

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

**St. Illtyd's Primary School
Llanhilleth
Abertillery
NP13 3JT**

School Number: 6772312

Date of Inspection: 27 March 2006

by

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W267/78911**

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- * secondary schools;
- * special schools;
- * pupil referral units;
- * independent schools;
- * further education;
- * adult community-based learning;
- * youth support services;
- * LEAs;
- * teacher education and training;
- * work-based learning;
- * careers companies; and
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St. Illtyd's Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection 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 information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of St. Illtyd's Primary School took place on 27th, 29th and 30th March 2006. An independent team of inspectors, led by Stephanie Joy James undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **full** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of 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 reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| Year | R | Y 1 | Y 2 | Y 3 | Y 4 | Y 5 | Y 6 |
| Ages | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8-9 | 9-10 | 10-11 |

Secondary phase:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Year | Y 7 | Y 8 | Y 9 | Y 10 | Y 11 | Y 12 | Y 13 |
| 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 Illtyd's Primary School is a new school in the local authority of Blaenau Gwent and was opened in September 2004. It was created following the amalgamation of Brynhyfryd and Ty'r Graig Primary Schools and is at the heart of a major community regeneration project. The school's name was chosen by pupils in a competition to find one that would reflect the character of the community. The name 'St Illtyd's' is taken from the local fourteenth century church. Pupils also chose the design for the school's badge, which features an oak tree by a river. The tree symbolises children's development and growth to adulthood. The river represents the Ebbw which flows alongside the new school.
2. Most pupils come from the two communities of Llanhilleth and Brynithel. Some pupils from outside the catchment area have started to join the school, including a few from the neighbouring authority of Caerphilly. Most of the housing is traditional, rented terraced and there is a high degree of unemployment. There has been greater pupil mobility during the last year, with families moving into the area from other parts of the country to find more affordable housing.
3. The school caters for pupils from three to eleven years of age. There are 195 pupils on roll, including 25 children who attend the nursery in the mornings only. Children enter the nursery the term following their third birthday. Baseline assessments in the nursery indicate that children's attainment is below average on entry to school. A significant number of children have poor language and computational skills when they start school. Over 99% of pupils are of white ethnic origin and all of them speak English at home. No pupils speak Welsh as a first language. Thirty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average of 19%. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs (SEN), which is above the national average of approximately 20%. One pupil has a statement of SEN.
4. There are eight full-time teachers including the head. Five teachers work part-time in the school, including two who share responsibility for the year 1 class, the nursery teacher and another two who are specialist language support teachers.
5. The 'state of the art' building has an early years unit for nursery and reception children, a suite for information and communications technology (ICT) and an inter-connecting library. It also has a combined school and community sports hall, as well as a floodlit artificial turf pitch for year round team games. The school is directly linked to the Llanhilleth Institute, which is currently being refurbished and when complete will offer pupils access to a public library and theatre. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in spring 2005. It is a pilot school and training centre for the 'First Steps' approach to the teaching of writing.

6. The school was due to be inspected from 27th to 29th March, but was closed on Tuesday 28th because of industrial action by non-teaching staff that affected schools throughout the country. The inspection was therefore conducted on Monday 27th, Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th March.

The school's priorities and targets

7. The school's aims were devised through staff discussion and are to:
- Help every child reach his or her full potential in all curricular areas.
 - Give every child the opportunity to learn to read, understand what is read, use what is read and enjoy what is read.
 - Encourage the creative, poetic and more technical forms of writing.
 - Encourage pupils to speak appropriately and listen with interest, attention and patience.
 - Give pupils opportunities to understand science and technology.
 - Show children the manner in which they ought to live, irrespective of race, colour or religion and develop a sense of tolerance, understanding and appreciation of others and their beliefs.
 - Give children the time and opportunity to find out about the past.
 - Help children gain knowledge and understanding of their immediate locality and places further away.
 - Encourage the music, sport, art and drama aspects of education.
 - Provide a happy school where children are sensitively cared for and cared about.
 - Work in harmony with governors, staff and pupils and embrace parents as partners in their children's education.
8. Targets in the current academic year 2005 to 2006 are to:
- Raise standards in English with regard to reading, writing, spelling and assessment.
 - Further develop aspects of assessment for learning.
 - Raise standards in pupils' use of key skills.
 - Raise standards of awareness of cultural diversity.
 - Develop the role of the School Council.
 - Induct newly qualified staff into the life of the school.
 - Establish a manageable and effective system for planning, preparation and assessment time and the new workload agreement.
 - Continue the development of the Healthy School initiative.
 - Develop closer links with industry.
 - Develop awareness of, and training for, child protection.
 - Continue to develop as a community school.

Summary

9. St Illtyd's Primary School is a good school with many outstanding features. The clear leadership of the head teacher, and the commitment of all members of staff and governors, have enabled the new school to establish itself firmly at the heart of the community. Pupils, parents, staff and governors are justifiably proud of what they have achieved in the eighteen months since it was first opened.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

10. During the inspection, standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20% | 60% | 20% | 0% | 0% |

11. In 80% of lessons, pupils' standards of achievement were judged to be grade 2 or above, which is well above the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2007 that 65% of standards should be grade 2 or above. After the first year in their new school, pupils generally achieve well and meet the agreed learning goals set for them.
12. In the early years, overall standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Grades for areas of learning for children under five

| Area of Learning | Grade |
|--|-------|
| Language, literacy and communication | 2 |
| Personal and social development | 2 |
| Mathematical development | 2 |
| Knowledge and understanding of the world | 1 |
| Creative development | 1 |
| Physical development | 2 |

13. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Their progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative development has outstanding features as a result of the excellent provision made for them in these areas of learning.
14. In key stages 1 and 2, overall standards in the subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) are as follows:

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

| Inspection area | Key stage 1 | Key stage 2 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| English | 2 | 2 |
| Welsh second language | 2 | 3 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 3 |
| Science | 2 | 2 |
| Information technology | 2 | 2 |
| Design and technology | 3 | 3 |
| History | 2 | 2 |
| Geography | 2 | 3 |
| Art | 2 | 2 |
| Music | 3 | 3 |
| Physical education | 2 | 2 |
| Religious education | 2 | 3 |

15. Pupils make good progress and achieve good standards overall. In their project-based learning days, pupils' work in several areas of the curriculum often has outstanding features.
16. Where there are shortcomings in pupils' standards of achievement, this is because they do not regularly use and develop some of the skills associated with particular subjects. More able pupils sometimes do not achieve their full potential in some subjects. In both key stages, there are often shortcomings in the standard of presentation of pupils' work.
17. Pupils with SEN achieve good standards, relative to their abilities. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress through the school because of the very good quality of support they receive.

18. Children under five make good progress, and achieve good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy through their activities in all six areas of learning. Their developing skills in using ICT are good with outstanding features. Their early bilingual skills are developing well.
19. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils' listening skills are good with outstanding features. Their use of the key skills of speaking, reading and writing in their work in all subjects is good with no important shortcomings. In both key stages, good features outweigh shortcomings in pupils' use of numeracy across the curriculum. Pupils' use of ICT as a key skill across the curriculum at key stage 1 is good with no important shortcomings, and at key stage 2 good features outweigh shortcomings.
20. Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in using Welsh in their work across the curriculum. Good features outweigh shortcomings in pupils' bilingual competence in key stage 2.
21. In the first set of NC assessments for the school in 2005, pupils in both key stages performed well, overall, in comparison with pupils locally, in Blaenau Gwent, and nationally, in Wales.
22. In key stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 2 in all three core subjects was 20% above that of Blaenau Gwent and 12% above that of all pupils in Wales. The percentage achieving the higher level 3 was 13% above the national figure in English, 2% above it in mathematics and 30% above it in science.
23. In key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 in all three core subjects was 10% above that of Blaenau Gwent and 5% above that of all pupils in Wales. The percentage achieving the higher level 5 was 9% below the national figure in English, 6% above it in mathematics and 3% above it in science.
24. Pupils' understanding of what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve varies considerably. They sometimes show a very good capacity for self-evaluation and appreciation of the work of their peers. At other times, their knowledge of their own progress and areas for development is vague.
25. The quality of relationships within the school is very good. Pupils work hard in class, enjoy their lessons and talk readily about their work to visitors in a friendly and natural manner. Pupils are considerate and courteous to each other, to staff and to visitors. Children in the early years are confident. Throughout the school, pupils move sensibly in and around the building.
26. Pupils make a significant contribution to creating a happy and supportive learning environment. They are very well behaved and have settled very well into their new school. They respond positively to the reward system, value and

are proud of their achievements. The School Council and prefects have a role in maintaining positive relationships. Pupils feel they are treated fairly.

27. At 92%, the average rate of attendance is above that of Blaenau Gwent, but below the national average. Absences are caused mainly by sickness and an increasing number of family holidays in term time. A small number of pupils are often late for school and miss the important start of the lesson. The school regularly reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and punctuality, but despite the school's best efforts, a small number of families continue to give concern.
28. The school provides very effective personal and social education that helps to create a good learning ethos and enhances pupils' self-esteem. Pupils make good progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development. Throughout the school, pupils show a very good awareness of equal opportunity issues.
29. Pupils have a very good preparation for the world of work. The school is an integral part of the community and pupils are well prepared to take an active and effective role in it.

The quality of education and training

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

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 18% | 66% | 16% | 0% | 0% |

31. The quality of teaching is good in 84% of lessons, with 18% of them having outstanding features. This compares well with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in her annual report for 2004 to 2005. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good in 79% of lessons, with 18% of them having outstanding features.
32. The overall quality of teaching is generally stimulating and, in the majority of classes, provides a good level of challenge that enables pupils to do well. Sometimes, however, lessons do not sufficiently challenge pupils or successfully build on previous learning.
33. Teachers establish good working relationships that foster productive learning. They engage and maintain pupils' interest through employing a good range of teaching strategies. Teachers plan their lessons effectively with clear objectives for what pupils are to learn. These plans are shared with classroom assistants, who make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Most lessons are well paced. Resources are well used to support teaching and learning.
34. Teachers use incidental Welsh throughout the school day to reinforce pupils' understanding of simple words and phrases, but planning does not allow pupils to make consistent progress in their use of Welsh in key stage 2.

35. Although the overall quality of teaching is good with no important shortcomings, outstanding features were sometimes identified in the quality of teaching in several classes. However, the quality of teaching observed in the deputy head teacher's classroom, where each class attends once a fortnight for a day of project-based learning, is exceptional. Some aspects in the teaching of children under five also have outstanding features. The nursery, in particular, is extremely well organised and the quality of assessment there has outstanding features.
36. In key stages 1 and 2, the majority of lessons are evaluated and assessments are recorded to provide a focus for the next stage of learning. This is evident in the core subjects in both key stages. The school's formal assessment and recording procedures are being developed and the action plan in the School Development Plan (SDP) clearly marks the way forward for this recently established school.
37. Oral feedback and marking of pupils' work are generally good and support improvements in learning. Individual targets for development, however, are often too general to allow pupils to focus directly on improvement. Similarly, targets for improvement in written reports to parents are too generalised and do not help parents focus on how they can directly help their children.
38. The curriculum is broad, balanced and accessible to all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities. Policies and schemes of work have been developed and established in all subjects.
39. Some aspects of the quality of provision for children under five have outstanding features. In both the nursery and reception class, the provision for children's imaginative play is very stimulating and enhances their development in all areas of learning.
40. The school provides some good opportunities for pupils to apply the key skills of listening and speaking, reading and writing and use of ICT in a range of subjects. They have some excellent opportunities to use them in their fortnightly cross-curricular project work. However, the provision is not yet sufficiently co-ordinated in all classes to ensure progression in pupils' developing use of numeracy across the curriculum and their use of ICT in key stage 2. The school has identified this as a priority in its SDP.
41. A particularly effective element in the curriculum is the outstanding provision for out-of-school activities. The school also makes very effective provision for visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning. The curriculum is further enhanced by the individual music tuition for pupils provided by peripatetic teachers.
42. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It provides pupils with a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to behave as responsible members of their local community and of the wider world and they have many opportunities to take responsibility and make decisions.

43. Collective worship is conducted appropriately to celebrate pupils' achievements and raise their self-esteem, but offers few opportunities for them to develop their spirituality through quiet reflection. The school actively and effectively promotes pupils' appreciation of other cultures.
44. The school has established a wide range of valuable links with industry in a very short time and pupils' understanding of the world of work is good with outstanding features.
45. There is suitable emphasis on the teaching of *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, Welsh culture and heritage.
46. Good policies and procedures have been developed that promote equal access and opportunity for all.
47. Pupils develop a sound knowledge of the importance of sustainable development. They use the skills required to support economic development extremely well through their role on the very recently established School Council. They have a real voice in improving the school.
48. The school reflects national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration extremely well. It is at the heart of the community and provides a meeting place for youth and adult groups. Pupils benefit from family learning, literacy and numeracy courses. This is an outstanding feature.
49. The head teacher, governors and staff work together well to provide very good care and support services for all pupils. The school is a happy, secure, caring community where every pupil is respected and valued.
50. The school has an effective partnership with parents and carers and takes good account of their views.
51. Procedures for the induction of new pupils into the school are well established. Pupils are well prepared for the transition to secondary school through a common curriculum programme and staff exchanges.
52. Pupils receive good quality personal support and guidance. Links with the police, health services, education authority and social services are very effective and make a valuable contribution to the curriculum.
53. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored. A number of initiatives have resulted in a marked improvement in attendance and punctuality.
54. The school has effective policies and procedures to monitor inappropriate behaviour. The recognition and celebration of good behaviour and work of a high standard reinforce the positive ethos and pupils' self-esteem.
55. There are effective procedures for safeguarding pupils' well-being and health and safety. Care is taken to ensure that pupils receive positive guidance for leading healthy and safe lives.

56. The quality of provision for learners with SEN is good with outstanding features. The procedures for the identification of these pupils, and the quality of the arrangements for their monitoring, are outstanding. The school is sensitive to issues of equal opportunities and inclusion when plans are made to support pupils both in class and in withdrawal sessions. Parents and carers are fully involved in the review process.
57. The school promotes good attitudes and values that foster a sense of belonging and community. All pupils are treated equally and with respect, irrespective of their background. The school ensures that there is equal access for pupils to participate in all activities.
58. Pupils' sex education is well organised and there are very effective policies to promote the development of race equality and equal opportunities through the wider curriculum.

Leadership and management

59. The head teacher gives a very strong lead and has a clear vision for establishing the new school at the heart of the community. In this, the head teacher, very ably assisted by his deputy and supported by all members of staff, has been extremely successful. Pupils, parents, staff and governors are very proud of their new school. They have been outstandingly successful in creating a clear sense of purpose and a shared ethos in a relatively short space of time.
60. There are clear structures for effective and efficient management. The school secretary provides excellent support so that day-to-day arrangements are managed effectively and efficiently.
61. Performance management is used effectively to promote teachers' personal and professional development. There is, however, some inconsistency in the expectations teachers have of the standards pupils can achieve, and in the quality of teaching. Target setting for pupils is at an early stage of development and is another major priority in the current SDP.
62. The school takes very good account of Welsh Assembly priorities and has fostered strong partnerships with local organisations and the community.
63. The governing body effectively carries out its responsibilities in terms of strategic planning and fulfils the legal duties placed upon it. Governors are very supportive of the head teacher and school.
64. A culture of self-evaluation is being established. The school is making good progress in developing self-evaluation procedures which are comprehensive, systematic and based on first-hand evidence. The complimentary roles of the head and deputy are very effective in enabling them to evaluate standards and identify areas for improvement. Curriculum co-ordinators are at an early stage in developing their roles in gathering first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning in the areas for which they are responsible.

65. The quality of the school's self-evaluation process is good and draws on evidence from a wide range of sources. It takes very good account of the views of pupils, parents, staff and governors.
66. The school effectively uses all the information gained from its self-evaluation process to plan for improvement. The SDP is a valuable, detailed document which clearly specifies targets for improvement, the actions that need to be taken in order to meet them and the timescales involved. Resources are carefully allocated to ensure that objectives can be met.
67. The school's self-evaluation report produced prior to the inspection is a document of high quality. The judgements of the inspection team coincided with those of the school in its self-evaluation report on all seven key questions.
68. The overall quality of staff is good. Throughout the school, pupils are well supported by qualified and experienced staff who are effectively deployed. Full-time and part-time non-teaching staff provide high quality support for children under five and pupils who need it in key stages 1 and 2. They liaise regularly and effectively with the appropriate teachers. Members of staff benefit from opportunities to undertake continuing professional development.
69. The accommodation provides excellent facilities for teaching and learning. It is kept clean and very well maintained by the caretaker and cleaners. The quality of displays throughout the school is of a high standard and contributes to the stimulating environment the school creates.
70. The school has sufficient good quality resources in all NC subjects. There is very good use of the local environment, the community and educational sites to enrich pupils' learning. This is further enhanced by the contribution of visitors to the school.
71. The use of resources is regularly reviewed and the school gives good value for money.

Recommendations

- R1** Ensure progression in the development of pupils' use of ICT as a key skill and their bilingual competence in key stage 2, and in their use of numeracy across the curriculum in both key stages.
- R2** Spread the excellent quality of teaching and high expectations that exist in a number of areas throughout the school.
- R3** Raise the standard of presentation of pupils' work throughout the school.
- R4** Continue to develop pupils' understanding of what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.

R5 Further develop the role of leaders and managers in monitoring the quality of teaching and standards achieved in those areas for which they are responsible.

Note: The school has identified R1, R4 and R5 as areas for improvement in its SDP.

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

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

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20% | 60% | 20% | 0% | 0% |

74. In 80% of lessons, pupils' standards of achievement were judged to be grade 2 or above, which is well above the Welsh Assembly Government's target for 2007 that 65% of standards should be grade 2 or above. After the first year in their new school, pupils achieve well and meet the agreed learning goals set for them.
75. In the early years, overall standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Grades for areas of learning for children under five

| Area of Learning | Grade |
|--|-------|
| Language, literacy and communication | 2 |
| Personal and social development | 2 |
| Mathematical development | 2 |
| Knowledge and understanding of the world | 1 |
| Creative development | 1 |
| Physical development | 2 |

76. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Their progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative development has outstanding features as a result of the excellent provision made for them in these areas of learning.
77. In key stages 1 and 2, overall standards in the subjects of the NC are as follows:

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

| Inspection area | Key stage 1 | Key stage 2 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| English | 2 | 2 |
| Welsh second language | 2 | 3 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 3 |
| Science | 2 | 2 |
| Information technology | 2 | 2 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Design and technology | 3 | 3 |
| History | 2 | 2 |
| Geography | 2 | 3 |
| Art | 2 | 2 |
| Music | 3 | 3 |
| Physical education | 2 | 2 |
| Religious education | 2 | 3 |

78. Pupils make good progress and achieve good standards overall. In their fortnightly project-based learning days with the deputy head teacher, pupils' work in several areas of the curriculum often has outstanding features.
79. Where there are shortcomings in pupils' standards of achievement, this is because they do not regularly use and develop some of the skills associated with particular subjects, such as the use of tools in design and technology. More able pupils sometimes do not achieve their full potential in some subjects, particularly in year 6, because of a lack of adequate challenge in some of their tasks. In both key stages, there are often shortcomings in the standard of presentation of pupils' work.
80. Pupils with SEN achieve good standards, relative to their abilities. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress through the school because of the very good quality of support they receive. A significant number of them leave the SEN register because of the very good progress they make.
81. Children under five make good progress, and achieve good standards, in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and in their use of numeracy through their activities in all six areas of learning. Their developing skills in using ICT are good with outstanding features. Their early bilingual skills are developing well.
82. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils' listening skills are good with outstanding features. Their use of the key skills of speaking, reading and writing in their work in all subjects is good with no important shortcomings. Good features outweigh shortcomings in their use of numeracy across the curriculum. Pupils' use of ICT across the curriculum at key stage 1 is good with no important shortcomings and, at key stage 2, good features outweigh shortcomings.
83. Throughout the school, pupils listen very attentively to their teachers, to other adults and to each other. The quality of their listening has outstanding features and enhances their ability to learn effectively. The majority of pupils speak confidently about their learning experiences. They ask and answer questions clearly.
84. Pupils make good progress in using their reading skills in all subjects. Pupils in key stage 2 are developing their skills well in using the library for independent research across the curriculum.
85. Pupils learn the conventions of writing in the early years and in key stage 1, and use them with increasing confidence in a range of subjects. In key stage 2, they

write effectively in a wide variety of styles and in different contexts. In their project-based learning sessions, all pupils learn to plan, draft, confer and edit their work and the quality of some of their work is outstanding.

86. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in some subjects in key stage 1. Year 3 pupils use Venn diagrams accurately in their work in science. However, overall, pupils do not apply these skills confidently and in an increasing number of ways across the curriculum to measure, calculate or record information.
87. Pupils are confident in using ICT as a result of the good facilities available in classrooms and in the computer suite. The use of the interactive whiteboard has enhanced pupils' progress in lessons, by improving their skills in reading and information gathering in a range of subjects. In their project-based learning sessions, pupils use laptop computers and a wide range of peripherals with considerable ease and confidence. However, pupils make limited use of ICT to handle data in subjects such as mathematics and geography in key stage 2.
88. Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in using Welsh in their work across the curriculum. Good features outweigh shortcomings in pupils' bilingual competence in key stage 2. Although they understand and use Welsh incidentally throughout the day, many of the language patterns they use are repetitive and do not show consolidation and progress.
89. In the first set of NC assessments for the school in 2005, pupils in both key stages performed well, overall, in comparison with pupils locally, in Blaenau Gwent, and nationally, in Wales.
90. In key stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 2 in all three core subjects was 20% above that of Blaenau Gwent and 12% above that of all pupils in Wales. The percentage achieving the higher level 3 was 13% above the national figure in English, 2% above it in mathematics and 30% above it in science. The number of boys who attained at least level 2 in all three core subjects marginally exceeded the number of girls who did so.
91. In key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 in all three core subjects was 10% above that of Blaenau Gwent and 5% above that of all pupils in Wales. The percentage achieving the higher level 5 was 9% below the national figure in English, 6% above it in mathematics and 3% above it in science. There was no significant difference in the number of boys and girls who attained at least level 4 in all three core subjects.
92. As this is a new school, it is not possible to report on trends over time in pupils' performance in NC assessments. It is also important to note that only 15 pupils were in the year group who were assessed at the end of key stage 1 in 2005, making it difficult to draw any firm conclusions based on percentages. In key stage 2, the discrepancy between pupils' performance in English, and their results in mathematics and science, may be due to the fact that they had not had time to benefit fully from the school's early intervention strategies designed to boost their performance in literacy.

93. Pupils' understanding of what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve varies considerably. In their cross-curricular work once a fortnight with the deputy head teacher, pupils show a very good capacity for self-evaluation and appreciation of the work of their peers. For example, when writing extended stories, they take it in turns to sit in the 'author's chair' and read their drafts to a partner who offers 'two stars and a wish' – two very good features and one area for improvement in their writing. Partly as a result of this reflection on their work in progress, they produce some outstanding pieces of writing. At other times, throughout the school, pupils' knowledge of their own progress and areas for development is often vague because individual target setting is at an early stage of development.
94. Pupils' attitudes towards learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are good. The quality of relationships within the school is very good and the positive ethos results in pupils who are willing learners. They work hard in class, are keen to join in the activities prepared for them and are generally enthusiastic about their work. Pupils enjoy their lessons and talk readily about their work to visitors in a friendly and natural manner.
95. Pupils are very well behaved. They are happy, have settled very well into their new school and know what is expected of them. Pupils are friendly, considerate and courteous to each other, to staff and to visitors. Children in the early years are confident. They relate very well to each other and to adults. Pupils throughout the school show high levels of self-discipline and move sensibly in and around the building.
96. Pupils make a significant contribution to creating a happy and supportive learning environment. The youngest children in the nursery are eager to show their skills, for example, in the 'Celebration Room.' Pupils respond well to the reward system. They value 'Golden Time' and are proud of their achievements. The School Council and prefects have a role in maintaining positive relationships. Pupils feel that they are treated fairly; one summarised the attitude of many when she said, "they love school and want to live here."
97. At 92%, the average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is above that of Blaenau Gwent, but below the national average. Absences are caused mainly by sickness and an increasing number of family holidays in term time. Almost all the pupils arrive on time at the start of the day, but a small number are often late and miss the important start of the lesson. A significant number of pupils achieve full attendance and are rewarded at the end of term. The school regularly reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and punctuality and the detrimental effects of absence and lateness on their children's learning. However, despite the school's best efforts, a small number of families continue to give concern. The school works very closely with the Educational Welfare Officer in these cases.
98. The school provides very effective personal and social education that helps to create a good learning ethos and enhances pupils' self-esteem. Many examples of good practice were observed whereby pupils' problem solving and decision making skills were developed within lessons and opportunities given for small

group discussion and report back. These strategies enable pupils to focus upon a challenge and help them organise and think about their work.

99. Pupils make good progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development. They show genuine respect, care and concern for others and express their views openly and honestly. They work well with other pupils and the opportunities provided in lessons and throughout the wider curriculum help them develop mature attitudes.
100. Throughout the school, pupils show a very good awareness of equal opportunity issues. The planned curriculum, together with the experiences gained from visits to the locality and further afield, successfully extends pupils' understanding of their own community and of the diversity within the world. The participation by year 6 pupils in the 'One World Conference' is a good example of how their awareness is deepened by the opportunities provided by the school.
101. Pupils have a very good preparation for the world of work through initiatives such as the University of Newport's programme to develop pupils' aspirations about career choices. The school is an integral part of the community and pupils are well prepared to take an active and effective role in it. One year 6 pupil, in her personal writing about Llanhilleth, conveyed her pride in the community when she wrote, "They all do what needs to be done and they all help one another and the best thing of all – they all stick together."

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

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

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18% | 66% | 16% | 0% | 0% |

104. The quality of teaching is good in 84% of lessons, with 18% of them having outstanding features. This compares well with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in her annual report for 2004 to 2005. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good in 79% of lessons, also with 18% of them having outstanding features.

105. The overall quality of teaching is generally stimulating and, in the majority of lessons observed, provides a good level of challenge that enables pupils to do well. This is apparent in the early years, key stage one and most classes in key stage 2. In these lessons, pupils work at a good pace and teachers intervene to support pupils using appropriate strategies to help them succeed, giving pupils opportunities to talk about their work. Some of the lessons in year 6, however, do not sufficiently challenge pupils or successfully build on previous learning.

106. Teachers establish good working relationships that foster productive learning. They engage and maintain their pupils' interest through employing a good range of teaching strategies that supports progress and manages behaviour effectively. Teachers raise pupils' self-esteem through valuing their contributions and encouraging them to think and ask why in discussion and question time.

107. Teachers and classroom assistants have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and of current educational developments. Many have benefited from recent and relevant training courses. Teachers manage their classrooms well and, in most lessons, the work is well matched to pupils' needs.

108. Teachers plan their lessons effectively with clear objectives expressed in terms of what pupils are to learn. The lessons are generally well planned to ensure that the needs of all the pupils in the class are met and the objectives are usually effectively shared with them at the start. The plans are shared with classroom assistants to enable them to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

109. In the majority of classes, lessons are well structured with clear introductions, a good range of differentiated tasks for pupils and plenary sessions where the learning objective is revisited. In the best practice, lessons are well paced with

teachers setting timed targets for pupils to focus purposefully on the completion of achievable tasks.

110. Although the overall quality of teaching is good with no important shortcomings, outstanding features were sometimes identified in the quality of teaching in several classes. Where the teaching is good with outstanding features, teachers plan for a high level of challenge, base their lesson objectives on pupil assessment, offer stimulating introductions and activities and reinforce their objectives in the plenary session. Throughout the lesson, teachers adapt their strategies to pupils' learning needs, motivating and expecting pupils to achieve high standards. In these lessons, pupils learn to work independently, self-evaluating their work and thinking how they can improve it.
111. The quality of teaching observed in the deputy head teacher's classroom, where pupils attend once a fortnight when their class teachers receive planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA time), is exceptional. The teaching is innovative, creative and motivates pupils to produce work of a very high standard through imaginative, stimulating activities, high expectations and extremely well used resources. Independent, individual and group work is exceptionally well organised, with each member of the group allocated a role in their project. As a result, the classroom buzzes with excitement and pupils are totally absorbed in what they are doing.
112. Some aspects of the teaching for children under five also have outstanding features. There is excellent planning for children's structured play, which expertly draws on all six areas of learning for children of this age. Support staff are very well deployed, knowledgeable about young children's learning and often take the initiative in supporting them. The nursery, in particular, is extremely well organised. Cards outlining key learning objectives, and prompts for discussions with children, are displayed alongside areas such as the water tray and the 'Indian restaurant'. These cards enable both teaching and support staff to maximise opportunities for children's learning and language development when they work with them in these areas.
113. The school is justifiably proud of its policy of equal access to all activities. Teachers actively promote equal opportunities and challenge stereotypical views. They treat all pupils equally, regardless of their gender or ability.
114. Teachers use incidental Welsh throughout the school day to reinforce pupils' understanding of simple words and phrases, but planning does not allow for pupils to make consistent progress in their use of Welsh in key stage 2.
115. Resources are well used to support teaching and learning. In all classes, teachers provide an attractive learning environment where pupils' work is celebrated.
116. In the early years, when pupils start school, detailed information of children's achievements and progress, including baseline assessment, is recorded. The quality of assessment in the nursery has outstanding features. Staff make regular, focused observations of individual children's progress towards the

Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. These observations effectively inform detailed planning for the next stage of learning.

117. In key stages 1 and 2, the majority of lessons are evaluated and assessments are recorded to provide a focus for the next stage of learning. This is evident in the core subjects throughout the key stages. The school analyses the results of the formal diagnostic tests given to key stage 1 and 2 pupils. This analysis informs the units of work which provide the basis for classroom planning.
118. The school's formal recording procedures are being developed and the action plan in the SDP clearly marks the way forward for this recently established school. Current records enable value added to be judged for each pupil as they progress through the school, but the collation and analysis of the assessments, together with other information such as medical data and personal development, are not always easily manageable.
119. The school has planned programmes to enable teaching staff to become fully proficient in levelling pupils' work for accurate NC assessments in the core and foundation subjects. Comprehensive portfolios of assessed work are being developed for all subjects.
120. The quality of the oral feedback and marking of pupils' work is generally good and supports improvements in learning. The recently issued key stage 2 pupils' learning diaries contain individual targets for improvement, but these are often too general to allow pupils to directly focus on improvement and evaluation procedures are unclear.
121. The school provides opportunities for parents to be informed about their children's progress and achievement through parents' meetings and annual reports. However, the targets for improvement given in the reports are too generalised and do not help parents focus on how they can directly help their children. Teachers' comments on the core and foundation subjects are often descriptive and do not indicate the standards that pupils have achieved.
122. The school meets the statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on the NC and has established good procedures for the transfer of pupils' records to their comprehensive schools.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

123. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
124. The curriculum is broad, balanced and accessible to all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities. It meets all the requirements of the NC and fully reflects the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Policies and schemes of work have been developed and established in all subjects.
125. The school works closely with other professionals to identify pupils with SEN. A policy for meeting the needs of pupils who are gifted or talented has recently been written.
126. Some aspects of the quality of provision for children under five has outstanding features. In both the nursery and reception class, the provision for children's imaginative play is very stimulating. Children and adults create special areas related to class themes which include dressing up clothes and props to support and extend children's learning through play. These areas also provide many opportunities for children to engage in purposeful literacy activities, related to class themes.
127. The school provides some good opportunities for pupils to apply the key skills of listening and speaking, reading and writing, numeracy and use of ICT in a range of subjects. They have some excellent opportunities to use them in their fortnightly cross-curricular project days with the deputy head teacher and often produce work of outstanding quality as a result. However, the provision is not yet sufficiently co-ordinated to ensure progression in pupils' development and use of these skills across the curriculum and in all classes.
128. A particularly effective element in the curriculum is the outstanding provision for out-of-school activities and a very good range of clubs, cultural and sporting activities. In addition, the school makes very effective provision for visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning. The school's first residential visit for older pupils has been organised for September 2006. All pupils have access to a wide range of activities which are well attended.
129. The curriculum is further enhanced by individual music tuition for pupils provided by peripatetic teachers. Both pupils and parents very much appreciate these opportunities for them to learn to play an instrument. Pupils also benefit from the school's links with other primary schools for sporting fixtures and music activities.
130. The school promotes pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It provides pupils with a strong

sense of right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to behave as responsible members of their local community and of the wider world. The local vicar and other church leaders regularly visit the school.

131. Collective worship is conducted appropriately to celebrate pupils' achievements and raise their self-esteem. It is used as an effective medium to promote good behaviour and respect for others, but offers pupils few opportunities to develop their spirituality through quiet reflection. Similarly, classroom opportunities to develop pupils' aesthetic and spiritual awareness are sometimes overlooked.
132. The school actively promotes pupils' cultural development. Pupils study their own and other cultures in history, geography and religious education. For example, they celebrate Chinese New Year and enjoy the music and dance of African countries.
133. Pupils participate with understanding in 'Circle Time' and in class discussions. The school provides many good opportunities for pupils from year 2 to year 6 to learn to take responsibility and make decisions when representing their peers on the School Council or when submitting ideas to it. The School Council is very influential in deciding how to support generously and imaginatively local charities and links abroad. For example, during this year, the school has supported a school in Zimbabwe. Activities such as these also successfully raise their awareness of global citizenship.
134. The school's very good links with parents begin in the nursery class. A helpful and informative brochure is given to parents as their children start school. They receive a warm welcome into the nursery. A Mother's Day assembly took place in the nursery during the inspection. This was very well attended by mothers and fathers and was a delightful occasion for the whole community, adults and children alike.
135. The school has established a wide range of valuable links with industry in a very short time. Year 6 pupils' aspirations are raised by working with a link tutor from the education department of a teacher training institution on the Schools and Jobs Challenge.
136. The school's provision for developing pupils' understanding of the world of work is good with outstanding features. Throughout the school, pupils are involved in a variety of first-hand experiences in workshops and carefully planned educational visits that also enhance their design and technology, history and media skills.
137. Pupils in year 6, for example, use the knowledge gained from a visit to the BBC studios in Cardiff to create their own multimedia and animation projects in school and to develop a mini-enterprise project. They work with an engineer and help develop an educational resource pack on the Second World War following their visit to an armaments factory. Another excellent example is the way in which pupils in year 3 work with professionals to set up a 'factory' to produce healthy sandwiches.

138. The police and emergency services support the school's personal and social education curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils work with professionals to develop their skills in sports and road safety.
139. Four teachers have benefited from industrial placements and have produced educational resources, for example, on World War Two. The head teacher is trained to use the Dynamo project. These experiences enhance their professional development and managerial skills. The school and families benefit from sponsorship. For example, the contractor that built the new school provided all the pupils with school uniform and funding for PE kit.
140. There is suitable emphasis on the teaching of *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, Welsh culture and heritage. The school has strong links with its local community and this is recognised in many aspects of the curriculum. There are shortcomings, however, in the school's provision for developing pupils' bilingual skills in English and Welsh. In most classes, infrequent and variable use of incidental Welsh hampers pupils' development of fluency.
141. There are effective policies and procedures to promote equal access and opportunity for all. Pupils show great respect for each other in their work and play.
142. Pupils develop a sound understanding of the importance of sustainable development. The school grounds and local environment are used to enhance the curriculum. Pupils are involved in recycling and compost schemes and are educating their parents in sustainability. They care for their environment and take measures to make it attractive, for example, through planting pots and flower beds and keeping the grounds litter free. In a very short space of time the school has achieved the bronze 'Eco School' award.
143. Pupils develop the skills required to support economic development extremely well through their role on the very recently established School Council. They have a real voice in improving the school through suggestions such as seating areas and games in the playground, as well as play equipment and sharing facilities at lunchtimes and playtimes. Year 6 representatives chair the discussions and present ideas from key stage 1 pupils.
144. Year 6 pupils run the Healthy Tuck Shop and make decisions about the types of fruit for sale. They learn about cost effectiveness and stock control and negotiate prices effectively. All stock is purchased from local suppliers, which further helps to strengthen links with the community. Pupils take their roles very seriously and show great commitment. All pupils have the opportunity to take responsibility by undertaking monitor roles.
145. The school also promotes entrepreneurial skills very well. Pupils in year 6, for example, made a film as part of their cross-curricular learning project, to celebrate the school's first anniversary. They sold the DVD to parents to raise money for a video camera for the school.

146. The school reflects national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration extremely well. The school is at the heart of the community and provides a meeting place for youth and adult groups during the day and in the evenings. As a result, two scout groups have been formed where there were none previously. In recognition of this, they have adopted the school colours.
147. Pupils benefit from working with their families in family learning literacy and numeracy courses. Parents are better able to help their children and pupils, in turn, see themselves and adults as lifelong learners. This is an outstanding feature.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

148. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
149. The head teacher, governors and staff work together well to provide very good care and support services for all pupils. The school is a happy, secure caring community where every pupil is respected and valued. Discussions with pupils confirm that they feel safe and well supported. They are confident that there is an adult that they can turn to for support and guidance if they are unhappy or worried about something.
150. The school has an effective partnership with parents and carers and takes good account of their views. Parents and community helpers are welcomed into school to support and guide the pupils. The strong community links are a strength of the school. All volunteers are checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.
151. Procedures for the induction of new pupils into the school are well established. Parents are involved in the induction process to enable children to settle quickly into the nursery. The induction procedures for pupils who join the school at a later stage are also successful so that pupils settle quickly into the life and routines of the school.
152. Links with the comprehensive school are very good and ensure a smooth transition from year 6 to year 7. Pupils are well prepared for the transition through a common curriculum programme and staff exchanges. At the start of each year, there is a planned programme to help pupils settle into their new classes. This includes the pupils devising a 'classroom charter' which helps to set a positive class ethos.
153. The school provides good quality personal support and guidance for the pupils through the work of the staff and support agencies. Links with the police, health services, education authority and social services are very effective and make a valuable contribution to the curriculum.
154. The school has very good procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality. A 'First Day Response Officer' tracks attendance daily and the school liaises closely with the Education Welfare Officer who follows up pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern. A positive ethos is encouraged through the rewarding of good attendance in celebration assemblies. The marking of registers complies with regulations. All these initiatives have resulted in a marked improvement in attendance and punctuality.
155. The school has effective policies and procedures to monitor inappropriate behaviour. Pupils whose behaviour is giving cause for concern are counselled, parents are involved and, when necessary, support is sought from external

agencies and the Local Education Authority (LEA). The recognition and celebration of good behaviour and work of a high standard reinforce the positive ethos and pupils' self-esteem.

156. The school has developed effective procedures for safeguarding pupils' well-being and health and safety. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place and all staff are fully aware of the arrangements for referral. Arrangements for first aid are well organised and fire drills are held regularly. The security arrangements for the school building are good.
157. Care is taken to ensure that pupils receive positive guidance for leading healthy and safe lives. The school promotes physical education and healthy exercise through a wide range of initiatives and supports a healthy diet through the tuck shop and the curriculum. The awarding of the Healthy School Award Phase One has recognised the importance of these valuable initiatives.
158. The quality of provision for learners with SEN is good with outstanding features. The school has identified fifty-five pupils as having SEN. The procedures for the identification of these pupils, and the quality of the arrangements for their monitoring, are outstanding. The individual educational plans (IEPs) provide specific objectives that enable good programmes of work to be planned. Pupils with SEN make good progress through the school and the quality of support is such that many pupils leave the register after experiencing success.
159. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) provides good guidance to class teachers and support staff and liaises effectively with the many support services who contribute to the good progress made by these pupils. The school is sensitive to issues of equal opportunities and inclusion when plans are made to support pupils both in class and in withdrawal sessions. Parents and carers are fully involved in the review process.
160. The school promotes good attitudes and values that foster a sense of belonging and community. This ethos also encourages good behaviour. Incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with promptly and appropriate support strategies ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn without interference or disruption.
161. All pupils are treated equally and with respect, irrespective of their background. The school ensures that there is equal access for pupils to participate in all activities. No pupil is disadvantaged because of any disability and care is taken to provide access to all curriculum areas, including residential visits and sporting activities.
162. The school has very effective policies to promote the development of pupils' sex education, race equality and equal opportunities through the wider curriculum. The school is very effective in challenging stereotypes in pupils' choices and expectations and in dealing with all forms of racial discrimination and harassment.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

163. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
164. The head teacher gives a very strong lead and has a clear vision for establishing the new school at the heart of the community. The main priority when the schools were first amalgamated was to unite the pupils, parents, staff and governors from two distinctive traditions together into a cohesive community. In this, the head teacher, very ably assisted by his deputy and supported by all members of staff, has been extremely successful. Pupils, parents, staff and governors are very proud of their new school. They have been outstandingly successful in creating a clear sense of purpose and a shared ethos in a relatively short space of time.
165. There are clear structures for effective and efficient management in which staff can work together productively. Lines of communication and daily routines are good and allow the everyday work of the school to proceed smoothly. The school secretary provides excellent support so that day-to-day arrangements are managed effectively and efficiently.
166. The school has explicit aims, which evolved and were formally agreed by members of staff and governors towards the end of the first academic year as a new school. The head teacher and senior management team have been sensitive to the possibility of 'initiative overload' and have therefore staggered priorities for development in a five year strategic plan. During the first year, a huge number of detailed policies on the curriculum and all other aspects of school life were compiled. This is indicative of the hard work and commitment to the developing school shown by all concerned. The focus in the current year is to establish innovative approaches to learning.
167. Performance management is used effectively to promote teachers' personal and professional development. Opportunities to attend relevant courses, where individual teachers have identified a training need, are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and standards achieved. There is, however, some inconsistency in the expectations teachers have of the standards pupils can achieve, and in the quality of teaching. Target setting for pupils is at an early stage of development and is another major priority in the current development plan.
168. The school takes very good account of Welsh Assembly priorities and has fostered strong partnerships with local organisations and the community. For example, every Thursday afternoon the school hosts a mother and toddler club that is very well attended. The school promotes lifelong learning skills with an outstanding degree of success during project-based learning days.

Arrangements to accommodate the new teachers' workload agreement are very well organised.

169. The governing body effectively carries out its responsibilities in terms of strategic planning and fulfils the legal duties placed upon it. Governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They played an important role in choosing the location and layout of the new building and in helping to create a school for the whole community.
170. There are link governors for all subject areas and for child protection. Appropriate sub-committees have been established. Governors are kept very well informed through comprehensive half-termly reports by the head teacher and by their own formal and informal visits to the school. Governors are very supportive of the head teacher and school. Many assist in classes and with after school clubs. The chair of governors, in particular, works with pupils every week and supports them in a variety of activities. Governors support the School Council and a wide range of events.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

171. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
172. A culture of self-evaluation is being established. The school is making good progress in developing self-evaluation procedures which are comprehensive, systematic and based on first-hand evidence.
173. The head teacher currently monitors the quality of teaching and learning through scrutiny of teachers' weekly planning and through frequent visits to classrooms and work with pupils. The deputy head teacher's role involves her in working closely with pupils throughout the school, enabling her to have a very good overview of standards. The complimentary roles of the head and deputy are very effective in enabling them to evaluate quality and identify areas for improvement.
174. Curriculum co-ordinators have agreed job descriptions which make clear their roles and responsibilities with regard to evaluating and improving quality and standards. They are at stage 1 of a 5-stage programme of training designed to help them carry out their role of monitoring standards in the areas for which they are responsible. Opportunities for them to monitor, at first hand, the quality of teaching and learning are therefore limited at present but they do scrutinise teachers' mid-term planning and pupils' books. All managers monitor progress towards targets in the SDP.
175. The school's self-evaluation process draws on evidence from a wide range of sources. It takes very good account of the views of pupils, parents, staff and governors.
176. Pupils complete a questionnaire and also regularly communicate their opinions through the School Council. Parents completed a detailed questionnaire at the end of the school's first year, which the head teacher analysed in order to gain their views of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Parents also value highly the 'open door' policy and feel it is easy to approach the school with questions or problems.
177. During a school closure day, all members of staff, and those governors who could attend, discussed the strengths and weaknesses of individual subjects and other curriculum areas. Co-ordinators then wrote detailed evaluations of those subjects and areas, based on the consensus view. These evaluations were fairly accurate. Where some areas for development were not identified, this is due to the fact that co-ordinators are still at an early stage of the training designed to help them in this task.

178. These very good channels of communication for all interested parties to make known their views of the school, effectively inform the school's self-evaluation process and its plans for improvement.
179. All managers are involved in identifying priorities for the SDP. This is a valuable, detailed document which clearly specifies targets for improvement, the actions that need to be taken in order to meet them and the timescales involved. Resources are carefully allocated to ensure that objectives can be met.
180. It is too early in the school's development for leaders and managers to be able to show that actions taken have resulted in measurable improvements. However, NFER tests are taken by pupils in every class from year 1 to year 6. These provide valuable information, in addition to that gained from NC assessments at the end of key stages 1 and 2, to enable the school to measure progress over time.
181. The school's self-evaluation report produced prior to the inspection is a document of high quality. The head teacher wrote the report, which was reviewed by the governing body, following the school's self-evaluation process. The school's progress, achievements and areas for improvement in relation to each of the seven key questions are evaluated in depth and specific evidence to support each of its judgements about its own performance is provided.
182. The judgements of the inspection team coincided with those of the school in its self-evaluation report on all seven key questions. The school also chose to grade its performance in all NC subjects. The inspection team agreed with the majority of the school's judgements in relation to subjects. Overall, the school's self-evaluation process is accurate in identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

183. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
184. The overall quality of staff is good. Throughout the school, pupils are well supported by qualified and experienced staff who are effectively deployed.
185. The school has established a manageable and highly effective system to enable all staff to be released for Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time. The deputy head teacher takes each class for a whole day, once a fortnight, to develop project-based learning. Pupils benefit enormously from her skills and expertise and, as a result, their standards of achievement are raised in a number of areas of the curriculum. At the same time, class teachers benefit from the guaranteed opportunity, once a fortnight, to plan, prepare and assess in detail.
186. Full-time and part-time non-teaching staff provide high quality support for children under five, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 who have specific learning difficulties and pupils with SEN. They liaise regularly and effectively with the appropriate teachers.
187. There is a strong commitment to undertake continuing professional development, and this has had an influence on developing the inclusion of ICT as an integral part of most subjects. All staff have received training on the development of the immediate landscape. The school garden at the front of the school will be extended and the area at the back will be developed into a garden area. The picnic benches which were requested by the School Council are used appropriately by all age groups.
188. The accommodation provides excellent facilities for teaching and learning, including a large hall, good-sized classrooms, a computer suite, a well stocked library, a music room, a family learning room and shared learning and practical areas. The classroom dedicated for project-based learning is extremely well organised and used very efficiently. However, the potential of the music room to develop pupils' musical skills has not yet been fully developed.
189. Staff who work with children under five provide very attractive and stimulating areas for the children. The nursery and reception classrooms are used very effectively but the outdoor play area is not yet sufficiently stimulating to enhance children's development in all six areas of learning. The school has identified this as an area for development in its current SDP.
190. The accommodation is kept clean and very well maintained by the caretaker and cleaners. The carpeted corridors and classrooms help reduce noise levels. The quality of displays throughout the school is of a high standard and contributes to the stimulating environment the school creates.

191. The outdoor provision is enhanced by marked playground games, an astro-turf area, a grassed area for games lessons and an area for netball practice.
192. The school has sufficient good quality resources in all NC subjects. In the main, these are efficiently managed and used well.
193. The computer suite is used effectively. There are sufficient computers and chairs for pupils in all classes. The school is linked to the Internet and all classes have at least one computer in their classroom.
194. There is very good use of the local environment, the community and educational sites to enrich pupils' learning. This is further enhanced by the contribution of visitors to the school. The proximity of the swimming pool provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in swimming.
195. There is very good provision for the local community to use parts of the school on a regular basis. There is a shared commitment to support lifelong learning for all members of the family. This is an outstanding feature of the school.
196. The use of resources is regularly reviewed and a contingency fund is managed carefully to anticipate fluctuations in the number of pupils on roll. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

197. When they first enter the nursery, a significant number of children lack confidence in speaking and have a limited vocabulary. However, they make good progress in both the nursery and reception classes in developing their listening and speaking skills because of the intense focus on these skills by the adults who work with them. Reception children's vocabulary is gradually widened through their work on topics such as the rainforest.
198. Nursery children respond to, and return, simple greetings in Welsh. They like browsing among books. They handle them appropriately and enjoy sharing them with their peers and adults. They make the connection between words and pictures and more experienced children recognise some letters. They enjoy making marks and writing messages, using what they know about letters. They are eager to write 'menus' and take 'orders' in the 'Indian restaurant'.
199. Children in the reception class make good progress in their reading. They enjoy reading books for information, such as finding out about rainforest animals. Regular, short sessions on phonics enable them to develop a good understanding of letters and their related sounds. More able children recognise the sounds of more complex combinations of letters such as 'ai'. They write freely, from choice, for a range of purposes and use individual whiteboards confidently to write familiar words. They write simple sentences about their interests and activities to accompany their drawings.

Shortcomings

200. There are no important shortcomings.

Personal and social development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

201. Nursery children settle quickly and happily into nursery routines and are secure in their new environment. They are establishing good relationships with adults and with one another. They sat very calmly and sensibly, in their costumes, as their parents came in to watch their special assembly for Mother's Day, despite

the excitement of the morning and the very wet day. They respond enthusiastically to new experiences and move confidently from one activity to another.

202. Reception children confidently approach visitors and are keen to show and talk about their work. They increasingly work well as part of a group, play harmoniously together and enjoy team games such as 'Duck and Goose'. They respect and applaud one another's efforts. They tidy up quickly at the end of a session.

Shortcomings

203. Some children in the reception class find it difficult to maintain concentration during prolonged class discussions.

Mathematical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

204. Nursery children recognise some numerals and can match the appropriate number of objects to them. They are beginning to count accurately from one to five and know the right order for the numbers. They are also beginning to recognise shapes such as circles, squares and triangles. They are developing an understanding of the concept of subtraction through simple number rhymes such as 'Five Little Ducks'.
205. Reception children count, measure and match appropriately in a range of contexts. They use mathematical language such as 'tallest' and 'widest' in their construction activities. They are beginning to count reliably forwards and backwards to 20 and can identify missing numbers in a number line. They recognise numbers and have a good understanding of simple addition and subtraction. They are developing a good understanding of symmetry through their work on the computer in making symmetrical butterfly patterns.

Shortcomings

206. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

207. In both the reception and nursery classes, children develop an excellent understanding, at a level appropriate for their age, of other places, cultures, people and animals. They do this through books, stories and class discussions, but also through their engagement in imaginative play areas such as the 'Indian

restaurant' in the nursery and the 'rainforest' in the reception class. Reception children can identify contrasting places on a large-scale pictorial map of the world. They understand some of the key differences and similarities in places such as the Arctic and the rainforest. They talk knowledgeably about animals such as anteaters, snakes and monkeys. They use a range of ICT equipment such as cameras, walkie-talkies and computers competently and with confidence.

Good features

208. Children in the nursery are becoming aware of different sorts of weather by keeping a simple daily record of it. They successfully complete simple programs on the computer and can drag and move pictures on the interactive whiteboard to match items. They find out about past events in their own lives and are developing an awareness of how things and people change over time. They are developing a good knowledge of the needs of babies, animals and plants and how they grow.
209. Reception children are developing a good awareness of geographical features of their local area, such as hills, trees and parks. They have a good understanding of basic commands on the computer and use the interactive whiteboard confidently.

Shortcomings

210. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

211. Nursery children handle glue well and stick feathers carefully onto pictures of chicks they have painted. They are developing good control of pencils and crayons and colour between lines and draw around templates with increasing accuracy. It was not possible to observe children's outdoor play because the weather was too bad. Evidence from photographs indicates that they use a good range of equipment to develop strength and balancing skills.
212. Reception children are developing their fine motor skills well through activities such as tracing, threading and manipulating small construction pieces and have good pencil control. In physical education lessons in the hall, they display good awareness of spatial relationships such as behind, underneath and up. They understand and enjoy the differences between running, walking and jumping and move with good control and co-ordination.

Shortcomings

213. There are no important shortcomings.

Creative development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

214. In both the nursery and reception classrooms, children respond imaginatively, and with great enthusiasm, to the many opportunities provided for them to explore and extend their creative potential. Children in the nursery thoroughly enjoy responding to music and create their own dances in the 'Celebration Room'. They become totally absorbed in their role-play as waiters and customers in the 'restaurant'. Reception children dress up as animals in the 'rainforest' and use a wide range of props to enhance their imaginative play. Their responses to suggestions in dance sessions are of a very high standard and include an imaginative variety of facial expressions, shapes and movements.

Good features

215. Nursery children explore a good variety of media, textures and ways of making drawings and paintings. They paint chicks after close observation of pictures of them and incorporate textiles to produce images to a good standard. They know lots of songs by heart and enjoy singing them. They explore a good range of simple instruments and are becoming aware of different sorts of music from around the world.

216. Reception children explore a variety of colours and patterns and produce some very good animal camouflage pictures using the computer. They also paint daffodils from close observation to a good standard. They create interesting designs to decorate objects such as the curtains in the home corner and the dragon they made for Chinese New Year using a wide variety of techniques and materials

Shortcomings

217. There are no important shortcomings.

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

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

218. The standard of pupils' work in English is good overall. However, they produce some work of outstanding quality during their fortnightly project-based learning days. Here, pupils develop their understanding of how to write in a particular style from their reading and study of the different styles and techniques of familiar authors. They collaborate very successfully to write openings to stories and then continue them individually, producing pieces which include drama and suspense and demonstrate good control of the form. They spend a

considerable amount of time planning, drafting, refining, editing and publishing their writing and write for a real purpose, for example, to script a film of their story or produce a news report video. They work very well with one another to identify ways to improve their writing and often use the computer to word process their work.

Good features

219. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their listening and speaking skills. They display an increasingly effective range of verbal strategies as they move through the school.
220. In key stage 1, pupils listen well in whole-class situations and respond appropriately in a variety of contexts by describing, explaining or asking appropriate questions. They readily discuss their tasks with adults and respond very well to visitors' questions. They are developing confidence in answering questions in class discussions.
221. In key stage 2, pupils communicate very well with one another when engaged in collaborative group tasks. They put forward their points of view sensibly and take into account those of others. For example, pupils in year 3 work very well in 'teams' to write quite long group 'pirate' poems, suggesting ideas and alternative words that might be more effective. They really enjoy reading aloud the poems they have written, and do so with great gusto.
222. Pupils show an increasing awareness of the need to adapt their manner of speaking to the needs of the audience. By year 6, pupils project their voices clearly to the rest of the school in assembly for dramatic performances.
223. Pupils make good progress in reading. In key stage 1, they read with increasing confidence and are becoming aware of a range of different texts. They apply their knowledge of letters and sounds to help them work out unfamiliar words and also use the context to gain meaning from the text. Their knowledge of letters and sounds also helps them read and write poems containing alliteration. They are aware of a variety of punctuation marks and are beginning to realise their purpose in helping them make sense of what they read. By the end of key stage 1, pupils can recite a number of poems and rhymes from memory.
224. In lower key stage 2, pupils increasingly read silently during group reading sessions and most do so with good concentration. In discussions about what they have read, they make good predictions about what might come next in the story. They know how to use features of non-fiction books such as contents and index pages and sub-headings to extract information.
225. In upper key stage 2, pupils recount the plots of novels they have enjoyed and make good use of their reading skills to locate information in books and on the Internet. They are beginning to recognise the difference between fact and opinion. In year 6, they demonstrate a good understanding of the techniques authors use to present characters, and enjoy reading and listening to the class novel, 'The Snow Spider.'

226. Pupils in both key stages write for a wide variety of purposes and in a range of genres. For example, key stage 1 pupils write stories, lists, invitations, plays and accounts of events in their lives. Key stage 2 pupils write conversations, letters, poems, narratives, reports and discussions about issues such as bullying.
227. In key stage 1, pupils write independently and demonstrate a growing awareness of basic punctuation marks. More able pupils write at increasing length and are beginning to use the language of stories. They use their knowledge of sounds to spell words independently, and their spellings are phonetically plausible. They make some good choices of words in their poems about the sea, describing it as "salty, wide, and wet."
228. Pupils in year 3 make good progress in terms of content and spelling. They use a good range of interesting synonyms in order to bring variety to their writing. In year 4, pupils' work is generally well presented. They usually use the past tense consistently in stories, their spelling is good and most pupils write at some length and are beginning to use paragraphs.
229. By year 5, pupils produce a good quantity of writing of good quality. They use more complex sentences in both their imaginary and factual writing. They are beginning to understand and use metaphor effectively in their poems. By year 6, they have a good understanding of the audience for their writing. For example, in designing and writing a leaflet about Caerleon for younger pupils, they recognise a number of features that need to be taken into account to make it appealing to them. They also write with empathy in role as a character in 'The Snow Spider.'

Shortcomings

230. In key stage 1 and lower key stage 2, pupils make slow progress in developing fluent, neat and legible handwriting and their work is not consistently well presented.
231. In upper key stage 2, pupils quite often use non-standard English grammar in their writing where it is not appropriate.

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| Welsh second language |
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| Key Stage 1 | Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 2 | Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings |

Good features

232. Pupils in Year 1 know the names of approximately ten foods and pronounce them correctly. They effectively ask and answer simple questions about the food they like.
233. Year 2 pupils name different articles of clothing. They know a good range of prepositions and extend their vocabulary by using colours. They ask and

answer simple questions appropriately. They use the interactive whiteboard well to support their learning of Welsh. They remember and sing enthusiastically the words of a few Welsh songs.

234. Pupils in key stage 1 respond confidently to the use of incidental Welsh such as the calling of the register and state accurately whether they want sandwiches or school dinners.
235. Younger pupils in key stage 2 effectively ask a range of questions related to their topic for the term, such as 'The Weather' and 'Time.' They use a word processing package well to write sentences about themselves. They extend well their knowledge of prepositions.
236. Older pupils in the key stage use an increasing range of phrases and sentence patterns in the present and past tense. They use ICT well to enhance their presentations.

Shortcomings

237. Throughout key stage 2, there is little evidence of continuity and progression in pupils' understanding and use of Welsh and they lack the confidence to apply their Welsh language skills in a variety of settings.
238. In upper key stage 2, pupils do not write enough Welsh in extended tasks or use compound sentences sufficiently. Their reading skills are also underdeveloped.

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| Mathematics |
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Key Stage 1 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

239. Pupils in year 1 have a good understanding of coin value. They use appropriate mathematical terms well. They have a sound knowledge of pattern and copy, continue and make their own patterns.
240. Most year 2 pupils know their 5 and 10 times tables. More able pupils recognise patterns of similarity and difference in the tables. They recognise the hour and the half hour on the clock. They accurately work out the cost of several items up to £1. They recognise and can draw lines of symmetry to good effect.
241. Year 3 pupils draw on their previous knowledge of axes and labelling in their work on graphs and understand what scales they need. Most pupils competently use a scale of 1:1. More able pupils produce a correctly set out graph using given data and a scale of 1:2.
242. Year 4 pupils estimate accurately what they are capable of completing in a specific length of time. Most pupils accurately count in steps of five minute intervals and count the minutes around the clock telling the time in minutes past.

A significant number can recognise and tell the time in one minute intervals. They know that there are 60 seconds in one minute and 60 minutes in one hour.

243. Most pupils order effectively a set of four digit numbers and write in figures numbers like 'four thousand and thirty one'. They recognise simple equivalent fractions and can find fractions of a shape or number. They correctly classify polygons using criteria such as number of sides and number of right angles.
244. Most year 5 pupils manipulate numbers well orally. They measure accurately the perimeter of irregular shapes and sort according to size. They find the perimeter by adding the length of the four sides. More able pupils find the perimeter of a range of rectangles by measuring the sides and then using the formula appropriately.
245. Most year 6 pupils can calculate mentally the perimeter of a shape and its area and use the correct units of measurement. They calculate accurately the area of a compound quadrilateral. More able pupils calculate the area of a more complex quadrilateral using two different methods. A few pupils demonstrate clearly to the class how they calculate the area of these shapes.
246. They recognise and use with increasing confidence improper, compound and equivalent fractions. They order negative numbers and add and subtract them in context.

Shortcomings

247. In both key stages, pupils' progress in handling data, including the use of ICT, is limited.
248. Key stage 1 pupils have limited knowledge of investigations associated with shape and measure.
249. In some key stage 2 classes, more able pupils' knowledge and understanding of number and measure are underdeveloped because of a lack of appropriate challenge.
250. Year 6 pupils lack confidence in using operations to solve word problems involving numbers and quantities, explaining their methods and reasoning.

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

Good features

251. Pupils in both key stages develop good investigative and enquiry skills. They understand the need for a fair test to take place in order to attain a sound conclusion based on accurate results. Pupils make sensible predictions prior to

their investigations and key stage 2 pupils understand the importance of repeated measurements to obtain accuracy.

252. At the beginning of key stage 1, pupils correctly differentiate between living and non-living things and group them into sets based on their similarities. When pupils test the strengths of different sorts of paper they understand that their tests must be fair and systematic in order for their results to be valid.
253. By the end of key stage 1, pupils have good observational skills and develop an appropriate scientific vocabulary. They co-operate well together in small groups to predict the outcomes of their investigations and record their findings using graphs for easy comparison. They use their skills well to investigate how different materials, including food, change over time. Pupils have a good knowledge of the parts of the body and some of the major organs. They understand the need for a good diet and sensible exercise to be healthy.
254. Younger key stage 2 pupils develop their knowledge of healthy living and the importance of looking after themselves by classifying foods into groups and investigating what constitutes a healthy diet. They investigate the effect that a range of drinks has on teeth and record their conclusions in an appropriate way.
255. Pupils have a good understanding of simple electrical circuits. They know that a complete conducting circuit is needed for a current to flow to make electrical devices work. They use a battery, two bulbs and a switch to investigate how switches can be used to control the bulbs in simple series and parallel arrangements. They use Venn diagrams accurately to differentiate between a wide range of conductors and insulators.
256. Pupils successfully learn about how the position of the sun appears to change during the day, and how shadows change as this happens. They measure and compare the lengths of the shadows at different times and present their results in a clear manner using tables and block graphs.
257. Older key stage 2 pupils further develop their investigative skills to study light and sound, materials, the natural world and forces and motion. They use ICT equipment to measure changes in temperature over time when comparing thermal insulators and they accurately measure in Newtons when investigating forces.
258. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good understanding of the scientific enquiry process and recognise the need for prediction, observation, investigation and conclusion.

Shortcomings

259. Much of the work of pupils in year 6 is a repetition of previously learnt topics and does not sufficiently extend their knowledge.

Information technology

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

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

260. The standard of pupils' work in information technology is good overall. However, they produce some work of outstanding quality during their fortnightly project-based learning days. For example, they use laptop computers and a web cam to create animations. They adjust the camera so that it is in focus and the photos become sharp. They listen to a selection of music and choose the most suitable to add to their presentation. They confidently explore new ideas and observe each other's work, regularly suggesting ways to improve. In groups, individual pupils take on the role of editor, cameraperson, designer, producer, director and narrator and present their animations to the whole class. Their confidence and expertise in using this range of ICT equipment is impressive.

Good features

261. Pupils in year 1 use a keyboard and a mouse competently to select words from a word bank and insert them appropriately into text. They save and print out their work.

262. Year 2 pupils collect information from the class to create a simple data base in their work in science. They enter and save the data that is collected, edit and add data at a later date. They confidently use the mouse to move objects on the screen. They use a word processing package to write poems and competently change the font and size of the text.

263. Younger pupils in key stage 2 move a programmable toy along the floor and then transfer the instructions to the computer screen. They produce simple shapes. They explore and experiment with Logo commands to produce a variety of simple shapes and pictures.

264. Year 5 pupils use a software package to add text and a picture to a slide. They copy and paste confidently between applications. More confident pupils scan a picture into their presentation and save it appropriately. They select backgrounds and begin to use custom effects to enhance their presentation.

265. Year 6 pupils use a multimedia package to copy a picture and insert text. They confidently use the toolbars to animate the text, including the appearance and disappearance of the text and the timing of the slides.

Shortcomings

266. There are no significant shortcomings.

Design and technology

Key Stage 1 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

267. During the inspection only one lesson was observed in key stage 1 and no lessons were observed in key stage 2 led by class teachers. One lesson was observed with year 4 pupils during a project-based learning day with the deputy head teacher.
268. Scrutiny of portfolios of past work in all classes demonstrates that standards are as stated above, with the exception of the work with the year 4 pupils during project-based learning days, where standards of achievement are outstanding. During these days they develop an excellent understanding of how to use robotic software and control technology to create dinosaurs that can move backwards and forwards. They create, test, modify and store instructions to control the dinosaur and develop a high level of understanding. They share their ideas in a mature way. They write their instructions on paper and on the interactive whiteboard and interpret their diagrams very effectively.

Good features

269. Year 1 pupils consider what moving parts can be used successfully in a story book. They think about how it affects the enjoyment of the book. They learn about tabs, flaps and pop-up features. Previous work indicates that they designed and made a fruit salad. They recognise that it is important to eat fruit and vegetables.
270. All key stage 1 pupils examined hats in order to see how they were joined. They designed and made flower hats of good quality and evaluated their work orally.
271. Previous year 2 work indicates that pupils successfully designed and made Christmas stockings. They also evaluated hobby horses in order to make 'hobby dragons'. They experimented with a range of materials and successfully made the dragons move with a variety of different fastenings. They evaluated their work throughout by asking appropriate questions.
272. Year 3 pupils understand the need for hygienic conditions when preparing food. They apply this well whilst planning and making a healthy sandwich. They successfully evaluate the product against their specification. They investigate frames for photographs and discuss their purpose and design. They design good working drawings with an indication of the measurements and materials to be used.
273. Previous work indicates that year 5 pupils worked together in groups to make a selection of musical instruments.
274. Pupils in year 6 examine a selection of bags. They consider how parts of the bag can be joined. They test and evaluate methods of fastening. They

understand the qualities required for bags used for different purposes. Previous work indicates that they made a variety of Jewish artefacts of good quality. They made a video explaining how they designed and made their product.

Shortcomings

- 275. Key stage 1 pupils use a limited range of materials and their written evaluations are at an early stage of development.
- 276. Key stage 2 pupils progress is limited in their skills of making labelled sketches to show details of their designs and of evaluating the stages of development.
- 277. Key stage 2 pupils do not, consistently, build on their knowledge and skills and there is limited use of tools and techniques.

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

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

Good features

- 278. In key stage 1, pupils develop a good awareness of the ways in which the past is different from the present. Younger pupils sequence the sorts of clothes they wore on their own time lines from birth to the present time. They study typical clothing from Roman times and make relevant comparisons with current fashions. Pupils effectively interview their relatives and find out how their clothes were different when they were children.
- 279. Pupils study and compare photographs of groups of people from Victorian times to the present day and make sensible comments on the changes that have taken place.
- 280. Older key stage 1 pupils develop their chronological understanding by continuing to sequence events and objects on extended timelines. They learn about the past through stories from different periods and cultures, including stories about historical events in Wales. They study events such as the great fire of London and use the Internet effectively to gather information.
- 281. Pupils identify differences between ways of life at different times. They compare a typical Victorian Christmas with their own, handle Victorian toys and compare them with toys of today. By the end of key stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of some of the changes that occurred in their lives and in those of adults and the immediate locality around them.
- 282. Younger key stage 2 pupils study the history of Wales and Britain in Celtic and Roman times. They have a good knowledge of the main characteristics of the periods and select, recall and organise information for the task well. For example, when writing home as Roman soldiers, pupils draw on an appropriate range of sources to describe life accurately at the barracks at Caerleon.

283. Older key stage 2 pupils extend their knowledge of life in Wales in Celtic and Roman times. They know why the Romans were successful invaders and why they invaded and settled in Wales.
284. Using a visit to the Imperial War Museum in London as a resource, older pupils in key stage 2 have a good understanding and empathy with life during World War Two. They imagine themselves as evacuees, consider family life during rationing and apply their numeracy skills well to work out the cost of equipping a soldier for battle.

Shortcomings

285. There are no important shortcomings.

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

Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

286. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection period because of the school's organisation of geography into termly units of work which alternate with history. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of work, together with discussions with staff and pupils.

Good features

287. At the beginning of key stage 1, pupils make and use maps effectively through their study of the local area. They draw good plans of the school and the immediate surrounding area. They survey the local park and make a plan of the facilities available. Pupils make their own books about the landscape around Llanhilleth. They show a good awareness of geographical terms by marking their maps with the main physical features and showing shops and houses.
288. In year 2, pupils extend their geographical knowledge of the local area and they make sensible comparisons of the main physical and human features with a seaside locality. Pupils begin to understand and place their local town in the context of Wales as a country.
289. Younger key stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of the main physical and human features of Chembakoli, in India and Dale as a seaside resort. They show a good awareness of the differences between their own lives and that of a child in the Indian village. Pupils understand why Dale developed as a village and they construct their own maps of the area and use 2-figure co-ordinates to find features in squares.
290. Pupils develop their mapping skills by identifying efficient routes for Santa to deliver presents in the locality and develop a sense of scale by using different scaled maps. Pupils use the 8-point compass accurately and use simple grid

references on a large scale map. They study the growth of Llanhilleth as a town and investigate the geology to find out how coal was formed.

291. Older key stage 2 pupils study the physical features of Africa and focus their study on Gweta in Botswana. They contrast life in Gweta with Llanhilleth. They compare the weather and interpret the information effectively. They express their concerns regarding animal conservation by writing letters to the government of Botswana about the hunting and killing of animals.

Shortcomings

292. Older pupils in key stage 2 make insufficient progress with their skills of geographical enquiry, especially in collecting and recording information in the field and in the development of their mapping skills.
293. In key stage 2, there is insufficient progress on the theme of environmental change.

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

294. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed in key stage 2 and no lessons were observed in key stage 1. Judgements are based on scrutiny of work in pupils' sketchbooks and on display, and discussions with staff and pupils.

Good features

295. During key stages 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in developing their drawing and painting skills and make particularly good use of the local environment as an inspiration for much of their work. They develop a good understanding of the art of different cultures and periods of history.
296. Pupils in key stage 1 mix primary colours successfully, which they use well in their vivid imaginary paintings of the jungle.
297. They study features of Welsh landscapes and produce interesting collages for their home-school tasks that include a wide variety of textures, natural objects and photographs.
298. In their cross-curricular project, 'Flower Power', pupils in year 2 study images of plants and flowers and make their own very detailed drawings. They discuss Van Gogh's painting of sunflowers, sketch and make their own huge paintings of sunflowers in his style, using a variety of shades, to very good effect.
299. Pupils in year 3 know a number of different ways of making clay pots and decorating them. They use the language of art, craft and design, such as shape and texture, appropriately in their evaluations of their work.

300. Pupils in lower key stage 2 make attractive garden sculptures of a snail, a spider and its web and a dragon fly using a variety of natural objects such as stones and twigs to enhance the entrance to the school.
301. In years 4 and 5, pupils use view finders increasingly effectively to study details of urban and rural landscapes. Year 4 pupils use line, tone and texture very well in their pencil sketches of the Six Bells colliery. By year 5, pupils understand how to depict fore, mid and background in their drawings and paintings and do so with a good degree of success.
302. By the end of key stage 2, pupils know a number of artists and respond practically and imaginatively to their ideas and methods to create pieces of work to a good standard. For example, after studying the pop-art of Andy Warhol, they sketch everyday items from different perspectives and paint them with great care.

Shortcomings

303. Pupils plan and make a limited range of objects in three dimensions.

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| Music |
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Key Stage 1 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

304. When encouraged, pupils sing enthusiastically and with good diction.
305. Pupils in year 2 know a range of ways in which they can play simple percussion instruments, building on their previous explorations of how to make sounds using their bodies. They recognise differences in pitch. For example, they can distinguish between high and low pitched sounds made by 'wobble' boards. Some pupils suggest ways to organise sounds to accompany the recitation of a poem.
306. In year 4, pupils work effectively in pairs to develop a 'conversation' between two percussion instruments. They control the instruments very well to convey different moods and emotions by varying the dynamics and tempo of their pieces. They listen appreciatively to one another's performance and make simple evaluations of its strengths and points for possible improvement.
307. In their cross-curricular 'Walking with Dinosaurs' project work, pupils in year 4 also use the computer very successfully to compose music to accompany a dance they are devising for the 'dinobots' they have made. There is a good match in mood and rhythm between the music and the dances of the 'dinobots.'
308. Pupils in year 5 collaborate very well in groups of four to compose a rhythmic melody. They understand the importance of repetition in music to create an

effective piece. They maintain their parts well in a group performance, responding appropriately to symbols representing crotchets, quavers and semi-quavers.

309. By the end of key stage 2, pupils know a number of contemporary song writers and songs from different times and cultures such as the blues, African songs and the Welsh national anthem.
310. Many pupils benefit from specialist tuition in a wide range of instruments including keyboards, guitar, brass, woodwind, violin and percussion.

Shortcomings

311. Pupils' progress in developing the skills of composition appreciation is inconsistent because they have more frequent opportunities in some classes than others to practise those skills.
312. In year 6, pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of key musical terms such as dynamics and pitch.

Physical education

Key stage 1 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key stage 2 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

313. In both key stages, pupils change into appropriate clothing and remove jewellery for physical education lessons. They know the value and purpose of the warm up and down sessions and are aware of the importance of safety. Pupils handle apparatus sensibly and carefully.
314. In year 1, pupils follow instructions well and show good spatial awareness. They show good basic control and co-ordination when performing their movement sequences on the floor and using benches. Pupils describe their own movements and begin to recognise the positive points in the performances of other pupils.
315. Year 2 pupils introduce variety into their sequences by combining jumps, twists and spins and link them together well. The majority of pupils take care to finish their movements with good control.
316. Year 3 pupils demonstrate good interpretation of the music and theme of launch and exploration during their dance lesson. They combine movements to represent the launch, landing and exploration showing good control.
317. In their gymnastics lesson, year 4 pupils create different body shapes and support weight on different parts of the body demonstrating good balance. They work together well, mirroring their partners to create more complicated movements.

318. Year 5 pupils make very good use of the space available to create movement sequences using a wide variety of gymnastic skills and apparatus. They make sensible suggestions when evaluating their own sequences and those of others. They perform actions fluently and precisely, and when working with others they show a good understanding of partner and group relationships.
319. When creating dance patterns, year 6 pupils demonstrate strong, effective movements at different levels. They work enthusiastically, observing each other to suggest improvements.
320. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, irrespective of their gender or ability. These add significantly to the good standards observed in the lessons. Key stage 2 pupils attend swimming lessons and learn about the need to develop an awareness of safety in the water.

Shortcomings

321. Pupils do not regularly, and consistently throughout the school, evaluate their own work and that of others.

| |
|----------------------------|
| Religious education |
|----------------------------|

Key Stage 1 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

322. Visits to local places of worship and regular visits from clergy lead pupils to a good knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of people from different faiths.
323. Pupils effectively develop life skills through strong links with the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme.
324. Pupils in year 1 have a secure knowledge of the basic concepts of Christianity appropriate to their age. They know the names of the major festivals and explain in simple terms the key features and beliefs behind them. They discuss a Christening and name the special people involved. They competently name the special artefacts and clothes. Most pupils successfully write an invitation card for a Christening.
325. Pupils in year 2 show respect for racial and cultural diversity when they learn about Chinese New Year. They explore and consider the purpose of a range of religious artefacts. They share their creative ideas effectively when they make their own red envelopes and long red banners.
326. All pupils understand the importance of religious rules in relation to their discussion of the need for school rules. In their study of the leadership of Moses, key stage 2 pupils realise the significance of the Ten Commandments.

327. Pupils in key stage 2 have a sound knowledge of several faiths including Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. Year 6 pupils describe the main features of some of the major world religions. Their attendance at a 'One World Conference' further helped their understanding of the importance of respecting the beliefs of others.
328. Younger key stage 2 pupils understand about the effect of the plagues on Egypt and why God sent them. They understand the story behind Shrove Tuesday and sensibly discuss fasting and giving up foods during Lent. They know what happens on Ash Wednesday in a Christian church.
329. Older key stage 2 pupils know about the Passover and its significance. They understand that Christians mark this time by observing Lent. Year 6 pupils empathise with the feelings that Jesus and his disciples might have had during 'The Last Supper.' They examine their individual copies of the painting of 'The Last Supper', discuss the characters and try to establish the conflicting emotions which would have been present.

Shortcomings

330. In key stage 2, pupils have difficulty in thinking about their own beliefs and the impact these can have on the way they lead their lives.
331. Some pupils in year 6 find it difficult to reflect in a mature way on important issues raised during lessons in religious education.

School's response to the inspection

The head teacher, staff and governors are very pleased that the inspection findings support the grades given to each of the seven key questions by the school in its self-evaluation report. We are also proud of the recognition by the inspectors that, "St. Illtyd's is a good school with many outstanding features." The care and support systems we have in place, as well as behaviour throughout the school, have been recognised as very good.

The skill and dedication of teachers and the talents of support staff are duly acknowledged. Most importantly, the inspection report clearly illustrates the elements that make our school what it is. In particular, the report confirms that we are achieving our aim to establish the school firmly at the "heart of the community" and to create a "happy and supportive learning environment" in which pupils grow in confidence and independence.

Pleasingly, several of the recommendations for improvement identified by inspectors are already outlined in the school's development plan. They are:

- to develop pupils' use of ICT as a key skill;
- to develop pupils' understanding of how well they are progressing;

- to develop the role of subject leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching and standards achieved.

The remaining recommendations, namely:

- to ensure progression in pupils' bilingual competence in key stage 2 and their use of numeracy across the curriculum in both key stages;
- to spread the excellent quality of teaching and high expectations that exist in a number of areas throughout the school and
- to raise the standard of presentation of pupils' work throughout the school

will be incorporated into the school's development plan.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents. The governors' annual report to parents will outline the progress we are making towards implementing these recommendations.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Name of school | St. Illtyd's Primary School |
| School type | Nursery and Primary |
| Age-range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Address of school | Llanhilleth Abertillery Blaenau Gwent |
| Postcode | NP13 3JT |
| Telephone number | 01495 321718 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Headteacher | Mr Nigel Roberts |
| Date of appointment | September 2004 |
| Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority | Mr Steve Doel |
| Registered inspector | Ms Stephanie James |
| Dates of inspection | 27 th , 29 th and 30 th March 2006 |

Appendix 2

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 | 12.5 | 27 | 23 | 28 | 16 | 24 | 22 | 30 | 195 |

| Total number of teachers | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time equivalent (fte) |
| Number of teachers | 8 | 5 | 9.9 |

| Staffing information | |
|--|-------|
| Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes) | 17:1 |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes | 8:1 |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes | n/a |
| Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes | 24 |
| Teacher (fte): class ratio | 1.3:1 |

| Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection | | | |
|--|-----|-----|----------------|
| Term | N | R | Rest of School |
| Spring 2005 | 76% | 91% | 93% |
| Summer 2005 | 75% | 88% | 90% |
| Autumn 2005 | 86% | 87% | 92% |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals | 30% |
| Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection | 0 |

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

| National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2005 | | | Number of pupils in Year 2 | | 15 | | |
|--|-----------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Percentage of pupils at each level | | | | | | | |
| | | | D | W | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| English: | Teacher Assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 67 | 33 |
| | | National | 0 | 4 | 13 | 63 | 20 |
| En: reading | Teacher Assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 13 | 40 | 47 |
| | | National | 0 | 3 | 11 | 63 | 23 |
| En: writing | Teacher Assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 79 | 19 |
| | | National | 0 | 50 | 5 | 69 | 11 |
| En: speaking and listening | Teacher Assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 67 | 33 |
| | | National | 0 | 4 | 14 | 55 | 27 |
| Mathematics | Teacher Assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 6 | 66 | 26 |
| | | National | 0 | 2 | 11 | 63 | 24 |
| Science | Teacher Assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 47 | 53 |
| | | National | 0 | 2 | 10 | 65 | 23 |

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English by teacher assessment

| | | | |
|---------------|----|----------|----|
| In the school | 93 | 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 Year 6 | | | | | 39 | | | |
|--|-----------------------|----------|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| Percentage of pupils at each level | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | D | A | F | W | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| English | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 15 | 59 | 23 |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 47 | 32 |
| Mathematics | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 44 | 38 |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 47 | 32 |
| Science | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 52 | 38 |
| | | National | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 51 | 35 |

| Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English by teacher assessment | | | |
|--|----|----------|----|
| In the school | 77 | In Wales | 72 |

- D Pupils who are exempted 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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Four inspectors spent a total of eleven inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection. A peer assessor also spent three days in the school. The nominee from the school was the head teacher.

These inspectors visited:

- fifty lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

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

The team also considered:

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

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

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

| Team member | Responsibilities |
|---|--|
| Stephanie James Registered Inspector | Context Summary Recommendations Key questions 1, 5 and 6 Children under five English Art Music Appendices |
| Cliff Brace Team Inspector | Key questions 2 and 4 Contributions to key question 1 Science History Geography Physical education |
| Helen Smith Team Inspector | Key questions 3 and 7 Contributions to key question 1 Welsh Mathematics Design and technology Information technology Religious education |
| Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector | Contributions to key questions 1, 3 and 5 |
| Helen Davies Peer Assessor | Contributions to the evidence base for key questions, subjects and areas of learning |
| Nigel Roberts Head Teacher | Nominee from the school |

The contractor was: Atlantes Educational Services
Technology House
Lissadel Street
Salford M6 6AP

Acknowledgement

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