

**Inspection under Section 28 of the  
Education Act 2005**

**A Report on the Quality of Education in**

**St Illtyd's R.C. Primary School  
Rocky Road,  
Dowlais  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF48 3BT**

**School Number: 6753300**

**Date of Inspection: 05 February 2007**

**by**

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St Illtyd's R.C. 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 R.C. Primary School took place between 05/02/07 and 07/02/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Robert Huw Jones 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:

<b>Grade 1</b>	good with outstanding features
<b>Grade 2</b>	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Grade 3</b>	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Grade 4</b>	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
<b>Grade 5</b>	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 nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.**

This school received a **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years 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 RC Primary School is situated in Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil and serves the Catholic and other denomination Christian communities in Dowlais, Pant, Penydarren, Galon Uchaf and the lower Gurnos Estate. A small number of pupils live outside the County Borough and travel from Tredegar and Aberdare. The school states that its catchment is one which contains both advantaged and disadvantaged areas. Twenty one per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals which is significantly below the local education authority (LEA) average and above the average for Wales. The school caters for pupils between three and 11 years and there are currently 158 pupils on roll. There are separate full-time nursery and reception classes and all other classes comprise pupils of mixed age; a Y1/ 2 class, one containing the remainder of Y2 and all of Y3, a Y4/ 5 class and a class which caters for the remainder of Y5 and all of Y6. There are 46 pupils who are identified as having special educational needs (SEN). None of the pupils comes from homes where Welsh is the main language and 14 pupils receive support teaching in English as an additional language (EAL). Pupils' attainment when they start school is lower than the LEA average.

### The school's priorities and targets

- 2 The school's priorities for improvement as indicated in the school development plan (SDP) include:
  - improving the language, literacy and communication skills of children in the foundation phase;
  - Improving oracy and writing, including presentation;
  - improving opportunities for learning in key skills across the curriculum;
  - improving the quality of teaching;
  - improving the quality of target setting by pupils and teachers;
  - improving opportunities for reflective prayer;
  - continuing to improve the quality of school self-evaluation.

## Summary

- 3 In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement.

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

- 4 Standards of achievement in the lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	72%	28%	0%	0%

- 5 Pupils' standards in the lessons observed are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government targets for all Wales by 2007, that is 98 per cent of standards being the equivalent of Grade 3 and 65 per cent the equivalent of Grade 2 or better.
- 6 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils are making progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Standards of achievement of the under-fives are as follows:

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

- 7 Baseline assessment scores on entry are below the LEA average and pupils enter school with poor language skills yet standards have improved in all areas of learning since the last inspection with the exception of Language, literacy and communication.

- 8 In key stages 1 and 2, in the subjects inspected, standards of achievement are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
English	Grade 3	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 3
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 9 Standards have not improved in English or mathematics since the last inspection when the school's NC assessment results were found not to compare well with those of similar schools based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Good standards have been maintained in history, art and music.
- 10 Baseline assessment scores on entry are below the LEA average. In National Curriculum assessments in 2006, results in key stage (KS)1 were higher than the LEA averages in English and science, and equivalent to the average in mathematics. Results were below the all-Wales averages in English and mathematics and above in science. When compared with similar schools in Wales based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, KS1 results are in the third 25 per cent in English and mathematics and in the second 25 per cent in science.
- 11 In KS2, results in National Curriculum assessments in 2006 were below both LEA and all-Wales averages in English and science and above local and national averages in mathematics. When compared with similar schools in Wales based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, KS2 results are in the fourth (lowest) 25 per cent in English and in the third 25 per cent in mathematics and science. Results in both key stages have fluctuated over the past three years and there is no discernible trend. The school has met its targets each year.
- 12 In both English and mathematics, pupils towards the end of KS2 do not make sufficient progress from previous years and this impairs standards. The raising of standards in English and mathematics are national priorities.
- 13 Pupils identified with SEN achieve good standards according to their age and ability. They make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
- 14 Pupils with EAL make good progress in all subjects.
- 15 The under-fives make good progress in their early numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) skills. In KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the key skill of listening is generally good, and overall standards in speaking, reading, writing and numeracy have good features which outweigh shortcomings. Standards in ICT are good. Pupils' creative skills are good as demonstrated, for example, by their work in music and art.
- 16 Pupils' bilingual competence throughout the school has many shortcomings. Pupils generally have insufficient knowledge of the Welsh language to promote their bilingual skills.

- 17 Pupils' behaviour is good. They display good personal and social skills and develop a sense of belonging to the school, the parish and the local community.
- 18 During the last three terms the overall whole school attendance averaged 91.7%, which is a slight improvement since the last inspection. In May 2006, however an outbreak of E-Coli in the area had a significant impact on attendance. Most pupils arrive on time in the morning and punctuality has improved since the last inspection.

### **The quality of education and training**

- 19 The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
7%	61%	29%	3%	0%

- 20 The above figures are lower than the percentages for Wales noted in the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for the year 2005-06, that is 17% of the teaching being grade 1, 62% of the teaching grade 2, and 20% of the teaching grade 3. The percentage of grade 4 teaching is three times the national average. Nearly one third of the teaching has shortcomings.
- 21 Where teaching is good or better, lessons include interesting and challenging tasks that take every opportunity to extend pupils' language and effective questioning allows time for pupils to formulate a response. There are good working relationships between teachers and pupils that foster learning and tasks are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, lessons proceed at a lively pace and effective use is made of resources.
- 22 In lessons where there are shortcomings in the teaching, learning objectives are not always set out at the start or referred to during the lessons, in order to ensure that pupils understand thoroughly what they will learn. In a small minority of lessons teachers do not produce imaginative lessons that stimulate pupils and there is an over-reliance on worksheets. Also, in some lessons, planning is not sufficiently well organised to ensure that all pupils are given work which is well matched to their age and ability.
- 23 The school provides well for pupils with SEN and for those who have EAL. The teaching of pupils with EAL is most effective where support teachers are guided well by class teachers, and where pupils are withdrawn to learn basic vocabulary and grammar.
- 24 Assessment policies and systems are good and meet statutory requirements. The assessment co-ordinator has established procedures that are coherent and, in spite of duplication in some areas, manageable overall. These work well in the majority of classes to facilitate planning and improvement of learning but are inconsistently applied in the remainder.
- 25 The quality of the assessment for the under-fives is good and children are appropriately assessed in accordance with the LEA baseline. Pupils with SEN are assessed regularly and work hard to achieve the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs).

- 26 In the majority of classes pupils do not regularly play an active role in the assessment process, neither do they contribute to setting their individual targets to give them clear aims for improvement.
- 27 The curriculum meets the needs of the majority of pupils and is equally accessible to all including pupils with SEN and those who are learning English as an additional language. It meets the statutory requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government and is adequately structured to meets the school's aims.
- 28 The curriculum is broad and balanced. In the early years the curriculum covers all the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning and is taught effectively through topic work. There is good continuity and coherence in the provision for the nursery and reception classes. Purposeful use is made of the outdoor environment, and children are prepared appropriately for work in KS1.
- 29 Learning experiences in KS1 and KS2 are generally appropriately planned and structured with an effective element of thematic work often linking subject areas. Because the classes consist of mixed age groups, however, continuity and progression is not always ensured, especially in upper KS2.
- 30 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are adequately integrated into everyday school life. Assemblies are of a Christian nature and provide guidance on moral issues but there is little opportunity for reflection on the main messages. They often fail to create an atmosphere of reverence or to support pupils' spiritual development.
- 31 Personal and social skills are developed well through initiatives such as circle time. Pupils display good social attitudes both inside and outside the classroom and pupils' involvement in determining rules for behaviour further develops good social skills.
- 32 The school promotes cultural development well through the curriculum and pupils learn about other cultures through subjects such as geography and art. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is promoted appropriately.
- 33 The partnership with parents is good and parents are welcomed into the school to help with their children's learning. They participate in the active Parent Teacher Association. The school has a strong partnership with the local parish and useful contacts within the wider community.
- 34 Groups of pupils visit local businesses and take part in enterprise challenge competitions. The focus on understanding the relationship between classroom learning and the workplace, however, and the overall provision for work-related education are underdeveloped.
- 35 The school promotes pupils' understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship well and these are incorporated into the curriculum.
- 36 The quality of care, guidance and support is good, and pupils feel safe and secure whilst in school. The school is a happy, caring community that emphasises the promotion of values such as honesty and tolerance. The Catholic ethos of helping and caring for others is borne out strongly in the way older pupils help younger pupils.

- 37 The quality of provision for additional learning needs is good. The school carefully identifies the needs of pupils with SEN, and arranges suitable support through withdrawal sessions or by providing support in classes.
- 38 Pupils who are learning English as an additional language receive a good deal of support from learning support assistants and they make good progress, especially in their oral skills, within a short space of time.

### **Leadership and management**

- 39 The headteacher has produced clear policy documents to underpin the work of the school. Not all these structures and procedures, however, are consistently applied in practice and this impairs standards
- 40 Curriculum co-ordinators monitor standards in their subjects identifying areas for improvement. Agreed procedures are not always followed, however, which results in inconsistency in the quality of the monitoring.
- 41 Performance management is not conducted effectively. Where shortcomings are identified in teaching the headteacher is insufficiently rigorous in taking steps to address them and in setting and carefully monitoring targets for improvement.
- 42 The school employs recognised, standardised tests to assess and monitor the progress of individual pupils but does not make effective use of the outcomes of these in order to set challenging and realistic individual targets.
- 43 The school has a four term cycle of monitoring but the monitoring programme does not adhere to the procedures set out in the monitoring policy and evidence is not always appropriately recorded.
- 44 The school's self-evaluation report closely follows the school inspection framework. The staff meet to agree on strengths and aspects for development. Pupils' work is used as evidence when coming to a judgement about standards. The report is a structured and comprehensive document which notes a number of strengths but does not accurately identify the areas where the school needs to improve.
- 45 The views of parents are gathered through a questionnaire and questionnaires have also been given to individual governors. The views of pupils are sought through the school council.
- 46 The school supports its priorities appropriately through the allocation of resources and there is evidence that the actions taken by the school have led to measurable improvements. For example, investment in hardware and software has seen standards rise in ICT.
- 47 The school has made some progress since the last inspection in developing the role of curriculum leaders and improving the quantity and quality of resources. Shortcomings in subjects, however, have not been rigorously addressed and standards have not improved in English or mathematics.
- 48 The school is well staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Support staff, particularly those for pupils with SEN, make an effective contribution to the overall quality of

teaching and work effectively under the guidance of teachers. The quality of support offered to EAL pupils is good.

- 49 The quality and range of resources to support the delivery of the curriculum is generally good and they are used effectively. The accommodation is located on two levels linked by stairs and there is no access to the upper, KS2 floor for pupils with physical disabilities.
- 50 Resources are well matched to the school's priorities for development, for example, in addressing language deficit on entry and the development of ICT.
- 51 Overall the school provides value for money.

## **Recommendations**

- 52 In order to secure improvement the school needs to:
  - R1 raise standards in English and mathematics;
  - R2 monitor more closely the performance of individual staff, setting rigorous and measurable targets for improvement;
  - R3 ensure that assessment effectively and consistently informs planning across the school;
  - R4 involve pupils to a greater extent in assessing their own progress;
  - R5 ensure continuity and progression in learning for pupils in mixed age classes, and
  - R6 ensure that pupils' competence in Welsh is improved in order that their bilingual skills might be appropriately developed.

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 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

54 Standards of achievement in the lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	72%	28%	0%	0%

55 Pupils' standards in the lessons observed are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government targets for all Wales by 2007, that is 98 per cent of standards being the equivalent of Grade 3 and 65 per cent the equivalent of Grade 2 or better.

56 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Standards of achievement of the under-fives are as follows:

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Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
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History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

59 Standards have not improved in English or mathematics since the last inspection when the school's NC assessment results were found not to compare well with those of similar schools based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Good standards have been maintained in history, art and music.

60 In National Curriculum assessments in 2006, results in KS1 were higher than the LEA averages in English and science and equivalent to the average in mathematics.

Results were below the all-Wales averages in English and mathematics and above in science. When compared with similar schools in Wales based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, KS1 results are in the third 25 per cent in English and mathematics and in the second 25 per cent in science.

- 61 In KS2, results in National Curriculum assessments in 2006 were below both LEA and all-Wales averages in English and science and above local and national averages in mathematics. When compared with similar schools in Wales based on the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, KS2 results are in the fourth (lowest) 25 per cent in English and in the third 25 per cent in mathematics and science. Results in both key stages have fluctuated over the past three years and there is no discernible trend. The school has met its targets each year.
- 62 In both English and mathematics, pupils towards the end of KS2 do not make sufficient progress from previous years and this impairs standards. The raising of standards in English and mathematics are national priorities.
- 63 Pupils identified with SEN achieve good standards according to their age and ability. They make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
- 64 Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress, especially in their oral skills, within a short space of time.
- 65 The under-fives make good progress in their early numeracy and ICT skills. They listen attentively and a number make recognisable marks on paper but many have immature speaking skills. The majority read a few familiar words correctly and make effective use of picture clues to understand stories.
- 66 In key stages 1 and 2, pupils' standards of achievement in the key skill of listening is generally good and overall standards in speaking, reading, writing and numeracy have good features which outweigh shortcomings. Standards in ICT are good. Pupils listen carefully and, although they speak confidently, their range of vocabulary is limited; this impairs their ability to express themselves clearly when discussing their work. They read to gain knowledge and write for a variety of purposes. Some pupils write well across the curriculum and in lower KS2 there are good examples of creative writing in history. Numeracy skills are used appropriately to measure, count and record. Pupils in both key stages make effective use of ICT to support their learning. Pupils' creative skills are good as demonstrated, for example, by their work in music and art.
- 67 Pupils' bilingual competence throughout the school has many shortcomings. As they progress through the school, pupils do not develop their oral skills sufficiently well in order to enable them to use these confidently. With rare exceptions, pupils make little use of incidental Welsh in class during the day. Pupils generally have insufficient knowledge of the Welsh language to promote their bilingual skills.
- 68 Pupils understand well the principle of equal opportunities as the school constantly emphasises its importance. The school is a multi-cultural community and pupils respect its variety of cultures. Pupils succeed whatever their linguistic, social or ethnic background.

- 69 Pupils acquire some new knowledge and skills well, particularly the responsibilities of citizenship, for example, through the school council. They make good progress also in their use of ICT which they will need for lifelong learning.
- 70 Pupils in some classes have a good awareness and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their work and what they need to do in order to improve but this is not consistent across the school. Where practice is good, pupils are aware of their personal targets and strive to meet them.
- 71 The majority make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage in their learning. Pupils are well motivated and persevere with their work. They work well both independently and in groups.
- 72 Pupils' behaviour is good. They learn from an early age the benefits of good behaviour and the consequences of poor behaviour. Generally they work together well, helping one another in their tasks. Relationships between pupils and staff are good.
- 73 During the last three terms the overall whole school attendance averaged 91.7%, which is a slight improvement since the last inspection. In comparison with attendance in similar schools (92.6%) and National averages (93.1%) it is low and a cause for concern. In May 2006, however, an outbreak of E-Coli in the area had a significant impact on attendance. Family holidays and other parentally condoned absence have a substantial effect at some times of year.
- 74 Most pupils arrive on time in the morning and punctuality has improved since the last inspection. However, there is still a small minority who are discourteously late and disturb the collective worship at the start of the day.
- 75 Pupils' display good personal and social skills and develop a sense of belonging to the school, the parish and the local community. They have responsibilities in their roles as members of the school council, eco committee or the road safety committee; pupils take their responsibilities seriously and show great commitment to their roles. Pupils support their peers well, particularly those with EAL. They have a good sense of right and wrong which they demonstrate daily in the life and work of the school.
- 76 In the classroom, pupils develop some useful personal skills for effective participation in the workplace and community. They acquire some understanding and awareness through visits to various enterprises in the area and from visitors from local agencies and services. Their general understanding of the world of work, however, is underdeveloped.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

78 The quality of teaching was judged to be as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	61%	29%	3%	0%

79 The above figures are lower than the percentages for Wales noted in the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for the year 2005-06, that is 17% of the teaching being grade 1, 62% of the teaching grade 2, and 20% of the teaching grade 3. The percentage of grade 4 teaching is three times the national average. Nearly one third of the teaching has shortcomings.

80 Where teaching is good or better, lessons include interesting and challenging tasks that take every opportunity to extend pupils' language and effective questioning, allows time for pupils to formulate a response. There are good working relationships between teachers and pupils that foster learning and tasks are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and are familiar with recent developments in various fields. They share learning objectives with pupils and lessons proceed at a lively pace. Effective use is made of resources, including the local and wider environment and teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboard to ensure that pupils take an active role in lessons.

81 On the whole, teachers establish good partnerships with learning assistants, and support teachers and other adults are effectively deployed. Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Learning experiences are generally appropriately planned and structured with an effective element of thematic work often linking subject areas in KS1 and KS2. Planning between class teachers and those employed to cover for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time is effective. In some cases teachers set clear time limits for pupils to complete tasks, and intervene sensitively to support and encourage pupils in their work. Staff in the early years plan a range of interesting activities in order to effectively promote the Desirable outcomes for Children's learning.

82 Homework is set on a regular basis. In the best examples teachers relate homework effectively to classroom activities.

83 In lessons where there are shortcomings in the teaching, learning objectives are not always set out at the start and referred to during the lessons, in order to ensure that pupils understand thoroughly what they will learn. In a small minority of lessons

teachers do not succeed in developing imaginative lessons that stimulate pupils and there is an over-reliance on worksheets.

- 84 In some lessons planning is not sufficiently well organised to ensure that all pupils are provided with work which is matched to their needs and ability. Because the classes consist of mixed age groups continuity and progression is not always ensured, especially in upper KS2.
- 85 Teachers promote equality of opportunity well and ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, irrespective of their background, gender or ability. The school provides well for pupils with SEN and for those who have EAL. The teaching of pupils with EAL is most effective where support teachers are guided well by class teachers, and where pupils are withdrawn to learn basic vocabulary and grammar. It is less effective when pupils are helped to complete tasks in the class which are beyond their level of comprehension.
- 86 The school strives successfully to meet the language needs of learners. Effective English language support is provided for the under-fives, many of whom enter school with underdeveloped language skills and pupils with EAL receive good support. Although teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop and apply bilingual skills in Welsh and English in subjects across the curriculum, the plans are not implemented effectively. Teachers do not use incidental Welsh sufficiently in order to reinforce pupils' skills in the language. Pupils understand commands and greetings but do not respond through speaking in Welsh.
- 87 Teachers know their pupils well and, overall, they monitor and review their progress appropriately. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements. Assessment policies and systems are good but the quality of assessment is inconsistent across the school as not all members of staff comply with procedures.
- 88 The assessment co-ordinator has established procedures that are coherent and, in spite of duplication in some areas, manageable overall. These work well in the majority of classes to facilitate planning and the improvement of learning but are inconsistently applied in the remainder. The quality of the assessment for the under-fives is good, and children are appropriately assessed in accordance with the LEA baseline. Pupils with SEN are assessed regularly and work hard to achieve the targets in their IEPs. In KS1 and KS2, detailed records are kept of pupils' academic capabilities and their personal and social skills but a minority of teachers make only limited use of this assessment information to inform future planning of pupils' work.
- 89 Test results are not analysed and used effectively to set realistic whole school targets. The monitoring system to provide valuable information about the progress of individuals is not applied effectively throughout the school except in the middle of KS2.
- 90 In the majority of classes pupils do not regularly play an active role in the assessment process, neither do they contribute to setting their individual targets to give them clear aims for improvement. Feedback by a few teachers, when marking pupils' work, gives focused guidance about what pupils need to do to improve their work and make progress. This, however, is not common practice.

- 91 Parents are happy with the arrangements for discussing their children's progress during two formal open evenings during the year. Useful twice yearly meetings are held to inform parents of their children's progress. Annual reports give a clear and honest picture of pupils' achievements in all subjects, and offer valuable comments regarding general development.
- 92 Governors are well informed of test results, and relevant data is transferred to the secondary school, to ensure appropriate progression from KS2 to KS3.

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

<b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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- 93 The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 2 made by the school in its self-evaluation report because continuity and progression are not always ensured, especially at the upper end of the school.
- 94 The curriculum meets the needs of the majority of pupils and is equally accessible to all including pupils with SEN and those who are learning English as an additional language. It meets the statutory requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government and is adequately structured to meet the school's aims.
- 95 The curriculum is broad and balanced. In the early years the curriculum covers all the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning and is taught effectively through topic work. There is good continuity and coherence in the provision for the nursery and reception classes. Purposeful use is made of the outdoor environment, and children are prepared appropriately for work in KS1.
- 96 The main schemes of work are those produced by the LEA advisory service and are generally used effectively as a basis for learning and teaching. They are designed to ensure continuity and progression but this is not always evident in some classes, especially at the upper end of the school. Where commercially produced schemes are used the school has adapted them well to include Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. Subject co-ordinators monitor pupils' work on a regular basis but do not amend their schemes as a result of this monitoring to meet the needs of learners.
- 97 In general, opportunities to develop learners' basic and key skills are clearly indicated in the planning and follow LEA guidelines but there are no suitable arrangements for monitoring the development of these skills across the curriculum. Teachers promote some of the skills effectively and planning for pupils' development in ICT and communication skills are good. However the development of problem-solving skills across the curriculum is not as effective. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in January, 2007.
- 98 Provision for personal and social education (PSE) is not yet fully incorporated into the curriculum although it features prominently in the religious education scheme of work. A police schools liaison officer talks to pupils about social issues including bullying.

- 99 The curriculum is greatly enriched by visitors with expertise in specific subjects, for example, a member of the community spoke to KS2 pupils about his experiences as an evacuee and the conductor of an orchestra held a workshop in the school, which led to older pupils taking part in a public performance in Brecon. Educational visits to places of historical and cultural interest enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of various subjects and strengthen the school's links with the local and wider community. Extra-curricular activities include music and sports clubs, which are well attended and contribute well to the standards pupils achieve.
- 100 The moral development of pupils is adequately integrated into everyday school life and pupils understand well the difference between right and wrong. Assemblies are of a Christian nature and provide guidance on moral issues but there is little opportunity for reflection on the main messages. They often fail to create an atmosphere of reverence or to support pupils' spiritual development. There are good links with the parish and the priest is a regular visitor to the school. Pupils attend mass on special occasions, such as the start of the new school year. The pastor of the local Pentecostal church also visits the school to conduct assemblies, and supports pupils in their moral and spiritual development.
- 101 Pupils' social development is promoted well. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously and pupils of all ages perform their duties as monitors diligently. Personal and social skills are developed well through such initiatives as circle time. Pupils display good social attitudes both inside and outside the classroom, and pupils' involvement in determining rules for behaviour further develops good social skills.
- 102 The school promotes cultural development well through the curriculum and pupils learn about other cultures through subjects such as geography and art. Planning for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is effective and it is promoted appropriately across the curriculum.
- 103 The partnership with parents is generally good and those attending the pre-inspection meeting expressed their satisfaction with the liaison between home and school. They feel well informed by letters, pupils' reports, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report. Any issues that arise are usually swiftly and effectively resolved.
- 104 There are effective meetings with other local primary schools that enable useful discussion of common issues. Supportive curricular bridging projects are developing with a local secondary school. There is an established partnership with teacher training institutions and students regularly provide additional breadth to pupils' learning experiences.
- 105 The school has a strong partnership with the local and wider community. Visits to and visitors from these areas help enhance learning and raise awareness of the world that pupils will eventually enter.
- 106 Groups of pupils visit local businesses and take part in enterprise challenge competitions. In school pupils are given the opportunity to take on responsibilities within the school council, the eco committee or the road safety committee. The focus on understanding the relationship between classroom learning and the workplace,

however, and the overall provision for work-related education and entrepreneurial skills is underdeveloped.

- 107 Teachers make some effective use of incidental Welsh but the school is not sufficiently proactive in increasing pupil participation and use of the language. There is insufficiently detailed planning for the active promotion of pupils' bilingual skills.
- 108 There is a commitment to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to all the school's activities regardless of individual background, circumstance or ability. Every effort is made to ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged in gaining access to learning experiences.
- 109 The school promotes well pupils' understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. These are incorporated into the curriculum and reinforced through activities such as the development of the small garden area, organised by the eco committee. Pupils' understanding of environmental awareness is gained largely through their involvement in recycling projects. Their fund-raising for various charities and the work of the school council and road safety committee increases their understanding of global citizenship.
- 110 The school endeavours to lay the foundations of lifelong learning and community regeneration by developing key skills and good study habits. Through the school council good opportunities are provided for pupils to influence issues that affect their everyday lives. Qualities such as kindness and tolerance are developed well through activities such as circle time, and they prepare pupils for lifelong learning and for living in the community.

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

<b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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- 111 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 112 The school has effective arrangements for the care of its pupils and pupils feel safe and secure whilst in school. In general, teachers and support staff have a good relationship with their pupils and are aware of the needs of individuals.
- 113 The pastoral care of pupils is a high priority and the majority of parents report that their children are happy in school. Good procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils, and, when required, the school seeks additional help from external agencies. For example, the school nurse visits the school regularly, and there is close contact between the school and the education welfare officer (EWO). Parents are fully informed about the care of their children.
- 114 Active steps are taken to involve parents in school life, for example, through newsletters, questionnaires and courses to help them understand how their children learn. Many parents, however, do not take part in any of the school's initiatives despite the efforts made by the school to encourage them. Formal open evenings are

held twice a year so that parents can discuss their children's progress with teachers. The detailed prospectus provides parents with information about the school. The home-school agreement meets statutory requirements.

- 115 The school has well-organised induction arrangements which help the under-fives settle happily in school. Pupils who join the school at a later stage are warmly welcomed and induction systems are appropriate. Arrangements for transferring Y6 pupils to the secondary school are effective.
- 116 The school is a happy, caring community that emphasises the promotion of values such as honesty and tolerance. The Catholic ethos of helping and caring for others is borne out strongly in the way older pupils help younger pupils and in the respect and courtesy shown to adults. In circle time and PSE sessions, pupils in both key stages discuss issues such as bullying and playground behaviour. They testify that they can turn readily to adults in school if they have worries.
- 117 The school has effective and rigorous procedures in place for the monitoring of attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Attendance registers are maintained correctly, and completed in accordance with statutory requirements. Current practices have been operating only since the start of this school year and they represent a substantial improvement over those employed at the time of the last inspection.
- 118 The school's provision for ensuring the healthy development and well being of pupils is good. One member of staff is trained in first aid and there are effective measures in place for caring for pupils who have an accident or who are unwell during the school day. The safety of pupils is assured when they are in the school's care and risk assessments are undertaken before all educational visits. The regular links with the school nurse and the police officer ensure that pupils understand issues pertaining to personal health and safety. The school is active in promoting healthy eating practices and lifestyles.
- 119 There are thorough policies and procedures in place for child protection with two designated persons responsible for the field. All members of staff and all members of the governing body are familiar with procedures.
- 120 The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good and procedures comply with the Code of Practice. There are forty six pupils on the register, although none has a statement of educational need. The school carefully identifies the needs of pupils with SEN and arranges suitable support through withdrawal sessions or by providing support in classes. All pupils with SEN are included fully in school life, and have full access to all NC subjects.
- 121 Each pupil with SEN has a detailed IEP which forms the basis of their learning programmes. The IEPs are reviewed on a regular basis by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and class teachers. Pupils with SEN are well supported by the SENCO, the part time specialist teacher, class teachers and support staff. Where there are close links between the home and school pupils progress well. The school also makes effective use of outside agencies to support pupils with additional needs. Pupils with SEN make good progress according to their ability.

- 122 Pupils who are learning English as an additional language receive good support from learning support assistants and they make good progress, especially in their oral skills, within a short space of time. The assistants work diligently to assist these pupils to gain access to the curriculum but class teachers' guidance about programmes of work is sometimes insufficiently structured and pupils' activities are, as a result, sometimes inappropriate.
- 123 The school employs a range of positive behaviour strategies, and deals effectively with pupils whose behaviour impedes their own progress and that of others.
- 124 Pupils have equal opportunities to participate in all school activities appropriate to their age or year group and the school actively promotes gender equality. The school recognises and respects the diversity of pupils' backgrounds, and acts appropriately by seizing many opportunities to promote racial harmony, for example, during circle time.
- 125 There are good arrangements in place to eliminate bullying should it occur, and pupils express confidence in the school's systems.
- 126 The school is aware of statutory requirements regarding provision for disabled pupils and adults. Because the school is a two-storey building it does not meet the needs of disabled learners though discussions regarding this problem are taking place with the LEA.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

- 127 The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 3 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school's management is ineffective in addressing important shortcomings and raising standards.
- 128 The headteacher has produced clear policy documents to underpin the work of the school. She has ensured that structures and procedures have been devised to enable the school to function efficiently. Not all these structures and procedures, however, are consistently applied in practice and this impairs standards
- 129 The school's stated values reflect its Christian nature, although this is not always evident in the spiritual life of the school.
- 130 The school's commitment to each pupil is evident in its mission statement which focuses on the development of each pupil's potential and the headteacher and staff actively ensure that all pupils are treated alike and receive the same opportunities and experiences. Parents, both in the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires, indicated their support and appreciation of the values instilled by the school.
- 131 Curriculum co-ordinators monitor standards in their subjects identifying areas for improvement. Agreed procedures are not always followed, however, which results in inconsistency in the quality of monitoring.
- 132 Performance management is not conducted effectively. Teachers' targets reflect both the school's priorities and the professional development needs and interests of the individual. Where shortcomings are identified in teaching, however, the headteacher is insufficiently rigorous in taking steps to address them and in setting and carefully monitoring targets for improvement. Professional development interviews are conducted with LSAs.
- 133 The school employs recognised, standardised tests to assess and monitor the progress of individual pupils but does not make effective use of the outcomes of these in order to set challenging and realistic individual targets.
- 134 The school takes account of national priorities; the raising of standards in literacy and numeracy are on-going targets but there has been no improvement in standards in these subjects since the last inspection. Considerable investment has been made in the development of ICT and this is reflected in improved standards. Pupils learn good citizenship skills through their involvement with the school council, the eco committee or the road safety committee.
- 135 The governing body is very supportive of the headteacher and staff and meets regulatory and legal requirements. Governors monitor the quality of provision by making visits to the school. They observe lessons, look at pupils' work and talk to

pupils. The governing body, however, has not fully developed its role as a critical friend to the school, for example, by keeping management issues under constant review.

- 136 Governors are committed to school improvement. The headteacher typically presents the governing body with a draft SDP which is then subject to scrutiny and discussion. The governing body approves each target and also has opportunities to add its own before the plan is finalised.

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

<b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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- 137 The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 138 The school has a structured four term cycle of monitoring. This cycle has good features, for example, curriculum co-ordinators monitor planning, collect pupils' books and scrutinise them before evaluating standards and provision in their subjects and they write an annual report. The monitoring programme, however, does not adhere to the procedures set out in the monitoring policy and evidence is not always appropriately recorded.
- 139 The school's self-evaluation report closely follows the school inspection framework. The staff meet to agree on strengths and aspects for development. Pupils' work is used as evidence when coming to a judgement about standards.
- 140 The views of parents are gathered through a questionnaire and questionnaires have also been given to individual governors. The views of pupils are sought through the school council. Individual teachers have an opportunity to submit a personal evaluation of the school but support staff are not consulted as part of the self-evaluation process.
- 141 Having gathered all the evidence available the headteacher selects targets for the SDP and shares these with the staff and governors. The SDP is a well structured document which includes targets for improvement, success criteria and costs.
- 142 The school supports its priorities appropriately through the allocation of resources and there is evidence that the actions taken by the school have led to measurable improvements. For example, a commercial phonics programme is beginning to have a positive impact on reading standards while the employment of a LSA to raise standards in oracy through interacting with pupils in role-play is also proving successful. Investment in hardware and software has seen standards rise in ICT.
- 143 The school's self-evaluation report is a structured and comprehensive document which notes a number of strengths but does not accurately identify the areas where the school needs to improve. The school's judgements match those of the inspection team in five of the seven key questions.

- 144 The school has made some progress since the last inspection in developing the role of curriculum leaders and improving the quantity and quality of resources. Shortcomings in subjects, however, have not been rigorously addressed and standards have not improved in English or mathematics.

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

<b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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- 145 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 146 The school is well staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Teaching and learning support staff are appropriately qualified and skilled and their expertise is well matched to the demands of the curriculum. Support staff, particularly those for pupils with SEN, make an effective contribution to the overall quality of teaching and work effectively under the guidance of teachers.
- 147 The quality and range of resources to support the curriculum are generally good and they are readily accessible to pupils. There is, however, a shortage of large equipment for the under fives.
- 148 The accommodation is of good quality and is used well by teachers to promote learning. Good quality displays enhance the school's environment and teachers make good use of the space available. The accommodation, however, is located on two levels linked by stairs and there is no access to the upper, KS2 floor for pupils with physical disabilities.
- 149 The staff make effective use of the resources available including the immediate and wider environment.
- 150 Staff are appropriately deployed and some teachers with specialist knowledge teach their subjects throughout the school. All staff including LSAs have access to a good range of professional development activities, and training priorities are linked to the needs of the school.
- 151 The school secretary, catering staff, mid-day supervisors, caretaker and cleaners carry out their daily routines and a range of responsibilities efficiently and effectively. There is a good standard of cleanliness within the school and the outside areas are free from litter and graffiti.
- 152 Resources are well matched to the school's priorities for development, for example, the investment in addressing language deficit on entry and the purchase of hardware and software to raise standards in ICT.

- 153 Co-ordinators ensure that there are adequate resources for their subjects although they do not compile inventories of resources, neither do they review them regularly in order to ensure value for money.
- 154 The school has adopted effective procedures for managing teachers' PPA time in accordance with statutory requirements.
- 155 Overall the school provides value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Under 5s

- 156 The overall quality of the education for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Many pupils enter school with underdeveloped language skills. Children who are learning English as an additional language make good progress, and understand some everyday expressions and simple instructions.

#### Language, literacy and communication

<b>Nursery:</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	Good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Reception:</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	Good features outweigh shortcomings

#### Good features

- 157 Nursery children listen carefully and respond enthusiastically to questions and commands. They show a good understanding of simple Welsh phrases. In their role play in the 'surgery' or the 'garage' they use appropriate vocabulary. They handle books correctly, recognise their names and form some letters correctly. They make marks on paper with pencils and crayons, and are beginning to realise that there are purposes to writing when they make good attempts at composing lists and letters.
- 158 In general, reception children listen well to each other and to adults. They respond with enthusiasm to Welsh commands and greetings. The majority read a few familiar words correctly and make effective use of picture clues to understand stories. Many form letters correctly and build words successfully, showing an appropriate grasp of phonics. They write their names accurately, and underwrite correctly as they create simple prayers. More able children are starting to write simple sentences independently.

#### Shortcomings

- 159 Although children make rapid progress within a short time, the limited vocabulary and sentence structures of the majority of the children curtails their language development.

#### Personal and social development

<b>Nursery:</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	Good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Reception:</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	Good features and no important shortcomings

#### Good features

- 160 Nursery children work and play well together. Many show good self control and are aware of the need for hygiene. For example, they know it is important to wash their hands before and after some activities and that they must clean their teeth regularly. Many dress and undress themselves independently before and after going outdoors to play. The majority wait their turn patiently when playing games. They show concern for living creatures, and look after the youngest children in the class.

161 Reception children understand the importance of rules and form good relationships with other children. They realise the need for good manners and that saying thank you is important. They are sensitive to the needs and difficulties of others, and work well with other children on specific tasks, such as writing a class story. Most of the children show a good measure of independence.

### **Shortcomings**

162 There are no important shortcomings

### **Mathematical development**

**Nursery:**      **Grade 2**      Good features and no important shortcomings

**Reception:**   **Grade 2**      Good features and no important shortcomings

### **Good features**

163 Nursery children count to ten and beyond confidently in Welsh and English and understand the concept of large and small numbers. They sort objects correctly according to shape and colour, and know the properties of two-dimensional shapes. They distinguish well between small, medium and large spoons and bowls. They are able to follow patterns and create their own. They have a good recall of a range of number rhymes and songs and they measure well using non-standard measures.

164 Reception children count up to twenty confidently and are able to use number lines correctly. They dial 999 correctly when pretending to phone the emergency services. They name and understand the features of two-dimensional shapes and show good understanding of the concept of 'more than' and 'less than' by comparing weights. They know that money is required to buy stamps in the post office.

### **Shortcomings**

165 There are no important shortcomings.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

**Nursery:**      **Grade 2**      Good features and no important shortcomings

**Reception:**   **Grade 2**      Good features and no important shortcomings

### **Good features**

166 Nursery children name colours correctly and can remember the names of many animals. They talk enthusiastically about people who help them in school and they have a good understanding of the order of the school day. They can name differences between day and night and have some understanding of time when talking about 'today' and 'a long time ago'. They use simple maps successfully when trying to find Goldilocks in the garden. They have a good understanding of some of the effects of heat on food through their investigative work with porridge and jelly. They make effective use of their senses when investigating hot chocolate.

167 In the reception class children discuss the life cycle of a butterfly in detail. They know the main characteristics of the seasons and have a good understanding and knowledge about differences between various materials and their uses. They realise

the value of being members of a family and have a great deal of knowledge of people who help us, for example, the policeman and the fire-fighter and know who to call in an emergency.

### **Shortcomings**

168 There are no important shortcomings.

### **Physical development**

**Nursery: Grade 2** Good features and no important shortcomings

**Reception: Grade 2** Good features and no important shortcomings

### **Good features**

169 Most nursery children display a good awareness of space and use a range of large equipment confidently. They display good physical skills when building with construction kits and handle small equipment well, for example writing materials, hammers, jigsaws, small cars and painting materials.

170 Reception children move with increasing control and co-ordination when playing outdoors. They work energetically and have a good awareness of safety factors. The majority are confident when playing with large toys such as scooters and show good body awareness. They handle small equipment, such as scissors, glue and the computer mouse effectively.

### **Shortcomings**

171 There are no important shortcomings

### **Creative development**

**Nursery: Grade 2** Good features and no important shortcomings

**Reception: Grade 2** Good features and no important shortcomings

### **Good features**

172 Nursery children enjoy rhythm in music and can recognise and play a large range of instruments. They sing Welsh action songs and engage enthusiastically in role play. They create lively art work, for example, winter collages using 'cold' colours, and a large scale rainbow fish collage. They mix paints appropriately to print footprint patterns and use clay effectively to form bowls.

173 Reception children sing in a lively fashion with a good recall of words. They participate confidently in role play, for example, when using puppets. Their lively imagination is apparent when they play on the pirate ship outdoors. They display a good awareness of rhythm when playing instruments. They create interesting art work using a good range of media, for example, they use boxes effectively to make emergency vehicles. Their large scale painting of 'The Last Supper' demonstrates their knowledge of Leonardo da Vinci's famous work. Their creative skills when using the computer are developing well, for example, when designing postage stamps.

### **Shortcomings**

174 There are no important shortcomings

<b>English</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 3** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key stage 2: Grade 3** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Good features**

- 175 In KS1, pupils listen well and show an increasing understanding of spoken and written language. Many speak in a variety of contexts with increasing confidence, and make appropriate progress in speaking to different audiences and for different purposes. For example, they display appropriate oral skills in their role play as they retell the story of 'Handa's Surprise'. Y2 pupils express their views confidently when comparing African and Welsh landscapes.
- 176 The reading skills of the majority of KS1 pupils are developing well, with many pupils able to correct their mistakes themselves and build words effectively by using their knowledge of sounds and letters. A few more able pupils read well independently and make effective use of content pages to find information. Many pupils distinguish between non-fiction and fiction. They read aloud well with appropriate intonation and expression.
- 177 In KS1, many pupils write simple sentences correctly with appropriate punctuation. They retell stories with correct sequencing. They understand that there are different types of writing, and produce work of good quality when writing book reviews, poems, lists and stories such as 'The Magical Christmas'. In general, pupils make effective use of their knowledge of letters and sounds to spell accurately, and use writing frames appropriately to produce short but lively pieces of work.
- 178 In KS2 most pupils listen attentively and speak confidently. At the beginning of the key stage pupils play roles effectively, and pupils in the middle of the key stage collaborate well in group discussions. Most pupils at the upper end of the key stage express their opinions clearly.
- 179 Overall, KS2 pupils read with understanding. They read aloud with appropriate intonation and characterisation, using suitable strategies when dealing with unfamiliar words. A few pupils at the upper end of the school have good advanced reading skills and can find information quickly. Most pupils use dictionaries effectively to check spellings, and give reasons for their liking of particular books and authors.
- 180 In KS2 the majority of pupils write appropriately for a range of purposes and audiences. Pupils at the beginning of the key stage make effective use of adjectives in their written work and pupils in the middle of the key stage produce humorous works, such as 'My Dad's Rules'. In general, writing by pupils in the middle of the key stage shows a good measure of understanding of paragraphing, accurate spelling of familiar words and correct punctuation in their newspaper reports, dialogues, letters to evacuee friends and poems based on the Blitz. Collaborative work, such as the poems entitled 'If there were no seasons', is of very good quality. Pupils at the upper end of the school use a limited range of writing forms, including book reviews and diaries, and complete many language exercises correctly.

181 Pupils who are new to English understand simple instructions and acquire a basic vocabulary. They speak using single words or short phrases. Pupils who are at the early acquisition stage are acquiring a good understanding of spoken English, and a widening vocabulary which tends to be related to familiar contexts.

### **Shortcomings**

182 In KS1 a limited vocabulary and lack of knowledge of sentence structure hinders the development of the oral, reading and writing skills of some pupils.

183 Handwriting standards are variable and the presentation of work across the school is inconsistent. Standards deteriorate towards the upper end of the KS2.

184 The oral skills of some pupils across KS2 are underdeveloped, particularly those of older pupils in the key stage.

185 The writing produced by some KS2 pupils, especially those at the upper end of the school, is insufficiently extended.

## **Mathematics**

**Key stage 1: Grade 3** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key stage 2: Grade 3** Good features outweigh shortcomings

### **Good features**

186 In KS1, pupils count forwards and backwards up to 100, count to 100 in tens and fives.

187 They have a good facility for mental calculation and a secure knowledge of addition and subtraction facts up to 20. They use these confidently in mental arithmetic.

188 Pupils confidently and accurately add 10 or 20 to a given number up to 100. They order numbers accurately to 100.

189 They understand number sequences and confidently complete number sentences.

190 Pupils identify odd and even numbers and count accurately and confidently in both.

191 Pupils handle money accurately and calculate the costs of items up to 20p.

192 They measure accurately in cm lengths up to 20cm.

193 Pupils identify two-dimensional shapes confidently.

194 In lower KS2, pupils have a good understanding of number patterns. They develop an understanding of place value and confidently handle numbers up to 1000.

195 Pupils have a secure understanding of decimal notation and express vulgar fractions as decimals. They round off decimal numbers to the nearest hundredth or tenth.

196 In lower KS2, pupils accurately express a number of measurements in a variety of ways. For example, they express 136cm as 1m 36cm or 1.36m.

- 197 Pupils further develop their knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes. They correctly identify and name various triangles, for example, isosceles and equilateral.
- 198 They measure accurately to one tenth of a cm and can calculate the perimeter of a shape.
- 199 Towards the end of KS2, pupils have secure data handling skills and accurately translate data which they collect in class into charts and graphs including Venn and Carroll diagrams. They construct graphs confidently and accurately, selecting appropriate gradations for the vertical and horizontal axes.
- 200 Older pupils in KS2 confidently and accurately add and subtract numbers to 10,000. They accurately multiply numbers to 1,000.
- 201 They accurately read numbers to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000.
- 202 Older pupils in KS2 name a variety of triangles and list their features and understand that angles are measured in degrees.
- 203 They accurately calculate time in both analogue and digital mode.
- 204 Pupils who are learning English as an additional language produce work of a good standard when they receive instructions in their mother tongue.

### **Shortcomings**

- 205 In KS1, pupils' data handling skills are underdeveloped.
- 206 In KS1, pupils' ability to compare and order objects by length, weight or capacity is underdeveloped.
- 207 Older pupils in KS2 have an insecure knowledge of percentages.
- 208 Older pupils in KS2 have an underdeveloped knowledge of area, length, weight and capacity.
- 209 In KS2, older pupils' ability to apply their knowledge to every-day problems is underdeveloped.

<b>History</b>
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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**

- 210 In KS1, pupils have a good understanding of the passage of time and recount accurately the order of events in a normal day.
- 211 Pupils make good use of secondary evidence to make observations on life in Victorian times based on a series of photographs.

- 212 They understand well that the lives of little children in Merthyr in the nineteenth century contrast markedly with their own. They compare their houses with those of Victorian families and know that household appliances and routines were very different.
- 213 Pupils' understanding of daily routines in Victorian households is enhanced by visits to museums and through participating in workshops, for example, 'Granny's Washday.'
- 214 Pupils describe in detail the conditions in a coal mine and pose a number of perceptive questions which they would ask of a young girl who worked in a local pit.
- 215 In lower KS2, pupils understand well why World War 2 started and know why it was called a world war. They have good chronological awareness and produce an accurate World War 2 timeline.
- 216 They understand well that the War brought many changes which touched the lives of all civilians, for example, that food was in short supply and had to be rationed. They collect wartime recipes and follow one of these to make a pie.
- 217 They have a good knowledge of another significant change brought about by the War, for example, the work done by women. They classify accurately the jobs done by women before and during the War.
- 218 Pupils understand well the devastating effect of the Blitz on towns in South Wales and conduct their own research on the internet to extend their knowledge. They know that the most popular types of shelters were the Anderson and Morrison.
- 219 Pupils interpret photographic evidence well and know that the most accurate accounts of any event are eye-witness accounts. They interview an evacuee who has remained and lived his life in the area.
- 220 They know that children were evacuated from large towns in England which were being bombed to the Welsh countryside. They recount in detail the journeys of these children and their feelings on leaving their families.
- 221 In upper KS2, pupils competently compile biographies of prominent wartime figures such as Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler. They use their ICT skills to conduct research into these people.
- 222 Pupils prepare effective powerpoint presentations on aspects of World War 2 which interest them, for example, famous aircraft such as the Spitfire.
- 223 EAL pupils produce work of a good standard, because of the effective support offered by teachers and volunteers. Pupils who have a good command of the language are also a source of help and encouragement.

### **Shortcomings**

- 224 There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Art</b>
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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**

- 225 Pupils in both key stages carefully observe features such as colour, shape, form, line, texture and tone, and use them effectively in their work. They effectively use a wide variety of media and techniques well to produce work of a high standard, for example, pupils in the middle of the key stage produce an attractive collage depicting the story of Gelert.
- 226 Pupils in KS1 have a good understanding of the effect that mixing paint has on colour as can be seen in their raindrop paintings. They experiment enthusiastically with paint, coloured pencils and pastels when creating self portraits and extend their knowledge of other cultures when making three-dimensional African masks.
- 227 When designing collages, KS1 pupils research well into patterns in nature, and use their observations in a purposeful way. They study patterns in the environment as a basis for effective imaginative work, for example, Welsh landscapes, and their drawings of leaves, grass and plants show good drawing skills.
- 228 Pupils successfully emulate the work and techniques of famous artists, for example, they paint self portraits using some of the techniques of Van Gogh.
- 229 KS1 pupils display appropriate computer skills to create lively self portraits and patterns.
- 230 KS2 pupils have a good knowledge of famous artists including Welsh artists. They also study the techniques of local artists and emulate them in their own work. They evaluate their own work and the work of others.
- 231 Pupils in KS2 understand the importance of drawing, and record accurately from direct observation. They use sketch books effectively in the investigating process, for example, to record observations of the outside of the local church which form the basis of exciting, imaginative work using paints and clay.
- 232 In both key stages pupils produce interesting three-dimensional work in various media, including clay, cardboard, textiles and junk material. For example, clay models of owls by older pupils in KS2, which are the result of a bridging project initiated by the secondary school, are of a high quality. Similarly, clay models of pigs by pupils in the middle of the key stage demonstrate keen observation skills and good modelling techniques.
- 233 Pupils at the upper end of the school use a large range of interesting materials to produce elaborate masks, suitable for a masked ball, based on the tale of Cantre'r Gwaelod. The quality of the finished work is good.

234 Pupils who are learning English as an additional language produce work of a good standard, because of the effective help they receive in the translation of instructions and technical phrases.

### **Shortcomings**

235 There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Music</b>
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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**

236 In KS1, pupils are able to sustain well a steady beat by clapping. Some pupils play the same beat accurately on tuned percussion instruments.

237 They listen carefully to a CD and identify the beat, joining in when they feel sufficiently confident. Pupils accompany the song on a CD by clapping or playing the beat on percussion instruments. Further instruments are added and the final performance is effective.

238 Pupils sing a 'round' accurately. They respond well to music and interpret it well, describing how it makes them feel.

239 In KS2, pupils work well in groups to determine which instruments would produce the effect they desired and then play their compositions effectively to accompany the teacher's reading of the story of Jesus and the storm.

240 Pupils follow a graphic score well and know that it has four beats to a bar. They understand that notes are of different length.

241 They sing a Welsh lullaby with good control of breathing and dynamics and accompany this with a selection of tuned instruments using the pentatonic scale.

242 Pupils' composing and performing skills are good and they recently won a national competition for playing their own composition on the theme 'Going to the bridge.'

243 Pupils who are learning English as an additional language work confidently and competently, achieving a good standard.

### **Shortcomings**

244 There are no important shortcomings.

## **School's response to the inspection**

It is encouraging to note that the inspection findings recognise that we have maintained good standards in the subjects of Art, History and Music, that standards are good with no important shortcomings in Early Years in five out of the six Desirable Outcomes and pupils identified with SEN achieve good standards according to their age and ability.

We are pleased that the inspectors found that pupils' standards in the lessons observed are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government targets for all Wales by 2007 and that the quality of care, guidance and support that we provide is good with pupils feeling safe and secure whilst in school. We agree with the inspectors' comments that the Catholic ethos of helping and caring for others is borne out strongly in the way older pupils help younger pupils and that support staff make an effective contribution to the overall quality of teaching and work effectively under the guidance of teachers.

We recognise that we are on a staged process of improvement and that the report highlights significant areas where we need to improve. We will work closely with our LEA to produce a detailed action plan which will address the recommendations in the inspection report and this will form the basis of our SDP for 2007/2008/2009. All staff and governors will be involved in implementing the action plan. Progress in meeting our targets will be reported regularly to the governing body and the LEA. The governors' annual report to parents will provide a summary report on the progress we make on the inspection recommendations.

Raising pupils' standards of achievement in English and Mathematics will be a major priority for us. We will make sure that these subjects are included in our SDP. In addition, we will provide more opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge and skills in Welsh so that they will be able to help the pupils achieve higher standards in bilingualism. We are also confident that we will be able to improve our work in assessing effectively and consistently to inform planning for continuity and progression across the school, particularly in mixed age classes, giving pupils a greater involvement in their assessing own progress and target setting as well as monitoring the progress of individual staff.

The inspectors have identified many elements, policies and procedures already in operation in the school that will help us address shortcomings by sharing good practice more widely and ensuring that all policies and procedures are applied consistently.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	St Illtyds R.C.Primary School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Rocky Road,
Postcode	CF48 3BT
Telephone number	01685 389915

Headteacher	Mrs Debra Evans
Date of appointment	1 May 2001
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Paul Griffiths
Registered inspector	Mr Robert Jones
Dates of inspection	5 –7 February 2007

## 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	20	27	15	18	17	21	19	21	158

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	2	8

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27.6
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Spring 2006	89.7	84.1	90.5
Summer 2006	92.4	92.7	90.3
Autumn 2006	80.7	95.1	94.1

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	21
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 2006			Number of		18		
			pupils in Y2:				
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	5	17	50	28
		National	0	4	12	64	20
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	6	28	33	33
		National	0	4	14	56	27
En:writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	6	11	44	39
		National	0	5	14	69	12
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	11	78	11
		National	0	2	11	64	23
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	17	83	0
		National	0	2	10	64	24
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	6	94	0
		National	0	2	9	66	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	72	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 2006			Number of pupils in Y6		10						
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	50	20
		National	0	0	2	0	1	4	15	46	31
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	70	10
		National	0	0	2	0	1	3	15	47	32
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	60	20
		National	0	0	2	0	0	2	11	51	34

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	70	In Wales	72

- D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum  
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence  
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence  
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection team included three inspectors who were present for a total of seven inspection days. A peer assessor joined the team for three days and took a full part in the inspection. During the inspection:

- pre-inspection meetings were held with the head teacher, teachers, parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school;
- 20 questionnaires were completed by parents and thoroughly analysed;
- school policies and documents were examined;
- discussions were held with the head teacher and curriculum co-ordinators;
- 31 sessions or part-sessions of teaching were observed;
- pupils were heard reading and discussions were held with them about their work as part of the examination of standards in National Curriculum subjects;
- examples of the pupils' work were studied in each class;
- attendance registers, pupils' records and teachers' planning files were inspected;
- inspectors were present at all whole-school acts of collective worship;
- post-inspection meetings were held with the staff and the governing body.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Robert H Jones Registered Inspector	Context Summary and Recommendations Key Questions 1, 5, 6 and 7 Mathematics History Music
Mrs Zohrah Evans Team Inspector	Key Questions 2,3 and 4 Under fives English Art
Dr Michael Snow Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3 and 4
Mr Tim Crosse	Peer Assessor
Mrs Debra Evans	Nominee

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### Acknowledgement

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