

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

**Ysgol Gymunedol Swyddffynnon  
Swyddffynnon  
Ystrad Meurig  
Ceredigion  
SY25 6AL**

**School Number: 6672354**

**Date of Inspection: 6 March 2006**

**by**

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15682**

**Date of Publication: 11 May 2006**

**Under Estyn contract number: 1112405**

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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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Ysgol Gymunedol Swyddffynnon 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 Ysgol Gymunedol Swyddffynnon took place between 06/03/06 and 08/03/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dafydd Gwynfor Evans 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 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. The school is located at the centre of the rural village of Swyddffynnon some six miles from Tregaron in the county of Ceredigion. There has been a reduction in pupil numbers over recent years. Currently, there are nine pupils on roll; the majority of these are between eight and 11 years of age and there is no child under the age of five at the school. At the time of the last inspection in 2000, there were 29 pupils between four and 11 years of age attending the school on a full-time basis.
2. Pupils come from the village itself and the surrounding rural agricultural area. The area is not considered by the school as being neither economically prosperous nor disadvantaged. No pupil is registered as being entitled to receive free school meals. The pupils represent the full range of ability; there are three pupils on the special educational needs (SEN) register and one of them has a statement of SEN.
3. The school has been designated as a Category A school under the local education authority's (LEA) language policy. The aim of the policy is to educate pupils to be fully bilingual in Welsh and English when they transfer to the secondary school at 11 years of age. A third of the pupils come from homes where English is the main language.

### The school's priorities and targets

4. The school's current priorities and targets are:
  - develop pupils' musical expression of in Key Stage (KS) 2;
  - extend the opportunities for pupils in KS2 to write in a wider range of styles in Welsh and English;
  - further develop the global citizenship programme;
  - further strengthen the process of target setting and the use of data;
  - create a whole area policy for information and communications technology (ICT);
  - strengthen the system of moderating pupils' work, and
  - improve the school's environment.

## Summary

5. Ysgol Swyddffynnon is a close and caring community where particular emphasis is placed on working together and good relationships. The school has dealt well with the key issues identified in the previous inspection.
6. The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's judgements in its self-evaluation report in three of the seven key questions. Where there is a difference in the judgement, the inspection team adjudged lower grades than those awarded by the school.

## 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?	1
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

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

7. During the inspection, the general standards of pupils' achievements in the lessons observed were as follows:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Pupils' standards of achievement	0%	88%	12%	0%	0%

8. In the lessons observed, pupils' standards of achievement were higher than Welsh Assembly Government targets for 2007 of 98% of standards being satisfactory (grade 3) and 65% being good or better (grade 1 and 2).
9. There are no children under five years of age on the school's register. The overall quality of the educational provision for them is appropriate.
10. All subjects were inspected in KS1 and KS2, standards of achievement in the subjects are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	2	2
English	Not applicable	3
Mathematics	2	2
Science	2	2
Design technology	2	2
Information technology	3	3
History	2	2
Geography	2	2
Art	2	2
Music	2	2
Physical education	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Religious education	1	1

11. Each individual regardless of ability, social or linguistic background experience success in his/her work. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
12. Overall, pupils in both key stages make good and steady progress in their communication skills in Welsh and English. They also make good progress in the development of their mathematical skills across the curriculum.
13. Overall, pupils' ability to use a range and variety of technology independently in their work across the curriculum is underdeveloped. The standards are Grade 3.
14. Across the school pupils' bilingual skills are developing well.
15. Pupils show good development in problem solving and thinking skills. They use their creative skills effectively. The skills of pupils in KS2 to express an opinion, defend a point of view or to take a constructive part in a discussion are less well developed.
16. Over the years, the numbers taking part in National Curriculum (NC) assessments at the end of both key stages are too small to make a meaningful comparison with county and national data year on year. However, during recent years it can be seen that the school's results, according to teacher assessment, and prior to that, tests and tasks in the core subjects, compare favourably with county and national results as well as with schools of similar backgrounds.
17. The school sets realistic targets for its pupils and, overall, they are attained consistently.
18. Pupils show an interest in their work and a clear understanding of what they need to achieve.
19. Pupils' behaviour is very good and has a positive effect on their learning. They show respect and kindness towards others and are aware of the school's expectations and rules and adhere to them.
20. The average attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection was good at 95.7% without any instances of unauthorised absence.
21. Pupils have a good awareness of equal opportunity issues. They make good progress in their personal, moral and social development. They show high levels of understanding and respect towards other beliefs, attitudes and traditions.
22. The school is an integral part of the community with the pupils and parents taking an active role in all activities in the area. Pupils' experiences of the world of work are enriched well through the use the school makes of resources in the community.

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

23. In lessons observed, 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>
6%	82%	12%	0%	0%

24. Lesson preparation is thorough and the relationship between the teachers and pupils is good. The teaching challenges the pupils to think and concentrate on their tasks. Through skilful questioning, teachers strengthen and extend pupils' understanding and knowledge effectively.

25. In a small number of lessons, tasks are insufficiently differentiated to correspond to pupils' needs and abilities and not enough attention is given to the balanced development of the key skills, especially ICT.
26. The arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting to parents are appropriate. Pupils' progress and achievement in the core subjects are assessed regularly but this is not done in the foundation subjects and religious education. The school's self-evaluation identifies the need to strengthen the method of moderating pupils' work. The inspection team agrees.
27. The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Policies and schemes of work are of good quality for each subject in the long, mid and short term.
28. The additional needs of all pupils are fairly supported. The arrangements for ensuring support by assistants in the classroom and during withdrawal sessions, are strong features in the school's provision.
29. There is some inconsistency in the way in which key skills are developed across the curriculum, especially the opportunities to extend pupils' ICT skills.
30. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
31. There is a strong and close link between the school and the parents. There is good communication between the school and the parents and all parents have signed the home-school agreement. Pupils receive valuable experiences through visits by members of the community to the school and through taking part in activities within the community.
32. Partnerships with other primary schools in the area and the secondary school to which the pupils transfer are very good.
33. The school takes full advantage of its links with local businesses. Pupils have opportunities to learn about the world of work through visits to places such as the local quarry and farms.
34. Learners' bilingual skills in Welsh and English are promoted well by the school, and reflect the traditions of Wales well. The provision for the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is good.
35. Support programmes have been very well integrated into the school's work in order to meet the needs of learners. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide an appropriate level of care, guidance and support to learners.
36. The provision for pupils with SEN is good and fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice.
37. Staff at the school are very mindful of pupils' well-being and safety on all occasions. Careful and comprehensive risk assessments are carried out within the school and for educational visits. There are appropriate procedures for the protection of children.
38. Pupils' attendance, punctuality and behaviour are monitored daily by staff at the school.

## **Leadership and management**

39. The headteacher offers clear and purposeful direction to the school. Through teamwork, the school operates in an environment of agreed values and high expectations.
40. Good consideration is given to national priorities. The partnership with primary schools in the area and with the local secondary school are outstanding features in the work of the school.
41. The school has gained the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark in 2001 and 2005.
42. Everyone at the school is aware of the agreed targets set for them, whether they are pupil or adult.
43. The governing body meets regularly and the members are very supportive of all the school's work; it meets all statutory and legal requirements. Currently, its members have insufficient knowledge of the school's performance, especially in relation to the standards of achievement and curricular developments.
44. There are minor deficiencies in the Prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents.
45. Self-evaluation procedures have existed in the school for many years. The processes have concentrated more particularly on the weaknesses identified in the last inspection, and in that respect, the school has acted appropriately.
46. The self-evaluation report prepared for this inspection identifies the need to create a new monitoring system that gives more attention to standards of achievement and issues relating to teaching, learning and assessment. The inspection team agrees with this.
47. The school development plan (SDP) is a useful tool to give direction to the work of the school. However, it notes that long term planning is difficult as the school has been included in the LEA's plans for reorganising primary education in the area.
48. The school's self-evaluation report identifies the strengths of the school together with some issues that need further attention in relation to the seven key questions. It does not form a judgement on pupils' standards of achievement in curricular areas nor in the key skills.
49. Good progress has been made by the school in addressing the key issues identified in the previous report.
50. With the significant decrease in the number of pupils on roll over the last five years, the governing body has endeavoured to ensure sufficient staffing at the school. The headteacher is also innovative in her efforts to overcome the challenge of teaching pupils from four to 11 years of age in one class during some periods in the week.
51. Overall, the range of resources to support the curriculum is good. They are conveniently located and used regularly. There is an insufficient supply of ICT hardware and software at the school.
52. The building and classrooms offer a very appropriate location and environment for teaching, learning and supporting pupils.

53. Spending decisions are appropriately linked with the plans identified in the SDP. The current budget shows a slight deficit which can be attributed to spending in relation to the SEN provision. The governing body is aware of this and is dealing with the matter. Overall, the school gives value for money.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the areas inspected in the school, the staff and governors need to:

- R1 attend to the weaknesses identified in the subjects;
- R2 ensure that the short-term planning gives appropriate attention to the balanced development of all the key skills across the curriculum and in particular ICT skills;
- R3 devise a system of evaluating standards in the foundation subjects and religious education and strengthen the process of levelling pupils' work in the core subjects;
- R4 further develop the school's self-evaluation procedure by making more extensive use of first hand evidence and to evaluate standards of achievement and the quality of the educational provision;
- R5. develop the role of governors in monitoring the curriculum and evaluating the school's progress;
- R6. ensure that the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents contain all the necessary information.

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

54. The findings of the inspection team agree with the judgement of the school in the self-evaluation report.
55. During the inspection, pupils' overall standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Pupils' standards of achievement	0%	88%	12%	0%	0%

56. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed were higher than the Welsh Assembly Government's targets for the whole of Wales by 2007 of 98% of standards being satisfactory (grade 3) and 65% being good or better (grade 1 and 2).

57. There are no children under the age of five currently on the school's register. The overall quality of the educational provision for them is appropriate.
58. All subjects in KS1 and KS2 were inspected, the standards of achievement in the subjects are as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
Welsh	2	2
English	Not applicable	3
Mathematics	2	2
Science	2	2
Design technology	2	2
Information technology	3	3
History	2	2
Geography	2	2
Art	2	2
Music	2	2
Physical education	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Religious education	1	1

59. Pupils make progress that is appropriate for their age and ability in gaining new information and understanding skills, and they succeed in achieving the agreed learning goals.
60. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
61. Overall, pupils in both key stages listen well to others and respond appropriately to what they hear. Pupils in KS2 discuss some aspects of the curriculum, such as responding to a Welsh text confidently and achieve standards which are generally good in their oral skills. Overall, they use their reading skills appropriately to gather information from different sources. The more able achieve good standards in writing across the curriculum.
62. Pupils make good progress in the development of their mathematical skills across the curriculum, especially in science, design technology and history.
63. Overall, pupils' ability to use a range and variety of technology independently in their work across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Standards are grade 3.
64. Across the school, pupils' bilingual skills are developing well. They show progressive development in working in Welsh and English across the curriculum.
65. Pupils show good development in problem solving and thinking skills, especially in mathematics and science. They use their creative skills effectively. In KS2, pupils' skills in expressing an opinion, defending a point of view and taking a constructive role in discussions are underdeveloped.
66. Over the years, the numbers taking part in NC assessments at the end of both key stages are too small to make a meaningful comparison with county and national data year on year. However, during recent years it can be seen that the school's results, as determined by teacher assessment, and prior to that, tests and tasks in the core subjects, compare favourably with county and national results as well as with schools of similar background.
67. The school sets realistic targets for pupils and generally, they are attained consistently.

68. Pupils show an interest in their work and a clear understanding of what they need to achieve. The vast majority concentrate well on their tasks and enjoy the work set for them.
69. The behaviour of pupils is very good and has a positive effect on their learning. Pupils are aware of the expectations and rules of the school and adhere to them. They are considerate and show respect and courtesy to each other, all staff and visitors to the school. They play well together with the older pupils caring for the younger children. No instances of bullying or aggressive behaviour were observed during the inspection but the school has appropriate procedures for dealing with any incidences that may arise. The school has not had cause to exclude any pupil during recent years.
70. The average attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection was good at 95.7% with no unauthorised absence. No instances were observed during the inspection of pupils arriving late. Parents are aware of the expectations and inform the school in the case of any absence. The registers and registration procedures comply with the Welsh Assembly Government circular 3/99.
71. Pupils have a good awareness of equal opportunities. They make good progress in their personal, moral and social development. They show high levels of understanding and respect towards other creeds, attitudes and traditions.
72. The school is an integral part of the community and pupils and parents take an active part in all activities such as fairs, eisteddfodau and services. Members of the community come into the school to share their experiences with the pupils and also to help in the school, for example with the organic garden or painting. Pupils have opportunities to learn about the world or work from visits such as to the local quarry and farms. Pupils' experiences in relation to the world of work are enriched well through the use the school makes of resources in the community.

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

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

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

73. The inspection team's findings do not agree with the Grade 1 judgement given by the school in the self-evaluation report.
74. In lessons observed, 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>
6%	82%	12%	0%	0%
75. Lesson planning is thorough and learning aims are consistently shared with the pupils. There is a good relationship between the teachers and the pupils.
76. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. Across the school, they make good use of a range of appropriate resources in order to motivate and sustain the pupils' interest.
77. The teachers build well on pupils' previous knowledge. The teaching challenges the pupils to think and to adhere to their tasks. Pupils are given good opportunities to evaluate their work. Through skilful questioning, teachers strengthen and extend pupils' understanding and knowledge effectively.

78. In a small number of lessons, the tasks set are insufficiently differentiated to correspond with pupils' needs and abilities. The short term planning does not give enough attention to the balanced development of key skills, especially ICT.
79. Assessment systems for the whole school are good throughout and are consistently implemented. Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching and appropriately influences the planning. Consistent records are kept on learners' achievements and progress. The information is used to promote higher standards in the core subjects.
80. Methods of assessing and recording progress according to NC levels in the foundation subjects have not been developed to the same extent. Similarly, the school's self-evaluation identifies the need to strengthen the method of moderating pupils' work across the school. The inspection team agrees with this.
81. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously, and there are purposeful comments on pupils' books which encourages them to improve their work. Pupils self-evaluate and set targets for improvement.
82. Pupils on the SEN register have their own detailed records. The procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with SEN comply with statutory requirements.
83. Arrangements for reporting to parents and other appropriate authorities on the progress and achievement of learners are good. The quality of the reports is satisfactory. Annual reports contain enough positive comments but there is insufficient detail regarding achievements and the next steps in learning.

**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**

84. The findings of the inspection team do not agree with the judgement of Grade 1 given by the school in the self-evaluation report.
85. The school responds well to the learning needs of pupils and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Policies and schemes of work are of good quality in each subject in the long, mid and short term.
86. The additional needs of all pupils are fairly supported. The arrangements for ensuring support by assistants in the classroom and during withdrawal sessions, are strong features in the school's provision.
87. Overall, the key skills are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. The mid-term planning identifies opportunities to develop the key skills. However, the short-term planning does not ensure a balance in the development of the key skills especially ICT skills.
88. The school is committed to developing the whole child personally, socially, spiritually, morally and culturally. This is done through periods of collective worship and the personal and social education programme, circle time, the school council and the general life of the school. As a result, pupils have a clear sense of ownership and responsibility towards their environment. Collective worship conforms to statutory requirements and contributes well to pupils' understanding of moral issues and helps them to respect truth and justice.

89. Pupils receive good experiences through the good range of extra-curricular activities. Because of the small number of pupils on roll, the school makes every effort to enrich and vary the experiences offered to the pupils through partnerships with the community and other schools.
90. There is a strong and close link between the school and the parents. There is good communication between the school and the parents and all parents have signed the home-school agreement. The Friends of the School are very active and hold various activities in order to raise money for the school. These usually involve the whole community which is also very supportive of the school. The school holds services in the local church and chapels and local ministers come to the school to take assemblies with the pupils. Pupils receive valuable experiences through visits to the school by members of the community and through taking part in activities in their community.
91. The school has a very good partnership with a nearby primary school whereby they share resources, staff and good practice. The partnership with Ysgol Uwchradd Tregaron is very effective, with pupils from Y6 visiting the school for a whole day every fortnight for lessons in language, mathematics, science, French and sports. Pupils and parents appreciate this arrangement very much and it eases the process of transferring to the secondary school. The school has good links with a school in Brittany following a visit to a school there by a teacher from the school.
92. Through an arrangement with Careers Wales, the school receives students from Ysgol Gyfun Tregaron on work experience placements.
93. The school takes full advantage of its links with local businesses. Pupils receive opportunities to learn about the world of work through visits such as those to local farms and a quarry.
94. The school promotes learners' bilingual skills in Welsh and English, and reflects the culture of Wales well. The provision for the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is good.
95. As the number of pupils in the school is small, each one takes part in all the activities and ensures equal opportunities for all.
96. Pupils have a good awareness of the need to operate in a sustainable way. They collect cartridges and mobile phones for recycling. The school has an organic garden that was designed as part of the Healthy Schools project. Members of the community help the pupils with the work of maintaining the garden.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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97. The inspection team's findings agree with the judgement of the school in the self-evaluation report.
98. Support programmes have been very well integrated into the work of the school in order to satisfy learners' needs. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide the appropriate level of care, guidance and support for learners.
99. The school holds regular meetings for parents, but parents can also visit the school at any time should they wish. They receive regular correspondence

notifying them of the school's activities. The school has recently sent a questionnaire to parents in order to ascertain their views on different aspects of the life and work of the school. The responses were positive.

100. Provision for pupils with SEN is good and fully satisfies the requirements of the Code of Practice. Teachers and support staff work together well to ensure continuous support. The quality of the individual educational plans (IEPs) is good. The school ensures that pupils with special needs are fully included in the life of the school.
101. Additional support is provided to meet the needs of individuals, including the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Each pupil receives the same opportunity to take part in the school's activities.
102. There are effective procedures to enable children to settle quickly and easily in the school.
103. Staff at the school are very careful of pupils' safety and well-being on all occasions. There are appropriate day-to-day procedures to satisfy the needs of pupils who have had an accident or are unwell. Careful and comprehensive risk assessments are carried out within the school and for educational visits. There are appropriate procedures for the protection of children.
104. School staff monitor the attendance, punctuality and behaviour of pupils daily.
105. The school promotes good race relationships and shows respect for diversity across all areas of activity. There are policies in place to promote equality on the basis of gender, race and background.
106. The school has effective strategies to ensure that bad behaviour does not impair the progress of pupils. No evidence of oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection.
107. The school building is accessible for those with disabilities without placing them at a disadvantage.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

108. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 1 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
109. The headteacher offers clear and purposeful direction to the school. As she is the only full-time member of staff in the school and the other member is a part-time newly qualified teacher, she undertakes a wide range of curricular and managerial responsibilities. However, with the ready co-operation of everyone, the school operates in an environment of agreed values and high expectations.
110. There is a range of managerial and curricular policies to guide the work of the school. They are consistently implemented and regularly reviewed. Equality for everyone is ensured and this is reflected well in the work from day-to-day.
111. Good consideration is given to national priorities and very good attention to local partnerships. The school has developed appropriate initiatives to develop the pupils' understanding of healthy eating and sustainable development. The links

between local primary schools and the local secondary school are an outstanding features in the work of the school.

112. The school gained the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark in 2001 and 2005.
113. Everyone in the school is aware of the agreed targets set for them, both for pupils and adults. The support for individuals is good and this has a positive effect on standards. The school's procedures for performance management are implemented effectively.
114. Monitoring procedures reflect continuous development since the last inspection. Subject areas and whole-school aspects are regularly evaluated and the results shared with staff and the governing body.
115. The governing body meets regularly and the members are very supportive of all the school's work. They approve all the policies and take a prominent part in the strategic planning and matters concerning staffing, resources and accommodation. Currently, the members do not have sufficient awareness of the school's performance, especially in relation to standards of achievement and curricular developments.
116. The governing body fulfils all of its regulatory and legal requirements.
117. There are minor deficiencies in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.

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

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

118. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 1 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
119. Self-evaluation procedures have existed in the school for many years. The processes have concentrated more particularly on the weaknesses identified in the last inspection, and in that respect, the school has acted appropriately.
120. The self-evaluation report prepared for this inspection identifies the need to create a new monitoring system that gives more attention to standards of achievement and issues relating to teaching, learning and assessment. The inspection team agrees with this.
121. The school makes purposeful use of local and national benchmarking information to compare the performance of the school with that of similar schools. However, insufficient use is made of first hand evidence through lesson observations and evaluating pupils' work to ensure a valid judgement on pupils' standards of achievement.
122. Full consideration is given by the school to everyone's opinions. It regularly consults parents. All pupils are on the school council and regular meetings are held; this helps pupils to contribute towards, and directly influence the decisions which affect them.
123. The SDP is a useful tool to give direction to the work of the school. On the whole, there is an appropriate link between the priorities identified and the

outcomes of the self-evaluation process. However, it notes that long term planning is difficult as the school has been included in the LEA's plans for reorganising primary education in the area

124. The self-evaluation report prepared for this inspection is the result of discussions with staff and the governing body. It is a concise document which identifies the strengths of the school together with some issues that need further attention in relation to the seven key questions. It does not form a judgement on pupils' standards of achievement in curricular areas nor in the key skills.
125. The inspection team agrees with the judgement of the school in its self-evaluation report in three of the seven key questions. Where there is a difference in judgement, lower grades were adjudged than those awarded by the school.
126. Good progress has been made by the school in addressing the key issues identified in the previous report. Standards of achievement in all the subjects inspected are now at least satisfactory, often good, and in religious education very good. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and management of the curriculum is now good. The school's self-evaluation procedures and strategies for the development of key skills across the curriculum have been developed although there is further work to be done in these areas.

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

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

127. The findings of the inspection team agree with the judgement of the school in its self-evaluation report.
128. With the significant reduction in the number of pupils on roll over the last five years, the governing body has endeavoured to ensure sufficient staffing for the school.
129. Currently, as well as the full-time headteacher, the school employs a part-time newly qualified teacher (0.6) a part-time experienced teacher (0.05) and a classroom assistant for 12 hours per week. An *athrawes fro* visits the school for one afternoon every fortnight and a specialist teacher to support pupils with SEN for two and a half hours per week.
130. On some occasions during the week, the headteacher teaches pupils from four to 11 years of age in one class. Ensuring a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for a class containing such a wide age and ability range is very challenging and the headteacher is innovative in her efforts to overcome that challenge.
131. The classroom assistant offers good support to the teachers and the pupils.
132. Pupils receive a valuable service from the *athrawes fro* and from the SEN teacher.
133. Teachers update their knowledge and skills regularly through attending appropriate training courses.
134. Overall, the range of resources to support the curriculum is good. They have been conveniently located and are used regularly. There is an insufficient supply of ICT software and hardware in the school.

135. The building and classrooms offer a very suitable location and environment for teaching, learning and supporting pupils. The school has its own kitchen where the cook provides lunches of a high standard. The building is kept in an orderly way and is maintained to a good standard.
136. The building is accessible for those with disabilities.
137. The colourful displays on the classroom and corridor walls, especially the art work, contribute well to creating an attractive environment. These include pictures and records that celebrate pupils' achievements but examples of pupils' curricular work are few.
138. Spending decisions are appropriately linked with plans identified in the SDP. The current budget shows a slight deficit which can be attributed to spending in relation to the SEN provision. The governing body is aware of this and is dealing with the matter. Overall, the school gives value for money.

## **Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning**

### **Under 5s**

139. There were no children under five years of age on the school's roll at the time of the inspection.
140. Appropriate aims and objectives are outlined in the documentation relating to the early years' provision.
141. The curriculum is broad and balanced and based on the principles of early years' education as outlined in 'Desirable Outcomes for the Education of Children below the age of Compulsory Education' (ACAC).
142. There are no significant weaknesses in the educational programme.
143. The learning environment is appropriate and suitable for children under five years of age.

### **Welsh first language**

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

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

#### **Good features**

144. Pupils in both key stages listen purposefully and take part naturally in class discussions. They respond eagerly and, on some occasions, with enjoyment, to a variety of stimuli. They speak clearly with correctness appropriate to their age and ability. Pupils in KS2 are increasing in their confidence to express opinions and to recall previous information to support a viewpoint.
145. Overall reading standards are good in both key stages. All pupils enjoy reading and discussing books. They read correctly with the appropriate expression. They discuss what they have read showing an increasing understanding. Pupils in KS1 respond creatively to stories through role-play and acting. Pupils in KS2 listen intently and respond enthusiastically to fiction which is read to them. They are eager to predict what is likely to happen next. They succeed in gleaning information from a variety of printed sources and record the outcomes of their research appropriately.

146. In KS1, pupils show increasing ability to write independently using elementary sentences, words and punctuation to an appropriate standard. Pupils in KS2 write in a variety of formats such as stories, questionnaires, and factual passages with the more able achieving extended creative work. They respond well to a variety of literary subjects including good attention to poetry.

### **Shortcomings**

147. Individuals in both key stages have some difficulty in forming sentences, spelling and punctuating.

148. Pupils' re-drafting skills in KS2 are insufficiently developed.

## **English**

### **Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

149. Pupils in KS2 speak for a range of purposes. They readily ask and answer questions verbally. They become increasingly more confident in talking and discussing matters which are within their interest and experience.

150. On the whole, they make good progress in reading with the majority reading correctly with a good level of understanding. They can discuss events and characters and express a simple opinion on what they have read. They gather information appropriately from reference books, the Internet and other sources.

151. Pupils write in a variety of styles including responding to a topic, portrayals and creative passages. They can present the information appropriately, such as facts about authors, posters and pamphlets. They are aware of the difference between a 'personal' and a 'formal' letter. They use comparisons and adjectives in writing creatively or in creating pieces of poetry. The more able show an appropriate understanding of paragraphing and punctuation.

#### **Shortcomings**

152. Some individuals lack confidence when responding verbally.

153. They do not discuss what they read in an extended way through paying attention to events and expressing an opinion on characters.

154. The spelling and paragraphing skills of a minority of pupils are underdeveloped.

## **Mathematics**

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

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

#### **Good features**

155. Pupils' individual needs are effectively met as teachers pick and choose from mathematics schemes according to need. Pupils can recall facts quickly as a result of regular exercises in oral and mental skills.
156. Across KS1 and KS2, pupils' numeracy skills are strengthened well through the use they make of appropriate computer programs.
157. In KS1, pupils can undertake simple counting work with appropriate accuracy. They recall addition and subtraction facts fairly accurately. Pupils show a secure grasp of elementary numeracy processes.
158. They have a good understanding of number bonds and patterns. They recognise two-dimensional shapes and can name coins correctly. They respond well to questions on the different ways of making 5p, 10p, 50p and £1.
159. The written calculation work of the vast majority of pupils in KS2 is correct. They respond well to a range of mental work, using the interactive whiteboard to strengthen appropriate concepts. The more able pupils can explain their calculation methods in detail.
160. The majority can work independently using the mathematical concepts which they have to solve problems in new situations.
161. Within mathematics, the mental skills of the majority of pupils in KS2 are developing well.
162. They can draw and recognise rhombus shapes and knowledgeably discuss shapes they have drawn. Some pupils can see and analyse number patterns in several trapeziums and understand that a rule or formula can be created for them.

### **Shortcomings**

163. The research, problem-solving and mathematical application skills, such as working out number patterns, of a minority of pupils in KS2 are not well developed.

<b>Science</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**

164. The knowledge, understanding and scientific skills of pupils across KS1 and KS2 are developing well. The work they undertake in relation to the organic garden created in the school grounds makes a valuable contribution in this respect.
165. Pupils in KS1 can record observations and results of simple experiments effectively on worksheets.
166. Pupils in KS2 respond positively to scientific activities. They work in pairs using thinking skills well in planning tests and in researching into activities. They can predict sensibly what is likely to happen in a test. They record the results of their investigations in a variety of ways.
167. They can name parts of the body such as organs and bones well, discussing the importance of different parts of the body sensibly. They use the interactive

whiteboard effectively to show their knowledge of the location of parts of the body.

168. They understand that physical exercise and resting affect the heart beat rate and that the pulse gives the measure of the heart beat rate.

169. Pupils in KS2 develop and adapt their key skills in language, numeracy and problem-solving well through their work in science.

### **Shortcomings**

170. Overall in KS2, pupils' understanding of the concept of using independent, dependent and constant variables in a fair test is underdeveloped.

## **Information technology**

**Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

### **Good features**

171. Pupils in KS1 show good independent skills in opening a program and using it to play games which strengthen their language and numeracy skills. Their word processing skills are developing appropriately.

172. They make effective use of drawing programs to produce interesting colour pictures relating to their studies.

173. Pupils in KS2 make appropriate use of word-processing features in creating, editing and improving their work.

174. They use CD-ROMs and the Internet confidently to support their research work. They become increasingly confident in searching for the most appropriate web sites to support their studies.

175. They can insert pictures into a word processing program in order to create pamphlets, pictures and posters.

176. Pupils make appropriate use of the interactive whiteboard. They have started to familiarise themselves with simple control work.

### **Shortcomings**

177. In both key stages, there is insufficient progress in pupils' basic skills.

178. Pupils' skills across the full range of information technology strands are insufficiently developed.

## **Design technology**

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

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

### **Good features**

179. Pupils benefit from detailed planning which is based on principles and objectives appropriate to design technology areas in KS1 and KS2. They make sense of devices and processes in their environment through direct experience and research in the subject.
180. They take good advantage of a compact and comprehensive programme of study which is appropriately linked with theme work across the curriculum. Pupils respond to their tasks in a way which is appropriate to their age and ability and build well on previous skills.
181. There are examples of design technology work of a good standard displayed in the school, such as the pillows on the Christmas theme.
182. Pupils in KS2 research ideas thoroughly in a variety of sources including web sites, before starting to create their own sketches. They develop making skills from the sketches drawn and skilfully use the cross stitch technique on the pillows.
183. From previous work, it can be seen that pupils have created a range of interesting objects using a variety of materials, tools and processes. These products satisfy a clear need and are suitable for the purpose.
184. Pupils are developing an understanding of the effect of Celtic patterns on design work through observing '*Rhiannon*' jewellery work produced by a local company. They have the ability to draw some of the items on paper skilfully.
185. Pupils can evaluate their work appropriately. They operate in a safe way when using equipment.

### **Shortcomings**

186. In designing artefacts, pupils' ability to experiment and make personal choices from a range of materials and resources is rather limited.

<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**

187. Pupils' range and depth of historical understanding and information is developed well across both key stages.
188. Key Stage 1 pupils are developing a good understanding of chronology. They use different terms correctly in referring to the passing of time in comparing Christmas 'past' and 'present'.
189. They can compare the way of life of a child in the past, such as Jane Pritchard, with their own way of life. They succeed in identifying and differentiating between life at Llancaiach Fawr and life in their own homes today. They confidently discuss a variety of artefacts from the period they have been studying and compare them with equipment used today.
190. Pupils in KS2 have a good knowledge of the passing of time and how life has changed. They know about the changes in society during the Victorian era and they use different historical sources, such as the 1851 census, appropriately to extend their understanding of the period.

191. They interrogate well some of the events during the Second World War. They refer to some of the effects of the war on people and society as is shown in their work on the evacuees.
192. They can discuss some of the main events in specific periods in history well, showing a good awareness of chronology and change.
193. Pupils can recall a number of important characters and events in the history of Wales.

### **Shortcomings**

194. Pupils' ability to use a range of methods to record and communicate historical information is too limited.

## **Geography**

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

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

### **Good features**

195. Pupils in KS1 and KS2 have good geographical skills as a result of the educational visits they undertake and experiences relating to education for sustainable development and global citizenship.
196. Pupils in KS1 develop their knowledge of their locality well. They can recognise and name some physical and human features such as a bridge, river, trees and paths.
197. They can correctly locate Cardiff and Swyddffynnon on a map of Wales. They can compare simply features of the two areas and also identify some of the differences.
198. Pupils in KS2 can locate Swansea and Tregaron on paper maps and on maps on the interactive whiteboard. They can use an atlas successfully as well as plans of different scales.
199. Through studying two contrasting areas, they show an awareness that different places have similarities and differences.
200. Pupils in KS2 benefit from opportunities to develop their geographical skills in field work and classroom activities. They develop a good knowledge and understanding of economically developing countries.

### **Shortcomings**

201. In KS1 and KS2, pupils make insufficient use of secondary sources to access information, ideas and explanations in order to develop their investigative skills.

## **Art**

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

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

### **Good features**

202. In KS1, pupils can use a good range of materials, equipment and processes effectively. Their skills develop well through good experiences of working in a

variety of media such as painting, drawing, *collage* work and printing, within the termly themes.

203. Their control over a number of techniques is developing well as they draw and paint from observations and from memory.
204. In KS2, pupils make a range of two-dimensional objects and images of good standard through using a variety of materials, equipment and processes. Pupils experiment confidently with visual effects, such as line, tone, colour, pattern and texture.
205. Pupils in KS2 take advantage of opportunities to learn about Welsh artists such as Ogwyn Davies, as well as gathering information on the Internet on artists such as Pablo Picasso. Pupils can emulate different styles through using a range of materials.
206. Pupils' skills are developing well through valuable experiences they have in working with local artists. Pupils can record images effectively through direct observation of objects such as buildings in the village. They also draw pictures full of expression from memory, their feelings and their imagination.
207. Across both key stages, pupils show pride in their work.

### **Shortcomings**

208. Pupils' skills in choosing, controlling and experimenting with a variety of techniques, materials and processes such as screen printing, photography and pottery are insufficiently developed.

<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**

209. Overall, singing, instrumental performance and musical evaluation skills across KS1 and KS2 are good.
210. Pupils sing a variety of songs and hymns tunefully and with enthusiasm.
211. The majority of pupils in KS1 and KS2 perform confidently, with expression and sensitivity. At times, pupils show a sense of style and occasion. They show ability and accuracy appropriate to their age and development.
212. Pupils in both key stages recognize the quality and dynamic of sound. They keep the beat well and listen well to others performing.
213. They satisfactorily evaluate their own music and that of others.
214. Pupils regularly take advantage of opportunities to compete and perform publicly in local and county eisteddfodau and concerts bringing credit on themselves and the school.

### **Shortcomings**

215. Overall, the composing skills of pupils in KS1 and KS2 are underdeveloped. Their creative skills to select, combine and organise sounds to produce specific mood or atmosphere are insufficiently developed.

## Physical education

216. It was not possible to observe physical education lessons during the inspection, and as a result, no judgement is made on pupils' standards of achievement in the subject.
217. The school offers a varied physical education programme which meets the requirements of the NC.
218. The school joins with a nearby primary school to hold gymnastic, dance, swimming and games activities in Tregaron Leisure Centre.
219. Pupils have an opportunity to take part in different games and competitions in the area.

## Religious education

**Key Stage 1 – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

**Key Stage 2 – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

### Good and outstanding features

220. Pupils in both key stages have a very good awareness of the Bible as a special book for Christians. They can recall a number of stories about Jesus and some which pertain to Welsh religious traditions, such as St David.
221. They have very good knowledge of Christian festivals and celebrations, such as Christmas, Lent and Easter. They can refer to some celebrations in other religions, such as Divali.
222. Their visits to local places of worship give them a very good understanding of some of the features of the building and the services held within them. They have a very good understanding of the baptism service.
223. Pupils in KS2 know of the importance of rules in everyday life and in religion. They knowledgeably discuss the appropriateness of the Ten Commandments to the lives of people today.
224. They have a developing knowledge of the main features of other religions such as Hinduism and Islam. Their understanding of the Hindu religion is extended very effectively through their studies, such as the story of Rama and Sita.
225. Pupils know of the contribution of Christian leaders through their visits to places of worship and visitors who come to the school. Their understanding of the worshipping customs of other religions is enriched through visits to a Mosque and Synagogue.

## School's response to the inspection

The school was invited to provide a response to the inspection report but in this case, declined to do so.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Gymunedol Swyddffynnon
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	4 to 11
Address of school	Swyddffynnon Ystrad Meurig Ceredigion
Postcode	SY25 6AD
Telephone number	01974 831682

Headteacher	Mrs Ingrid E Rose
Date of appointment	September 1990
Chair of governors	Mrs Carol Jenkins
Registered inspector	Mr D Gwynfor Evans
Dates of inspection	6 – 8 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	0	0	1	1	0	2	2	3	9

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	1	2	1.65

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	5.45:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	4.5
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection	
Term	Rest of School
Autumn 2005	96.3%
Summer 2005	94.9%
Spring 2005	96.1%

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

### Appendix 3

#### National Curriculum Assessment Results

##### End of Key Stage 1:

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2005</b>	Number of pupils in Y2	0
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was fewer than five, summary information is not included.		

##### End of Key Stage 2:

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2005</b>	Number of pupils in Y6	3
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 was fewer than five, summary information is not included.		

### Appendix 4

#### Evidence base of the inspection

- The school was inspected by a team of three inspectors over a period of seven inspector days.
- The headteacher was the nominee.
- Seventeen lessons or parts of lessons, as well as a selection of pupils' practical and written work were inspected.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- During the inspection, registration, acts of collective worship and other activities were observed.
- Discussions were held with staff and pupils relating to their work.
- Discussions were held with the School Council.
- All documents presented by the school before and during the inspection were analysed.
- Meetings were held with staff before the inspection and during the inspection with the parents and governing body.
- Seven parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and the six questionnaires completed by them were analysed.
- A post-inspection meeting was held with the staff and governing body.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Member	Responsibilities	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr Gwynfor Evans Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key questions 1, 2 (teaching) 5, 6 and 7 Appendices	Welsh English history information technology physical education religious education
Mrs Nan Williams Team	Key questions 2 (assessment), 3 and 4	mathematics science design technology geography music art
Mrs Janice Davies Lay	Contributions to the seven key questions	
Mrs Ingrid E Rose Nominee		

### ***Acknowledgement***

***The inspection team wish to express their thanks to the governors, head, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation during the inspection.***

**The contractor was:**  
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