sometimes resources are inadequate.

70. Overall, teachers' planning is good. They usually give clear explanations and demonstrations so that pupils understand what they are expected to do. Planned lessons build well on pupils previous learning. Teachers review objectives at the end of lessons so that pupils know they have achieved well. In the best lessons, teachers review this progress systematically and identify

clearly to pupils where there is a need to revisit a particular aspect of the lesson. Teachers foster discussion between pupils well; giving encouragement and reassurance in a supportive and purposeful way, so that pupils nearly always work together willingly and constructively.

71. Teachers successfully use questioning as part of their well-established classroom routines to help pupils recall previous work and to consolidate their current learning. They promote equality of opportunity well and when pupils try for themselves, teachers are mindful to ensure that boys and girls have equal access to resources and take turns fairly. Teachers use a good range of organisational strategies, providing pupils with opportunities to work as a whole class, in groups, in pairs or as individuals.
72. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to help pupils learn; particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. They take every opportunity to develop and apply the key skills of speaking and listening and personal and social education (PSE) but miss opportunities with numeracy and ICT skills. Teachers' confidence in using incidental Welsh in their lessons in order to reinforce pupils' skills in the language is variable.
73. While there are good, rigorous assessment systems in place in English and mathematics, many other subjects do not have formal, whole-school systems to track individual pupils' progress.
74. Statutory tests and assessments are undertaken appropriately and the legal requirements are fully met. Assessment of the progress of children under five tracks the progress of children effectively in all six areas of learning and the information gathered is used appropriately in planning lessons that match children's individual needs.
75. The school records and reports pupils' achievements to parents and other relevant parties; although some parents would value more information about how well their children are doing in the different subjects. There are suitable opportunities for parents, including parents of pupils with special educational needs, to comment upon and discuss their children's work.
76. Teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils in their care and a good working knowledge of the next stages in their learning. This knowledge is not always used fully when planning lessons, however, which tend to follow a planned programme and do not always specifically build on what each pupil already knows and can do. Often pupils of all abilities complete the same piece of work, for example. As a result, while it is possible for senior managers and co-ordinators to monitor the progress of individuals and groups easily in English and mathematics, in other subjects it is difficult to identify trends. The current head teacher is aware of this weakness and his draft school improvement plan includes this area for development.
77. The school has recently adapted its marking policy so that pupils indicate how confident they feel that they have understood the tasks they are set. Pupils' work is marked regularly and encouraging and helpful remarks are made.

However, opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and become involved in the setting of their next targets are not yet well developed across the school.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

78. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self evaluation in that the school judged this key question as grade 2.
79. The school ensures that all pupils receive equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Pupils, irrespective of their ability, social background, gender or ethnicity are positively included in all appropriate school activities. Sex education is provided in accordance with the school's policy and appropriate attention is given to personal and social education, including substance misuse.
80. The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right.
81. Children in the early years have access to a good range of well-planned activities which ensure continuity and progression in their learning across most of the six areas of learning. However, provision for the aspect of physical development of building upper body strength and agility is less well developed. It is inhibited by a lack of facilities and opportunity to take part in a suitable range of activities on a daily basis.
82. There is a good emphasis placed on the teaching and learning of English, science and mathematics. Emphasis on the development of the other "Foundation Subjects" has had less emphasis in recent years. Suitable schemes of work are in place for all the National Curriculum subjects and areas of learning. These provide effective guidance for teachers and ensure that progression and continuity in pupils' learning takes place in these subjects. However, there is no whole school programme for the development of key skills in a systematic way and progressive way.
83. The school effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development. Acts of collective worship and the great effort staff place on ensuring that displays of work around the school are to an extremely high standard contribute very positively to pupils' feelings of self-worth. On occasion, the provision for pupils' personal development is outstanding, such as during a lesson for pupils in year 5 and 6 where they were asked to consider making difficult decisions. The school supports a number of charities and by doing so helps pupils appreciate there are people in the world less fortunate than themselves. Cultural development is effectively planned for overall, but there are fewer opportunities for pupils to learn about the art and

culture of Wales or the work of artists other than those of Western European origin.

84. Provision for the development of pupils' bilingual skills and their awareness of the culture of Wales has good features that outweigh shortcomings. While a number of relevant procedures are in place for the promotion of bilingualism, there are inconsistencies in the focus on using incidental Welsh across the school and this constrains pupils learning.
85. *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* features well in a number of subjects. However, opportunities are not sufficiently promoted in all subjects. For example, there is very limited use of stories from Welsh history in key stage 1 and an insufficient focus on Welsh artists and composers.
86. The school provides rich and stimulating learning experiences outside the classroom, particularly for pupils from year 3 upwards. Pupils, particularly in key stage 2, enjoy and benefit from a programme of educational visits as well as cultural and sporting activities; these include Welsh country dancing, aerobics, rugby and music tuition.
87. The school has a positive partnership with parents and carers which it is working to develop further. It takes good account of their views and is developing systems to improve these communications still more. At meetings before the inspection and in their questionnaires the majority of parents confirmed this. The quality of information for parents is generally good. Regular newsletters have been started by the new head teacher, information sheets and instructions to assist with home/ school tasks, such as how to help your child in learning science facts, keep parents suitably informed about topics being taught, activities and events. The school prospectus is of good quality but there are some omissions of which the head teacher is aware. Much of the missing information can be found in other school documentation, particularly the Governors' Annual Report to Parents.
88. A significant number of adults provide good quality support for teachers in the classroom that is highly valued and contributes significantly to pupils' learning. There are good links with other agencies, such as the police, the school nurse, training colleges and other schools that have a positive impact on the education provided for all pupils.
89. The school is involved with a good range of activities within the community. Pupils take part in the local *eisteddfod* where they sing and dance. Visitors such as the community police officer, members of the fire service and road safety officials talk to children about their work and help pupils understand their role in the community.
90. Pupils' experience of the world of work is broadened through a range of activities. Occasional visits are made to commercial or industrial sites and visiting craftsmen and women come in to talk to children and demonstrate their skills. Career Wales has effectively helped develop pupils' design,

construction and engineering skills by involving the school in the 'Knex challenge'.

91. The school is committed to ensuring all pupils have equal access to all the school has to offer regardless of background or circumstance and this is borne out in practice.
92. Understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship are threaded throughout the curriculum. Pupils collect waste paper for recycling and the school participates in the Newport Waste-savers project.
93. Opportunities for developing pupils' entrepreneurial skills are limited. Year 6 pupils assist in serving items from the tuck shop, but are not involved in cashing-up or controlling the stock. Younger children through role-play 'buy and sell' things in the classroom shop, and begin to understand coinage and value.
94. The school endeavours to lay the foundations of lifelong learning and community regeneration by encouraging pupils to be responsible for their own actions and to be sympathetic to the needs of others. These areas are developing well. From the early years onwards, pupils are given the opportunity to take on responsibilities by undertaking tasks to help their teachers. These activities help prepare pupils for lifelong learning and for living in a community.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

95. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self evaluation in that the school judged this key question as grade 1.
96. Overall, the quality of care, support and guidance for pupils is good. The school gives high priority to the pastoral care of its pupils who feel safe and secure whilst in school. Suitable procedures are in place to monitor and support pupils' academic progress, their social development and their personal welfare. Staff know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs and equally pupils feel that staff are approachable. All pupils benefit from the school's determination to fully include pupils in both its academic and social life.
97. The school makes effective use of the support services that are available to the school. Education welfare services are consulted as and when required and are used effectively.
98. The school endeavours to develop a strong partnership with parents and carers in caring for, supporting and guiding their children. Formal parent/teacher consultations occur twice yearly but informal contact with staff

occurs daily. A governors' report is issued annually and a meeting is arranged for parents to discuss its content.

99. The arrangements for settling children into school life are good and pupils feel safe and secure in their new school. In discussion, pupils who are late entrants to the school report that they settled in quickly and soon made new friends. Arrangements for transferring pupils to their next stage of education are sound and effective and ensure a smooth transition.
100. The provision for the support and guidance of all learners is achieved through a carefully structured and co-ordinated programme that includes health education and the careful tracking of pupils' academic progress in English and mathematics.
101. The new head teacher ensures that attendance is monitored closely and personally reviews registers regularly. Good or improved attendance is acknowledged and rewarded. Most parents co-operate by informing school if their child is unable to attend. A first day response is invoked if a child is absent without explanation. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO), a regular visitor, investigates any absence where there are concerns.
102. The school's provision for ensuring the healthy development, safety and well being of all pupils is good. Staff are trained in first aid and there are good procedures in place for meeting the needs of pupils who are unwell or who have an accident. Health and Safety audits are regularly carried out within the school and risk assessments are undertaken before any educational visit takes place.
103. Suitable procedures are in place for child protection. The head teacher is the designated person and ensures regular training of staff. Staff are trained to be vigilant and to recognise signs that a child may need protection.
104. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is a strong feature of the school and well managed by the deputy head in his role as SENCo. Although the percentage of pupils on the school's special educational needs register is relatively low in comparison with that of other schools in Wales, full attention is given to their needs. Staff and pupils display a positive and constructive approach to those with learning disabilities.
105. Effective early identification, assessment and monitoring procedures contribute significantly to the raising of pupils' achievements. Arrangements for delivering in-class support or group withdrawal have been well-planned and organised so that all pupils have access to the full curriculum. Pupils are well-supported by dedicated and effective staff and good links have been formed with outside support services such as the educational psychology service. The SEN Governor is a frequent visitor to the school and plays an active role in monitoring provision. Overall, the school provides learning experiences which meet the needs of less able pupils, but has not, as yet, developed consistent and comprehensive strategies for challenging and extending its more able pupils.

106. The good behaviour of the school's pupils can be largely attributed to a strong moral and religious ethos supported by effective systems of reward and sanction. There are good procedures to deal with pupils whose behaviour might give cause for concern and who might be at risk of exclusion. Both parents and the community alike celebrate good behaviour of the pupils and pupils themselves have a clear understanding of the link between behaviour and achievement.
107. The school conforms to all statutory requirements in terms of documentation for equal opportunities, racial discrimination and disability discrimination. Teachers give serious consideration, when purchasing new resources, to avoid stereotyping the choices made available to pupils by gender, race or disability. The governing body has produced a disability access plan and arrangements for pupils and adults are currently appropriate.
108. The school recognises that British society consists of people from many different, racial, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds. Teachers do celebrate difference and promote respect for people of all cultural backgrounds but could do more to develop this systematically.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

109. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self evaluation in that the school judged this key question as grade 2.
110. The school's Christian Catholic aims and values are explicit and reflected in all aspects of school life and in everyday practice. General school aims are set and are effectively communicated to parents in the school prospectus.
111. The new head teacher provides strong leadership across the school. He has clarity of vision and a sound understanding of the order of priority for change. He has identified the need to continue to raise standards by establishing systems of rigorous self-evaluation and assessment.
112. The school takes due account of local and national priorities. It is very aware of the implications of the forthcoming foundation phase and is currently working towards developing a healthy school. The school works effectively in partnership with other local providers of education and training.
113. The school has appropriate documentation relating to equal opportunities, which actively promotes equality for all, both staff and pupils. Staff who are new to the school are well supported and are given the opportunity to develop their areas of expertise.
114. There is a well-established performance management system developing alongside a general staff development programme, both of which relate to priorities in the school development plan (SDP).
115. Subject leaders and co-ordinators work hard, and do their best to support colleagues. However, most have not had the opportunity to audit their subjects thoroughly; through monitoring teaching and learning, for example, or to make decisions about the deployment of resources.
116. The more established governors know the school well. They are supportive of the school and bring to their work a wide and valuable range of practical and professional skills. They are well led and are working well with the new head teacher in the strategic management of the school.
117. The governors are committed to providing the best possible support for the school, its pupils and staff. They take a keen interest in the progress and welfare of its pupils. They have a secure understanding of their responsibilities and are kept well informed by the head teacher. The governors monitor the curriculum and provide the necessary resources for its effective delivery. They monitor progress effectively and help to determine

targets for improvement. Newer governors bring fresh commitment and enthusiasm to the role and seek to make a full contribution.

118. The school meets most statutory requirements although there are some omissions in the School Prospectus. The missing information is available in other school documentation, notably the Governors' Annual Report to Parents.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

119. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self evaluation in that the school judged this key question as grade 2.
120. A culture of self-evaluation has been established but is in the early stages of development. The head teacher and the staff undertake an appropriate analysis of pupils National Curriculum test results and are aware of how the school is performing against other similar schools and schools nationally. Subject leaders have monitored and appraised some aspects of their subjects. However, the quality of overall monitoring is insufficiently developed and lacks a systematic approach.
121. The process of self evaluation has led to some initiatives which have helped move the school forward; for instance, the introduction of a system enabling pupils to evaluate their own work in English and maths through the simple concept of traffic lights has proven very effective.
122. Priorities for development are supported by the appropriate allocation of resources. However, the school development plan [SDP] itself is not the product of a rigorous and critical audit of the school's strengths and areas for development. Criteria for success and monitoring arrangements are not sufficiently clear. The new head teacher has already implicitly recognised this by modifying the SDP and producing a school improvement plan to address short-term priorities.
123. The self-evaluation report produced before the inspection is adequate and presents a range of information and there is a focus on features relating to the seven key questions. The analysis relates to a range of supporting evidence, which was made available to the inspection team. The inspection team agreed with the school's grade for two out of the seven key questions. However, it was felt that the school overestimated its effectiveness in five of the key questions and judged there was insufficient focus on areas for development.
124. As part of the current self-evaluation process the school does take into account the views of parents and pupils. However, the process for seeking

the views of other parties, such as the governing body, subject leaders and the community is less well advanced.

125. Overall, progress since the last inspection has been good with some shortcomings. Standards in the core subjects have risen sharply although there is less evidence of progress in the other subjects. The general presentation of pupils' work has improved but pupils still do not have sufficient opportunities for extended writing. Standards in information technology have risen as a result of the recent implementation and application of a comprehensive scheme of work. However, the amount of computer hardware and software is limited and this inhibits pupils' overall progress.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

126. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self evaluation in that the school judged this key question as grade 2.
127. A sufficient number of well-qualified and experienced teachers provide for the educational needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the under fives. Five full-time teaching staff receive good support from a newly-qualified part-time teacher to cover for recommended planning, preparation and assessment time and for leadership and management time. Teaching staff are effectively deployed across the five mixed ability classes. The school is committed to staff development but this is not always sufficiently well linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan.
128. Classroom support staff feel valued by staff and pupils. Although not directly involved in planning or evaluation, they work closely with the teachers. They make a very positive contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Caretaking, cleaning and mid-day supervisory staff play a major role in the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Administrative staff provide effective support and there are good systems in place. However, the school has not had a full financial audit since 1999.
129. Overall, the school has a suitable amount of resources. Classroom books and materials are generally in good condition. However resources have not been audited for many subjects in recent years and, occasionally, staff are not aware of exactly what is available. As a result, best use is not always made of what the school has. There is an adequate library area but the classification system used needs revision. Resources for ICT are limited, although the school makes generally good use of the ICT equipment it has. Similarly, the lack of historical artefacts has led to missed opportunities for teachers to bring the subject alive for pupils. The new head teacher has identified the need to review availability, storage, use and acquisition of resources in his draft development plan.

130. Accommodation has good features that outweigh shortcomings. The school grounds are spacious and used well. Classrooms are bright and cheerful and the high quality of display has a positive effect upon learning. However, facilities for the development of physical skills of children under five are inadequate. The school is aware that this limits their development.
131. The use of resources is not sufficiently and regularly reviewed. Spending decisions at all levels are not always well enough matched to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Last year the school's budget reserves were over seven per cent, which is above the audit commission's recommendation of between three and five per cent. Indications are that the budget reserve will fall this year to within that recommendation.
132. Taking account of the good progress pupils make during their time at school, and the continuous trend of improvement shown in the standards of achievement in English, mathematics and science the school gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Subject 1: Early Years

Under-fives

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcoming

133. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right. These relate specifically to the lack of resources and space for children's physical development.

Good features

Language, literacy and communication

134. Children learn to handle books carefully. They look at books quietly, turning the pages appropriately. They recognise their own names and some of the letters of the alphabet and can write them in sand, using a range of media with good levels of accuracy. Children show emerging self-confidence in speaking although some prefer to use short phrases rather than whole sentences. They have a developing vocabulary, which they use during class discussions and when playing simple games such as "Is there an orange one? I need an orange one". Their use and understanding of simple Welsh words and phrases, such as to describe the weather, is developed well.

Personal and social development

135. Children play and work together well; taking turns when playing with the toys in the garden area. They separate from their parents and carers with growing confidence and settle comfortably into the routines of the classroom. They demonstrate flexibility and most adapt their behaviour to different activities and the requirements placed upon them by their teacher and other adults with ease. Some are initially unwilling to hold hands with other children they have just met, but are easily convinced to co-operate by the teacher. They have a generally good awareness of boundaries and behavioural expectations. For example they accept that "You must listen to the chosen speaker". Children can manage their own basic personal hygiene well, being aware of the need to wash hands, for example.

Mathematical development

136. Children have developing confidence in mathematics. They willingly attempt to count and order numbers; for example, their teachers "washing line". They start to recognise numerals and can order them to ten. Higher attaining children sustain interest for a significant length of time such as when working on the computer to put missing numbers in a sequence up to twenty. Their knowledge of shapes and colours is developing well and they take part in a

wide range of mathematical games and puzzles with obvious enjoyment. Skills of counting down and the recognition of “zero” are developing well through the use of songs, rhymes and simple games. Pupils learn to measure with blocks, such as when measuring their feet. They know that the measurement of ten blocks indicates their foot is bigger than another child's which measures nine blocks.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

137. The children learn about living things, such as looking at fruit and tasting it. They develop a good sense of chronology by comparing photographs of themselves when they were babies and now. They successfully investigate objects and materials, such as dry sand, pouring and scooping. They take part in answering questions and checking hypothesis, such as when measuring the size of their feet to see if there is a correlation with their height. They can complete simple programs on the computer confidently, manipulating the mouse to solve mathematical problems, for example.

Creative development

138. Reception children successfully tap out simple repeated rhythms and sing well-known songs enthusiastically in English and in Welsh. They know the names of some percussion instruments and how to play them, which they do with obvious enjoyment, keeping in time well for their ages. Children paint shapes to represent objects, such as painting portraits of themselves and each other. They learn to create attractive collages and printed depictions, such as of a butterfly.

Physical development

139. In the reception, children show increasing control over clothing and fastenings, such as when taking off their shoes to measure their feet. They have increasing control when using equipment such as construction toys, fixing blocks together with appropriate skill and dexterity. They show understanding that good practices, such as washing their hands before eating, can contribute to good health. They gain increasing control when using implements, such as printing with strawberries, using pencils and crayons and threading beads into patterns.

Shortcomings

140. Children do not have well-developed skills in climbing and balancing. They have poorly developed skills of manoeuvring, such as when they ride tricycles in the small garden area and close misses often occur. Their upper body strength, lung capacity and agility are not developed as effectively as they might be, due to a lack of regular daily opportunities to take part in strenuous exercise, climb or hang by their arms.

Subject 2: English

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

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

Good features

141. In key stage 1, pupils listen well in whole class situations and respond confidently and appropriately in a variety of contexts by describing, explaining or asking questions. They share their ideas and opinions enthusiastically. For example, pupils in year 1 can identify rhyming words when enjoying a poem about an imaginary bear. They understand and can explain clearly the main features of a story, including the way in which the author creates dramatic effect. They use appropriate descriptive terms to paint a vivid picture.
142. By the end of key stage 1, most pupils have positive attitudes to reading and successfully use a range of strategies to help them understand the text. They generally apply their skills in matching letters to sounds effectively when they meet an unfamiliar word. Year 2 pupils read very well and are competent in researching information.
143. Younger pupils can successfully write a simple sentence using capital letters and a full stop. Additional support for pupils in year 2 has been particularly effective in raising standards in writing. By the end of key stage 1, many pupils' writing is organised, clear and contains some good ideas, with sentences correctly structured. Pupils are effectively developing a good vocabulary of increasingly complex words to use in their writing. More able pupils use a range of punctuation marks in their written work and use a variety of sentence structures to enhance the impact of it. Year 2 pupils' handwriting is well-formed and legible and some pupils use the computer for word-processing, successfully correcting errors as they type.
144. Key stage 2 pupils listen positively to their teachers. When answering questions, most give answers in full sentences. They are particularly confident in discussing their ideas and opinions with their peers. Younger pupils can communicate effectively the moral of a fable, using a thesaurus to choose appropriate adjectives to help them with descriptions.
145. In year 6, pupils develop excellent thinking and communication skills; for instance when considering the relative importance of people's roles in society. They engage enthusiastically in discussion when responding to poetry about evacuees in World War 2.
146. Younger key stage 2 pupils read aloud confidently and clearly. Older key stage 2 pupils read with appropriate emphasis taking full account of punctuation.
147. By the end of the key stage, pupils read a broad range of materials with fluency and expression. They show good understanding of themes, ideas, events and characters in books and talk about them in an informed manner.

They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and make effective use of dictionaries

148. Handwriting is legible and cursive throughout key stage 2. Pupils write well in a variety of genres and many have begun to develop effective annotation skills. Punctuation is generally used correctly.

Shortcomings

149. There are no significant shortcomings, although throughout the school, pupils do not regularly produce extended pieces of writing and do not develop appropriate library skills to help them read for pleasure or obtain information.

Subject 3: Science

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

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

Good features

150. Pupils throughout the school learn to use information and communication technology effectively, such as when using the microscope to learn about and photograph parts of the body.
151. Pupils in key stage 1 know about magnets and that they attract some materials and not others. They confidently sort materials into those which do and those which do not attract magnets.
152. They show a growing understanding of what constitutes a fair test.
153. Pupils in key stage 2 learn about life and living processes. They know the function of the blood and can describe the passage of blood through the heart. Younger pupils know about teeth and can apply previously learnt knowledge to developing sensible hypotheses. For example, they have the skills to deduce that water is not acidic as it does not rot teeth.
154. Pupils have a good knowledge of forces and other physical processes and can describe accurately how to test materials to construct a ramp to see what difference this makes to the speed of a toy car.
155. Pupils have a good knowledge of the key facts about light, such as that it travels in straight lines. Their awareness and use of key vocabulary, such as 'transparent', 'translucent' and 'opaque' is developed and used well.
156. In key stage 2, pupils know about the relationships between the earth, moon and sun and answer questions with confidence and obvious enjoyment.

Shortcomings

157. There are no significant shortcomings, although throughout the school, pupils' knowledge and confidence in setting up and recording experiments for themselves are less well developed than their knowledge of scientific facts.

Subject 4: Information technology
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Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

158. Pupils throughout the school are learning an increasing range of skills to communicate and handle information as a result of the recent implementation and application of a comprehensive and thorough programme of graded study.
159. Key stage 1 pupils recognise and name the main parts of a computer system. They can use a basic paint programme to create and edit their own pictures and designs. Year 1 pupils can use a mouse to drag images across the screen when creating pictures and can add text and subsequently print the result. They can successfully take and print photographs to record their work using a digital camera.
160. Year 2 pupils have developed some skills in word-processing and use the space bar, caps lock and clip art keys correctly. They use a 'Logo' number, words and pictures programme appropriately to draw and print.
161. Younger key stage 2 pupils solve problems using databases and use a variety of graphs and charts to display information. They can programme 'Logo' to create simple shapes such as a square or a rectangle on the screen and show good understanding of technical terms such as 'pen-up' and 'pen-down'. More able pupils can write a programme to double the size of the images. A few year 4 pupils have produced rudimentary spreadsheets to display a budget.
162. Older key stage 2 pupils further develop their word-processing skills and have produced a trifold leaflet on the benefits of swimming using 'Publisher'. Year 6 pupils made a moving 'Powerpoint' presentation to the whole school on the theme of 'Poverty' using words, images and sound. They are developing their skills in use of spreadsheets and show a good understanding of the layout of cells and can create simple formulae. They are confident and competent in their use of the interactive whiteboard.

Shortcomings

163. Throughout the school, pupils overall IT skills are under-developed because of the lack of long-term opportunity to have their progress assessed or to have access to sufficient computers and the school's one electronic whiteboard.

Subject 5: History

Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

164. Across key stage 1, pupils make appropriate use of stories about famous people such as Florence Nightingale as well as suitable drawings and photographs to develop their sense of chronology and their awareness of how the past was different to the present.
165. Older key stage 1 pupils develop an effective understanding of different homes and ways of travelling through the ages. They are aware, for example, of the importance of castles during the middle-ages.
166. Younger key stage 2 pupils are beginning to develop an appropriate understanding of the materials used to build Celtic round houses. They show a good knowledge of features relating to the Stuart period including reasons for the outbreak of the civil war and the impact of the plague and fire in London. They make good use of a visit to Llancaiach Fawr to develop their understanding of the lives of the rich and poor during the period.
167. Pupils in year 4 and year 5 are beginning to make appropriate use of material presented in video programmes and other secondary sources to develop their knowledge of various features of Victorian life.
168. Year 5 and year 6 pupils demonstrate an appropriate grasp of the impact on daily life of the Second World War.

Shortcomings

169. Pupils in both key stages make limited use of historical sources including artefacts.
170. Key stage 1 pupils' skills in using a range of stories, and in particular stories about people in Welsh history, to develop their understanding of cause and consequence are under developed.
171. Key stage 2 pupils' skills in arranging and presenting their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways are underdeveloped.
172. A number of pupils at the end of key stage 2 have an uncertain grasp of the chronology of the main periods of study for this key stage.

Subject 6: Art

Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

173. In key stage 1, pupils successfully use an appropriate range of materials, equipment and techniques to produce paintings, drawings and three-dimensional objects, such as masks.
174. When discussing examples of pictures, pupils demonstrate from their answers that they have looked carefully and have a developing understanding of how colour is used and how different effects may have been achieved.
175. When discussing paintings by famous artists, pupils in key stage 2 use a good range of vocabulary and are aware of the different layout styles possible, such as landscape and portrait. They are confident to suggest why artists may have represented things in the way they have.
176. Pupils throughout the school learn to work in three dimensions and with different media such as, making clay tiles in the form of houses.
177. In all year groups, pupils know how to use computer programs to create exciting and attractive patterns.
178. Pupils in both key stages learn to use art skills effectively to illustrate work in other subjects. For example, they use silhouettes to make an attractive display in work linked to “myself”.

Shortcomings

179. Pupils in both key stages do not have a well-developed knowledge of the work of Welsh artists. Neither do they have a suitably extensive knowledge of art styles other than that of Western European artists.
180. Pupils in all year groups have limited experience in building upon their previous work in art or developing sketches into other art forms, due to the relative newness of the use of sketchbooks across the school.

School's response to the inspection

The governors and staff of St. Gabriel's R. C. Primary School have considered the outcomes of the inspection and are pleased that the findings acknowledge our school demonstrates good features at helping learners achieve, that the teaching, training and assessment are also good and finally that the school is good at caring, guiding and supporting its learners.

The Inspectors have duly recognised the culture of self-evaluation does still need to be further embedded at the school. We are pleased the inspection team have given us this focus and this issue will become the main focus of the post-inspection action plan.

The inspection team acknowledge that the National Curriculum assessment results are much improved over the past three years and that the percentage of pupils who achieved the CSI at key stage 1 was above the national average. Similarly, the National Curriculum assessment results for key stage 2 have also significantly improved and again results in all three core subjects were above local and national averages. We are delighted that the skill and dedication of teachers has been recognised in the report.

We are happy that the inspection team recognised the strong leadership of the new head teacher and his clarity of vision for the school. The governors appreciate that the report noted their commitment to providing the best possible support for the school, its pupils and staff.

The head teacher, staff and governors will address the inspection recommendations by devising and implementing a post-inspection action plan to:

- R1: Establish a clear cycle of thorough self-evaluation and precise planning for improvement with critical and, where possible, quantitative evaluation of the results. Ensure that curriculum subject leaders, governors, and all other stakeholders contribute fully to the process.
- R2: Further develop school assessment procedures, and ensure that pupils are involved in setting and reviewing precise targets to improve their own learning.
- R3: Improve the provision to further pupils' key skills, including bilingualism and their independent learning skills.
- R4: Improve the accommodation and resources for children under five and improve resources in the foundation subjects and information communication technology.
- R5: Ensure statutory requirements are met in relation to the information provided for parents.

The governors and staff at the school would also like to thank the inspection team for the very professional and courteous manner in which they carried out the inspection at the school.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of School	St Gabriel's RC Primary School
School type	Voluntary
Age-range of pupils	4-11 years
Address of School	Ringland Circle Newport
Post-code	NP19 9PQ
Telephone number	01633 273937

Head teacher	Mr Tim Britton
Date of appointment	September 2005
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs A May
Registered inspector	Dr Jim Hewitt
Dates of inspection	3-4 October 2005

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	0	13	14	22	23	11	20	16	119

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	5	2	6

Staffing information	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	19.1 : 1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	n/a
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	23.8
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.3 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Whole School
Summer 2005	n/a	89.9	91.7
Spring 2005	n/a	86.6	89.9
Autumn 2004	n/a	94.3	92.4

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	25%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2005			Number of pupils in Y2					23
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	11	76	13	0
		National	0	4	12	64	20	0
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	13	65	22	0
		National	0	4	14	56	27	0
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	13	74	13	0
		National	0	5	14	69	12	0
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	83	17	0
		National	0	2	11	64	23	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4	70	26	0
		National	0	2	10	64	24	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	70	30	0
		National	0	2	9	66	24	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	87	In Wales	81

- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2005			Number of pupils in Y6							14		
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	0
		National	0	0	2	0	1	4	15	46	31	0
	Test/Task *	School										
		National										
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School										
		National										
	Test/Task	School										
		National										
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	64	36	0
		National	0	0	2	0	1	3	15	47	32	0
	Test/Task *	School										
		National										
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71	29	0
		National	0	0	2	0	0	2	11	51	34	0
	Test/Task *	School										
		National										

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language)			
By Teacher Assessment		By Test	
In the school	100	In the school	
In Wales	72	In Wales	

- 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
- F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

* Pupils did not sit the formal test/task in 2005.

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

A team of four inspectors spent a total of six inspector days in the school. A peer assessor was present for two inspector days. Twenty-five lessons were observed in whole or in part and all classes were observed. Inspectors also attended acts of collective worship and a sample of extra-curricular activities

- Pre inspection discussions about the life and work of the school were held with the head teacher and staff, the governing body and parents.
- Twenty-five lessons were observed in whole or in part and all classes were observed.
- Inspectors also attended acts of collective worship and a sample of extra-curricular activities.
- Thirty-five responses to the questionnaire for parents distributed before the inspection were analysed.
- During the inspection, discussions were held with the head teacher, senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils in the school.
- Pupils were observed throughout the school day, including break-times, lunchtimes and when entering and leaving school.
- The school's self-evaluation report, policy documents, schemes of work and other documentation were read, analysed and discussed with the head teacher and staff.
- A wide range of pupils' past and present work was examined.
- Post inspection meetings were held with the governors, head teacher and staff.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Jim Hewitt Registered Inspector	Context, Summary, Recommendations, Appendices, <u>Contributions to:</u> Key Question 1 Key Question 2 Key Question 3 Key Question 7 English Information technology.
Sheelagh Barnes Team Inspector	<u>Contributions to:</u> Key Question 2 Key Question 3 Key Question 5 Key Question 7 Science Art Early Years.
Brinley Jones Team Inspector	<u>Contributions to:</u> Key Question 1 Key Question 3 Key Question 4 Key Question 6 History.
Charles Brentnall Lay inspector	<u>Contribution to:</u> Key Question 1 Key Question 3 Key Question 4 Key Question 5.

The contractor was:

Evenlode Education Ltd
8 Fisher Close
Duxford
Cambridgeshire
CB2 4XU

Acknowledgement

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

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

**St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School
Ringland Circle
Newport
NP19 9PQ**

Summary for Parents

School Number: 680/3306

Date of Inspection: 3–4 October 2005

by

**Dr Jim Hewitt
79243**

Date: 5 December 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T086/05/

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Basic information about the school

Name of School	St Gabriel's RC Primary School
School type	Voluntary
Age-range of pupils	4-11 years
Address of School	Ringland Circle Newport
Post-code	NP19 9PQ
Telephone number	01633 273937

Head teacher	Mr Tim Britton
Date of appointment	September 2005
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs A May
Registered inspector	Dr Jim Hewitt
Dates of inspection	3-4 October 2005

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	0	13	14	22	23	11	20	16	119

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	5	2	6

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. **The full report can be obtained from the school.**

The inspection of St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School took place between 3 and 4 October 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dr. Jim Hewitt undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a standard inspection.

Summary

St Gabriel's R.C. Primary School is a caring and effective school with the potential to raise standards further by maintaining and building on recent improvements. During their time at school, pupils make good progress particularly in English, mathematics and science and show maturity in their personal, social and moral development. On leaving to start the next phase of learning, pupils prove to be a credit to themselves and the school; reflecting the commitment and hard work of the staff.

Table of grades awarded

The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

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

Standards

Subjects and Areas of Learning Early Years

Reception age pupils begin school with very different life experiences and skills but quickly adjust to school life and benefit from good Early Years provision overall.

In the Early Years, standards of achievement in the six areas of learning are as follows:

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

Pupils make good progress through their school career, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

In key stage 1 and key stage 2, standards of achievement in the subjects identified for inspection are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	2	2
Science	2	2
Information technology	3	3
History	3	3
Art	3	3

During the time of the inspection, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	60%	36%	0%	0%

Pupils' standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are well above the Welsh Assembly Government's current all-Wales targets.

The educational provision for the under-fives has some weaknesses, but there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right. These relate specifically to the lack of resources and space for children's physical development. In the other areas of learning, children reach a good standard with no important shortcomings.

Across the whole curriculum, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening and reading are good. In writing, numeracy, and information and communications technology, standards are also good but some shortcomings have been identified. Pupils have good standards and make good progress in developing personal and social skills. However, their creative skills, ability to solve problems and bilingual skills in using Welsh as a second language across the curriculum are not as well developed. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales is limited.

The school's results in English, mathematics and science have shown consistent improvement over the past four years. The results for 2005 were very good; particularly at key stage 2, where all pupils achieved at least level 4 in each subject. At both key stages, the school exceeded local and national averages in each of the three subjects. The number of pupils gaining the higher level 3 in key stage 1 and the higher level 5 in key stage 2 exceeded the national average in each subject with the exception of English at key stage 1 and science at key stage 2.

When compared with similar schools, based upon the number of free school meals provided, St Gabriel's is in the top 25 per cent of schools for all the core subjects except English at key stage 1, where it is above the average. Boys tend to outperform girls at mathematics and science and girls achieve better results in English.

Most pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and usually perform well. Overall, pupils do well in acquiring new knowledge and the school is helping them to develop their ideas and increase their understanding in many areas. Most pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and achieve well in relation to their starting points and meet or exceed the targets set for them by the school. Pupils are at an early stage, however, in evaluating their own progress, setting targets and developing strategies for improving their performance.

Pupils are well motivated and behave well; they work productively, show good attitudes to learning and make effective use of their time. They collaborate well and can work independently although they are given insufficient guidance in developing their investigative, enquiry and experimental skills. Pupils show maturity in their relationships with others and understanding of right and wrong. Their understanding of equal opportunities issues is developing well and they have respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions with British society.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4%	68%	28%	0%	0%

The quality of teaching is good overall and teaching for the children under five is consistently good. A particular strength of the teaching is in the establishment in all classes of good relationships and high expectations by all adults of pupils' behaviour and response.

Overall, staff successfully challenge and motivate their pupils. They have good subject knowledge and successfully use a wide range of teaching methods to involve all pupils, including those with SEN, actively in the learning process. In the main, lessons are planned to meet the needs of groups of pupils of all abilities and ages. In the best lessons, teachers skilfully and imaginatively capture the interest of their pupils. However, there are some occasions where activities are not sufficiently challenging or structured effectively for pupils to develop their independent working habits. In lessons judged to have some shortcomings, the aims of the lesson were not made clear at the outset, or there were missed opportunities for the development of key and bilingual skills.

Statutory tests and assessments are undertaken appropriately and the legal requirements are fully met. The school records and reports pupils' achievements to parents and other relevant

parties; although some parents would value more information about how well their children are doing in the different subjects.

Assessment of the progress of children under five in the reception years is good. The information gathered is used appropriately in planning lessons that match children's individual needs. In key stage 1 and 2, while there are good assessment systems in place in English and maths, other subjects do not have formal, whole school systems to track individuals' progress. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and become involved in the setting of their next targets is a very recent development and not yet embedded throughout the school.

Pupils receive equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Children in the early years have access to a wide spectrum of well-planned activities, which ensure continuity and progression in their learning; although provision for the aspect of physical development of building upper body strength and agility is less well developed. In the main, key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils receive a diversity of experiences and a range of opportunities well matched to their stage of development and particular learning needs.

There is a good emphasis placed on the teaching and learning of English, mathematics and science but emphasis on the development of the other 'Foundation' subjects has been given less emphasis in recent years. Whilst teachers are generally aware of the need to include key skills in their planning, there is as yet no means of ensuring their development throughout the curriculum in a meaningful and systematic way. Although *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* features in a number of subjects, opportunities for involvement are insufficiently promoted.

The school actively promotes pupils' broader personal, social, moral and spiritual development well. However, some opportunities for the development of entrepreneurial skills are missed. There are good links with parents and with the local and wider community. Opportunities for pupils to take part in extra curricular activities, educational visits and initiatives to help in the community are also good.

The quality of care, support and guidance is good. The school gives a high priority to the pastoral care of all of its pupils regardless of social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background. Boys and girls have equality of access to all the school has to offer and are developing a good awareness and respect for the diverse cultures in British society. The school works closely with outside agencies to support a range of identified needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) works closely with mainstream staff, support staff and governors to ensure SEN pupils follow a co-ordinated individual programmes and engage fully in the life of the school.

Leadership and management

The school's Christian Catholic aims and values are explicit and reflected in all aspects of school life and in everyday practices.

The new head teacher provides strong leadership across the school. He has clarity of vision and a sound understanding of the order of priority for change. The school takes due account of local and national priorities. There is a well-established performance management system.

The governors are committed to providing the best possible support for the school, its pupils and staff. They take a keen interest in the progress and welfare of its pupils. They have a secure understanding of their responsibilities and are kept well informed by the head teacher.

The governing body meets most statutory requirements although there are some omissions in the School Prospectus.

The established process of self-evaluation has led to some initiatives which, have helped to move the school forward. But the current link between self-evaluation and planning for school improvement has not yet been systematically developed. Overall progress in addressing the key issues for action identified during the last inspection has been good but with some shortcomings.

Subject leaders and co-ordinators work hard and support their colleagues well but most have not had the opportunity to audit their subjects thoroughly or make strategic decisions about the deployment of resources.

Staff in the school are well qualified, experienced and are well deployed. School administration is efficient although there hasn't been a full financial audit since 1999. Accommodation and resources are attractive and well maintained although there are some shortcomings in provision for the physical development of children under five and in resources in some subject areas.

The head teacher and governing body have suitable regard for the principles of best value and they carefully monitor the impact of spending decisions. Last year the school's budget reserves were over seven per cent, which is above the audit commission's recommendation of between three and five per cent. Indications are that the budget reserve will fall this year to within that recommendation. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve standards further, it is recommended that the school should:

- R1 Establish a clear cycle of thorough self-evaluation and precise planning for improvement with critical and, where possible, quantitative evaluation of the results. Ensure that curriculum subject leaders, governors, and all other stakeholders contribute fully to the process.
- R2 Further develop school assessment procedures, and ensure that pupils are involved in setting and reviewing precise targets to improve their own learning.
- R3 Improve the provision to further pupils' key skills, including bilingualism and their independent learning skills.
- R4 Improve the accommodation and resources for children under five and improve resources in the foundation subjects and information communication technology.
- R5 Ensure statutory requirements are met in relation to the information provided for parents.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Acknowledgement

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