

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

**Sychdyn C.P. School
Vownog Road, Flintshire.
CH7 6ED**

School Number: 6642043

Date of Inspection: 20/11/06

by

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- * primary schools;
- * 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
- * the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre Plus.

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Sychdyn Community Primary (C.P.) 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 Sychdyn C.P. School took place between 20/11/06 and 22/11/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Merfyn Lloyd 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:

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All 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. Sychdyn Primary school serves the residential area of Sychdyn which is situated between Mold and Flint. It lies in the area administered by Flintshire County Council.
2. The school caters for pupils between the ages of three and eleven years of age. At the time of the inspection there were 187.5 full-time equivalent pupils on roll. Pupils are admitted into the nursery class in the September following their third birthday and to the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.
3. Pupils represent the full ability range. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs although there are 20 pupils either on school action or school action plus for extra support. The pupils are arranged into seven classes.
4. According to the school, the pupils are drawn from a social background which is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Six per cent of the pupils receive a free school meal.
5. English is the predominant language spoken at home.
6. Accommodation problems evident at the last inspection have been resolved with the addition of three extra classrooms along with a complete remodelling programme.
7. The school was last inspected in 2000. The current head teacher has been in post since September 1992.

The school's priorities and targets

8. The school's main priorities and targets for 2005-06 include:
 - to raise pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2;
 - to further develop a more structured approach to monitoring teaching and learning;
 - to involve pupils in decision-making;
 - to create opportunities for training and development of support staff.

Summary

9. Sychdyn is a very caring school, one in which pupils feel safe, respected and valued. The school successfully promotes positive values and adults and pupils work together happily. All pupils are treated fairly and with respect. Good relationships exist between pupils and adults throughout the school. The good features at the school outweigh the shortcomings.

Table of grades awarded

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

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

Standards

11. Overall, the standards achieved in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	56%	40%	4%	0%

12. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
13. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, in the subjects inspected, the standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2	Grade 3
History	Grade 2	Grade 2

Geography	Grade 3	Grade 3
Art	Grade 2	Grade 3
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

14. In 2006, end of key stage 1 teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or better in English, mathematics and science was above the Local Authority (LA) and the national averages. Similarly the core subject indicator was above the LA and national averages. When compared with similar schools across Wales, using the free school meals indicator, the school was placed in the top 50% of schools for mathematics, science and English. Girls performed better than the boys in all subjects.
15. In 2006, end of key stage 2 teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science was above the LA and national averages. Similarly the core subject indicator was above the LA and national averages. When compared with similar schools across Wales, using the free school meals indicator, the school was placed in the bottom 25% of schools for each subject. Girls performed better than boys in all subjects.
16. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is generally good. There are no differences in standards of achievement of pupils in terms of social background, language or race.
17. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, the majority of pupils make good progress and attain good standards in speaking and listening. Overall the standards of reading and writing at both key stages have good features that outweigh shortcomings. The quality of handwriting at key stage 2 is varied and impacts on the quality of work presented. Numeracy is used to measure and calculate accurately in science and design and technology but opportunities are missed in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils across the age range use ICT to support their learning in a number of subject areas particularly mathematics and design and technology, but much of this is teacher led.
18. When provided with appropriate opportunities, pupils enjoy collaborating on creative and problem solving activities. However, opportunities are often missed for pupils to take more responsibility for their own work and the recording of it.
19. In their bilingual development, pupils do not have a secure knowledge of the limited range of vocabulary and sentence patterns they are taught and frequently give inappropriate answers. Pupils at both key stages have yet to develop the knowledge, understanding and confidence to initiate discussion in Welsh with teachers or with their peers and as a result make slow progress throughout the school with their bi-lingual skills.
20. Not enough emphasis is placed on developing key skills across the curriculum.
21. The majority of pupils show a good level of motivation, interest and enthusiasm in their work and concentrate well during lessons.

22. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are considerate, friendly and polite to each other, staff and visitors. They have very good awareness of values such as honesty, fairness and consideration for others and they demonstrate this attitude towards each other during the day.
23. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of equal opportunities is good.
24. Pupils have gained strong community awareness through fundraising for local and national charities.
25. Pupils are well behaved, considerate and courteous. They contribute positively to the good quality of life in the school.
26. Whole school attendance during the three terms preceding the inspection averaged 95%, which compares well with both national and local levels.
27. With very few exceptions pupils arrive punctually and lessons throughout the day begin on time. Good arrangements have now been established for monitoring attendance and punctuality which comply fully with statutory requirements .

The quality of education and training

28. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	45%	38%	17%	0%

29. In all lessons, good relationships exist between staff and pupils. All teachers make effective use of praise to motivate pupils and encourage them to give of their best. In lessons judged to be grade 2, teachers for example, plan well with clear learning objectives, interact well with pupils to support their learning and ask questions which draws out pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the percentage of lessons judged to be a grade 3 or lower, there is for example, an absence of challenge and pace, over-direction by teachers and limited opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.
30. The school ensures that the needs of all pupils are met regardless of gender, race or ability, in particular those pupils with SEN.
31. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements for the core subjects. However, there are no year-on-year targets in place which enable the school to monitor the progress of pupils between or within levels. There is no assessment of standards in foundation subjects.
32. Individual targets are set for pupils; these, however, are too broad, often unrelated to standards and are not regularly reviewed. Pupils are not involved in planning their own progress and improvement.

33. Parents have ample opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers.
34. The school provides pupils with a curriculum which is generally broad and balanced, meets statutory requirements and is accessible to all pupils. Inconsistencies in schemes of work in terms of format and detail make mid term planning difficult. Neither long-, mid-nor short- term plans address key skills.
35. Pupils at key stage 2 have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are a good feature of the school.
36. The school's provision for personal and social education is good and supports the school's Personal and Social Education framework well. Health education is an integral part of the curriculum.
37. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is effectively developed and the children have an awareness of the culture of Wales which is effectively promoted in history.
38. The school has an effective partnership with parents who are supportive of the school. Through parents' evenings, annual reports and newsletters, parents are kept informed of activities throughout the school year. However, there are a number of parents who feel they are not kept as informed as they should about their child's achievement, and that the school does not provide them with a clear understanding of what is taught. The home-school agreement meets statutory requirements.
39. Visitors and educational visits effectively raise pupils' awareness of the world of work, both past and present, and strengthen links with the community. Pupils' understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship are at an early stage and are being developed through activities within the school. The experiences offered to pupils enable them to begin to develop a range of skills to enable them to establish good attitudes for lifelong learning.
40. The quality of care, support and guidance for pupils is very good. Pupils feel safe and members of staff know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. All support assistants make an essential contribution to the learning, welfare and personal development of the pupils.
41. The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is very good. Pupils with SEN have Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) which are well structured and contain clear, achievable targets.
42. A very good feature of the school is its procedures for pupils with behaviour problems. These are sensitively and consistently applied in such a way that they are part of its ethos and no pupils are adversely affected.

43. The school adopts an inclusive approach to all pupils with special needs and pupils with physical or learning difficulties are fully integrated. All pupils are treated equally and all parts of the building are accessible to all.

Leadership and management

44. Members of staff work well as a team. The general organisation of the school is good. Administration arrangements are effective. There is a strong commitment by the staff to undertake continuing professional development.
45. The school has clear aims and values that are promoted by a committed staff and governing body. All staff members have job descriptions that identify their roles and responsibilities. They are keen and enthusiastic to carry these out effectively but have yet to receive the necessary guidance, support and time for these duties to be fully realised.
46. Whole school targets are set according to statutory requirements for English, mathematics and science; however comparative data is not used effectively to focus on those subject areas that need prioritising. Governors are conscious of the need to improve the school's performance at key stage 2 in relation to those schools that are in the same free school meals band.
47. The school takes account of national priorities and these are integrated into the daily life of the school; the Basic Skills Quality Mark, health promotion and sustainability are good examples of this. These initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and well being.
48. The governors are very committed and supportive of the school. Through recent initiatives governors are increasingly becoming better informed about all aspects of school life and good progress is being made in those areas where governors visit classrooms and have 'link' responsibilities.
49. The governing body fully meets its statutory responsibilities, but its involvement in providing a strategic direction for the school needs to develop further.
50. The self-evaluation report, although useful in identifying priorities for development, lacks judgements in relation to many aspects for each key question and on measuring performance by pupils.
51. Recently introduced monitoring arrangements for the core subjects and some aspects of foundation subjects are developing well but tend to focus more on provision than on the quality of teaching and learning. Little opportunity is given to subject leaders to draw on first-hand experience of the quality of learning, and evaluation of the standards pupils achieve.
52. The inspection team's judgements differ to that of the school's in all key questions. It is the view of the team that the school has overestimated its judgement in each one.

53. The school development plan (SDP) identifies the main focus areas for 2006 - 2007 and includes timescales, responsibilities, intended outcomes and cost implications but there are no priorities or targets beyond then. The plan is not sufficiently focused on pupils' progress and raising standards; this makes it difficult for governors to determine what resource priorities to set.
54. There are areas, identified for improvement in the last inspection where little progress has been made; namely assessment and monitoring. Good progress has been made in addressing the other key issues.
55. The school is adequately staffed with well-qualified teachers who are deployed effectively. The school has responded positively to professional development review arrangements and staff training needs are identified.
56. The school has an adequate supply of resources for most subjects and these are easily accessible for pupils. Following the remodelling and extension to the school in 2002, the standard of accommodation is good.
57. The school manages its budget well. The governors' Finance and Staffing Committee meets regularly to monitor budget spending. Overall, the school provides value for money.

Recommendations

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

R1 raise standards by addressing the shortcomings identified under the subject headings;

R2 ensure consistency in the format of schemes of work in order to facilitate effective mid-term curriculum planning and promote the development of key skills;

R4 prepare an effective school development plan that enables a clear sense of direction for the school and promotes improvement in how well learners achieve;

R5 develop the self-evaluation system to consistently and rigorously monitor standards of work and the quality of teaching;

R6 develop the awareness of pupils of what they need to do in order to improve their work and involve them more in identifying their own targets for improvement;

R7 establish and implement a robust system of assessment which clearly identifies priorities and informs future planning;

R8 make appropriate provision for the development of pupils' bilingual competence and ensure progression throughout the school.

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

58. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 2 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. There are shortcomings in several aspects of learners' achievements.
59. Overall, the standards achieved in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	56%	40%	4%	0%

60. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) all-Wales target that by 2007, 98 per cent of standards should be Grade 3 or better and 65 per cent Grade 2 or better.
61. The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
62. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, in the subjects inspected, the standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2	Grade 3
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 3	Grade 3
Art	Grade 2	Grade 3
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

63. In 2006, end of key stage 1 teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or better in English, mathematics and science was above the LA and the national averages. Similarly the core subject indicator was above the LA and national averages. When compared with similar schools across Wales, using the free school meals indicator, the school was placed in the top 50% of schools for mathematics, science and English. Girls performed better than the boys in all subjects.
64. In 2006, end of key stage 2 teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science was above the LA and national averages. Similarly the core subject indicator was above the

LA and national averages. When compared with similar schools across Wales, using the free school meals indicator, the school was placed in the bottom 25% of schools for each subject. Girls performed better than boys in all subjects.

65. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs SEN is generally good.
66. Statutory targets are set at both key stages. However, pupils across the school are not sufficiently involved in determining their own targets for improvement or in evaluating how well they are doing. Targets for more able pupils need to be more challenging, particularly at the top end of key stage 2.
67. There are no differences in standards of achievement of pupils in terms of social background, language or race.
68. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, the majority of pupils make good progress and attain good standards in speaking and listening. They speak clearly and confidently, using a range of appropriate vocabulary associated with different subject areas. Overall the standards of reading and writing at both key stages have good features that outweigh shortcomings. However, there are insufficient opportunities in writing for pupils to use different text forms, to write independently and across all areas of the curriculum. The quality of handwriting at key stage 2 is varied and impacts on the quality of work presented. Numeracy is used to measure and calculate accurately in science and design and technology, but opportunities are missed in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils across the age range use ICT to support their learning in a number of subject areas particularly mathematics and design and technology, but much of this is teacher led.
69. When provided with appropriate opportunities, pupils enjoy collaborating on creative and problem solving activities. However, opportunities are often missed for pupils to take more responsibility for their own work and the recording of it.
70. In their bilingual development, pupils do not have a secure knowledge of the limited range of vocabulary and sentence patterns they are taught and frequently give inappropriate answers. They are unable to move with ease between the two languages and while they understand and can respond to commands and simple questions this is at a limited level. Pupils at both key stages have yet to develop the knowledge, understanding and confidence to initiate discussion in Welsh with teachers or with their peers and as a result make slow progress throughout the school with their bilingual skills.
71. The majority of pupils show a good level of motivation, interest and enthusiasm in their work and concentrate well during lessons. They are happy to ask questions knowing that their efforts will be appreciated.
72. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are considerate, friendly and polite to each other, staff and visitors. They move around the school in a quiet, orderly and courteous manner. They have very good

awareness of values such as honesty, fairness and consideration for others and they demonstrate this attitude towards each other during the day. A range of extra-curricular activities, particularly sport, enhances pupils' social development. Collective worship is the main focus for spiritual development where pupils have time for reflection and the development of spiritual awareness; however, opportunities in lessons during the day are often missed.

73. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of equal opportunities is good. They recognise, understand and respect diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within a society.
74. Pupils have gained good community awareness through fundraising for local and national charities. This enables them to develop an understanding of the world around them and gives them good grounding in the importance of the world of work and citizenship.
75. Pupils are well behaved, considerate and courteous. They contribute positively to the very good quality of life in the school. Pupils enter and move around the school in an orderly and purposeful manner. Pupils understand the school rules, which they themselves have helped draw up, and the values that the school promotes. There have been no exclusions for many years.
76. Whole school attendance during the three terms preceding the inspection averaged 95%, which compares well with both national and local levels. Unauthorised absence is low. Registers are promptly called at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. With very few exceptions pupils arrive punctually and lessons throughout the day begin on time. Good arrangements have now been established for monitoring attendance and punctuality which comply fully with statutory requirements.

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 do not match the judgement of Grade 2 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The team found that there were shortcomings, some of them important.

78. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	45%	38%	17%	0%

79. The figures do not compare well with the figures in the Chief Inspector of Schools Annual Report for 2004 - 05 when the quality of teaching throughout Wales was a grade 2 or better in 79 per cent of lessons with 18 per cent having outstanding features.

80. Lessons judged to be good with no important shortcomings have features that include:

- good planning and organisation;
- good levels of classroom discipline;
- previous knowledge reinforced and extended;
- learning objectives which were clearly understood by pupils;
- good use of praise to motivate and encourage pupils;
- effective questioning which draws out pupils' knowledge and understanding;
- teachers interact well with pupils to support them in their work and
- lively and energetic delivery, which motivates pupils.

81. In lessons where there are shortcomings, there were features that include:

- over-direction by teachers impacting adversely on the pace of lessons and underdevelopment of extended and open-ended questioning which resulted in a lack of challenge;
- management of time being ineffective and progression limited;
- work that is not sufficiently adapted to suit the different needs of learners particularly the more able and
- limited opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own work which restrict their problem-solving and creative skills.

82. Some lessons in the early years and key stage 1 are sometimes too formal; as a result, pupils spend too much time working on tasks which present an inappropriate challenge, such as copying.

83. In all lessons, good relationships exist between staff and pupils. All teachers make effective use of praise to motivate pupils and encourage them to give of their best.
84. Teachers possess an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Overall, learning resources are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning and teachers sometimes make good use of visits and visitors to support pupils' learning in different areas of the curriculum.
85. The school ensures that the needs of all pupils are met regardless of gender, race or ability, in particular those pupils with SEN.
86. Teachers do not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop and apply their bilingual skills across the curriculum. The use of incidental Welsh is under developed and opportunities during the school day to develop pupils' bilingual skills are missed.
87. Teachers consider carefully the needs of individual learners with SEN. Individual programmes are prepared which are implemented effectively and pupils' progress is monitored. More able pupils, however, are not sufficiently challenged.
88. Teachers use a variety of schemes of work to support planning and teaching. These are, however, difficult to manage and, as a result, planning lacks clarity and focus. Planning does not always indicate clearly how pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills may be extended.
89. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements. Baseline assessment is undertaken in Nursery and Reception and results are analysed by the school and the information gained is used well to address children's strengths and areas for development. LEA records are also kept. At key stage 1 and key stage 2, the core subjects are assessed termly by teacher assessment and from year 2 a number of standardised assessments are used at the beginning of the school year in reading, spelling and mathematics. Standardised tests are also administered at the beginning of the summer term in literacy. The results are used to identify pupils with difficulties and to set targets for the end of each key stage. There are no year-on-year targets in place which enable the school to monitor the progress of pupils between or within levels, and the end of key stage targets which are set are neither reviewed nor adjusted during the school year. There is no assessment of standards in foundation subjects.
90. Individual targets are set for pupils; these, however, are too broad, often unrelated to standards and are not regularly reviewed. Assessment procedures lack rigour, clarity and a focus on formative assessment. Although teachers gather information from their assessments, the system is neither coherent nor manageable and the information gathered does not inform the planning of future work. There is no whole-school pupil tracking record in place and information about individual pupils' progress is not readily accessible.

91. Teachers' planning identifies assessment opportunities in the short term. These are frequently not completed, however, and when they are, the assessments are not sufficiently precise in identifying issues to be addressed, neither are they used to inform subsequent planning and teaching.
92. Teachers' marking is generally superficial and rarely identifies what pupils know and can do or indicate what pupils need to do in order to improve their work. Pupils are not involved in planning their own progress and improvement.
93. There are no portfolios of work assessed using National Curriculum (NC) levels in place to provide teachers with guidance when making judgements about standards. This contributes to a lack of precision and inconsistency of expectation when teachers assess pupils' work.
94. Parents have ample opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers. The school provides annual written reports for parents which indicate pupils' progress in the core subjects but do not provide a clear picture of their progress against NC criteria in the foundation subjects and religious education; neither do they provide pupils with an opportunity to comment on their own progress.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

95. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 1 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. There are important shortcomings in the provision for pupils' bilingual and key skills and there are shortcomings in the way in which pupils' learning experiences respond to the needs of employers.
96. The school provides pupils with a curriculum which is generally broad and balanced, meets statutory requirements and is accessible to all pupils. Neither long-, mid- nor short-term planning address key skills nor does planning take account of what pupils have done or indicate the way forward. Inconsistencies in schemes of work in terms of format and detail makes mid-term planning difficult. The organisation of many schemes of work into taught units results in a lack of coherence; this makes it difficult for pupils to develop, for example, a concept of chronology or to see the links between different aspects of geography.
97. The provision for the key skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy have good features but there are shortcomings in the provision for information technology (IT). The over-direction of teaching and the absence of opportunities for pupils to make decisions about their learning and to become independent learners results in their creative and problem-solving skills being

undeveloped. Teachers do not make effective use of the attractive and stimulating outdoor environment; this contributes significantly to the lack of pupils' active involvement in their own learning and to the underdevelopment of their creative and problem-solving skills. Not enough emphasis is placed on developing key skills across the curriculum.

98. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
99. Pupils at key stage2 have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are a good feature of the school. These include netball, football, rounders, cross-country running, rugby, tennis, athletics, hockey, recorder and guitar lessons and the school orchestra. Pupils also benefit from residential visits to Pentrellyncymer and Glanllyn which add a valuable dimension to their learning experiences. Teachers demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment when leading these.
100. Teachers provide good role models for pupils' moral development; as a result, pupils acquire a good set of values, understand how to behave and know right from wrong. They are sensitive to the needs of others. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and contributes to pupils' sense of values; the vicar visits regularly and takes assembly at the school. Spiritual development, however, is not well promoted in lessons; pupils do not receive opportunities to reflect on their learning and personal experiences.
101. The school's provision for personal and social education (PSE) is good and supports the school's PSE framework well. Pupils are courteous, their behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes towards learning. They collaborate well on tasks when given the opportunity to do so and take responsibility for their actions.
102. Health education is an integral part of the curriculum, and sex education is provided by the school nurse who is a regular visitor.
103. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is effectively developed and the children have an awareness of the culture of Wales which is effectively promoted in history. Visits to areas further afield in Wales including Castell Bodelwyddan and Moel Fammau, extend pupils' knowledge of their country and its culture and lead to further cultural experiences such as a drama project with Theatr Clwyd and Welsh folk dancing. The school's use of the locality to enhance Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig, notably in geography, its use of the work of Welsh artists and the use of stories about Wales and Welsh literature, is under developed as is pupils' awareness of other cultures.
104. Although incidental Welsh is used during assembly and when giving instructions in the classroom, the provision for the development of pupils' bilingual competence is inadequate.

105. The school has an effective partnership with parents who are supportive of the school. Through parents' evenings, annual reports and newsletters, parents are kept informed of activities throughout the school year. However, there are a number of parents who feel they are not kept as informed as they should be about their child's achievement, and that the school does not provide them with a clear understanding of what is taught. The home-school agreement meets statutory requirements.
106. There are good links with higher education institutions and the school regularly accepts students on placement who are well mentored by the assistant head teacher. Students pursuing vocational courses at a local college and students from the secondary school are frequently received on placement. The police liaison officer is a regular visitor who, with the community beat officer, talks to pupils about their role. The road safety unit visits year 1 regularly to provide a road safety programme and pupils in year 6 benefit from a cycling proficiency programme.
107. Visitors and educational visits effectively raise pupils' awareness of the world of work, both past and present, and strengthen links with the community. Pupils have benefited from working with authors, horticulturists, theatre groups and musicians. The school has close links with others in the same cluster which enable members of staff to share their expertise. These contribute to curriculum development as well as teachers' professional development. The head teacher has benefited from a placement in industry.
108. The school is an inclusive community and effectively ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils. Its equal opportunities policy reflects the school's commitment to encourage pupils to appreciate equality of access. Adults encourage all pupils, regardless of personal circumstances, gender, ethnic background or ability, to participate in all the school's activities. As a result, pupils demonstrate respect for one another, towards visitors and for all adults who contribute to the life of the school.
109. Pupils' understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship are at an early stage and are being developed through activities within the school. Their understanding of environmental awareness is developing through conservation schemes such as waste reduction and recycling. Pupils co-operate with the local community council by collecting waste paper, plastics, cans for processing and collecting leaves for composting .
110. Links have been established with villages in India and Ghana and contact has been made via e-mail. Pupils have collected and sent educational materials out to village schools in Ghana. These links are raising pupils' awareness of global citizenship.
111. The development of pupils' entrepreneurial skills is at an early stage. It is promoted through various activities such as their involvement in running stalls at school fetes and making small gifts to sell at the Christmas fair; however, it is not yet an ongoing part of their regular learning experiences.

112. The experiences offered to pupils enable them to begin to develop a range of skills in order to establish good attitudes for lifelong learning. The school endeavours to lay the foundations of lifelong and community regeneration by encouraging pupils to be responsible for their own actions and to be sympathetic to the needs of others. Senior pupils are given the opportunity to take on responsibilities such as by being 'playground pals' while younger pupils willingly undertake tasks to help their teachers.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

113. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 1 made by the school in its self-evaluation report, although there are some very good features, provision overall falls short of outstanding.
114. The quality of care, support and guidance for pupils is very good. Sychdyn is a very caring school, one in which pupils feel safe, respected and valued. The school successfully promotes positive values and adults and pupils work together happily. Members of staff take all reasonable care to protect pupils from harm and there are sound structures in place which ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Pupils feel safe and staff know their pupils well and are sensitive to their needs.
115. All support assistants make an essential contribution to the learning, welfare and personal development of the pupils. Effective use is made of additional support from specialist services including occupational therapy, health specialists, speech and language therapy and the inclusion service. This ensures effective support and guidance for pupils.
116. The school is proactive in developing a positive partnership with parents and in caring for, supporting and guiding their children, taking into consideration their views. Parents have regular access to all staff. They are suitably informed of the pastoral care and arrangements through the School Handbook, parents' evenings and regular letters. Their views are often sought through questionnaires. Parents are highly appreciative of the work achieved by the school and are happy with the care and support that their children receive. The school follows the correct procedures when dealing with appeals and complaints.
117. The school has effective induction and support programmes for new pupils and the under-fives settle in quickly in their classes and feel safe at school. There is good provision for admitting older pupils during the year. There are effective arrangements for pupil transfer to the secondary schools which ensure that pupils are happy and confident when moving schools. The close cooperation between the catchment primary school and the secondary schools leads to good continuity of curricular experiences for pupils.
118. There is an active monitoring system and effective strategies in place for encouraging good behaviour, attendance and punctuality.

119. The schools' provision for ensuring the healthy development, safety and well-being of pupils is good. As a result of a review of safety measures, a new path has been laid which enables pupils to access the school safely. A programme of healthy eating has been introduced and the school nurse and community police officer give talks to children on healthy lifestyles.
120. Some staff have been trained in first-aid and there are sound procedures in place for meeting the needs of pupils who are unwell or who may have had an accident. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and a risk assessment is regularly undertaken before school trips and events. There is very good supervision of pupils both inside and outside the classroom. Effective security measures are in place to ensure the safety and well being of pupils at all times .
121. There are good procedures for Child Protection. The head teacher is the nominated member and all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities.
122. The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is very good. The school's procedures for identification, assessment and provision for pupils with SEN pay due regard to the Code of Practice and the procedures are appropriately followed. There are four pupils with statements for SEN and they are very well integrated into the life of the school.
123. Pupils with SEN have IEPs which are well structured and contain clear, achievable targets. Teaching strategies, review dates and success criteria are identified and pupils move off the register when appropriate. Teachers meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) at least twice a year to review the progress of pupils with SEN and to identify their next steps in teaching and learning which inform subsequent IEPs. Individual pupils and groups are sometimes withdrawn from class and given additional help by the head teacher. They are also provided with very good in-class support by non-teaching staff and are very well integrated into the classroom; this is a particular strength of the school. The SENCo keeps detailed notes about each pupil on the SEN register and readily accesses detailed information when required.
124. The school has good procedures in place in order to identify and meet pupils' needs. The SENCO works closely with pupils and their teachers, parents and carers, and health services in order to ensure that pupils receive guidance of a high quality in support of their personal and social education. Effective early identification and diagnosis are outstanding features of the provision for pupils with SEN and a range of standardised tests ensure that the process of screening is continuous.
125. A very good feature of the school is its procedures for supporting pupils with behaviour problems. These are sensitively and consistently applied in such a way that they are part of its ethos and no pupils are adversely affected.

126. The quality of fairness and equal opportunity for all is an integral part of the school's ethos. All pupils are valued and are given opportunities to participate in all activities.
127. All teachers promote equality of opportunity and actively address issues of gender. Mixed gender partners and groupings are well promoted in lessons and all pupils are encouraged to play a full part in learning. There are appropriate measures in place which enable pupils to recognise and respect diversity and address race equality and equal opportunities.
128. The school adopts an inclusive approach to all pupils with special needs and pupils with physical or learning difficulties are fully integrated. All pupils are treated equally and all parts of the building are accessible to all.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

129. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 2 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school has overestimated the quality of leadership and management.
130. The head teacher provides good support and care for pupils at a pastoral level but there are shortcomings in those aspects of the school's work that focus more directly on improving the quality of provision and the educational achievement of pupils.
131. Members of staff work well as a team. Equality is provided for all pupils and this is reflected in the work from day to day. The general organisation of the school is good. Administration arrangements are effective.
132. There is a strong commitment by the staff to undertake continuing professional development. The outcome of some of this training is evident in, for example, the way one member of staff funded for training for dyslexic pupils provides support and guidance for others.
133. The school has clear aims and values that are promoted by a committed staff and governing body. All staff have job descriptions that identify their roles and responsibilities. They are keen and enthusiastic to carry these out effectively but have yet to receive the necessary guidance, support and time for these duties to be fully realised. As a result, monitoring is not undertaken regularly or with sufficient rigour to make judgements of the quality of learning and the standards pupils achieve.
134. Whole school targets are set according to statutory requirements for English, mathematics and science; however comparative data is not used effectively to focus on those subject areas that need prioritising. Governors are conscious of the need to improve the school's performance at key stage 2 in relation to those schools in the same free school meals band.
135. The school takes account of national priorities and these are integrated into the daily life of the school; health promotion and sustainability are good examples of this. These initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and well being.
136. The school works very effectively in partnership with its 'family' of local primary schools. They meet regularly to discuss local and national initiatives. The close partnerships with the University College of North Wales, Deeside and Yale colleges work well. Induction and transitional arrangements with the local high school are good.

137. The governors are very committed and supportive of the school. The sub-committee arrangements work well by reporting back issues for the full governing body to consider. Through recent initiatives governors are increasingly becoming better informed about all aspects of school life and good progress is being made in those areas where governors visit classrooms and have 'link' responsibilities. Governors have been pro-active in gaining the views of parents and have responded positively to suggestions.
138. The governing body fully meets its statutory responsibilities, but its involvement in providing a strategic direction for the school needs to develop further.

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

Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas

139. 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 has overestimated how well the school evaluates and improves quality and standards.
140. Teachers have been involved in the process of self- evaluation and have contributed to discussions to identify the school's best features and areas for development. The views of parents were sought through a questionnaire and the findings shared and considered. There was no informal involvement of pupils in the process or other interested parties. The self-evaluation report, although useful in identifying priorities for development, lacks judgements in relation to many aspects for each key question and on measuring performance by pupils.
141. Recently introduced monitoring arrangements for the core subjects and some aspects of foundation subjects are developing well but tend to focus more on provision than on the quality of teaching and learning. Little opportunity is given to subject leaders to draw on first hand experience of the quality of learning, and evaluation of the standards pupils achieve.
142. The inspection team's judgements differ to that of the school's in all key questions. It is the view of the team that the school has overestimated its judgement in each one.
143. The school has a system of setting targets for pupils' achievement at the end of each key stage but not all teachers are involved. There is no thorough assessment analysis done to determine targets for individual pupils.
144. The SDP identifies the main focus areas for 2006 -2007 and includes timescales, responsibilities, intended outcomes and cost implications but there are no priorities or targets beyond then. The plan is not sufficiently focused on pupils' progress and raising standards; this makes it difficult for governors to determine what resource priorities to set. As it stands, it is an ineffective tool.

145. There are areas for improvement identified in the last inspection where little progress has been made, namely assessment and monitoring. Good progress has been made in addressing the other key issues.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

146. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 2 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school has overestimated how efficient it is in using resources.
147. The school is adequately staffed with well-qualified teachers who are deployed effectively. All staff have appropriate job descriptions. Good use is made of peripatetic staff to support areas of the curriculum for example, music. Support staff work effectively with teachers to support individual pupils who have learning or behavioural difficulties.
148. The school has responded positively to professional development review arrangements and staff training needs are identified. These arrangements meet statutory requirements. The school organises its Preparation, Planning and Assessment (PPA) time to ensure that teachers have their entitled non-contact time. Training needs however, are not always focused on priorities to raise achievement.
149. The caretaker/cleaner and catering staff are valued members of the school team and make an important and valuable contribution to implementing the school's caring values.
150. The school has an adequate supply of resources for most subjects and these are easily accessible for pupils. The range of books in both the school and class libraries is generally good but there is a lack of 'Big-Books' to support learning at key stage 1. A new IT suite is well placed but its potential for pupils to work independently has not yet been fully realised.
151. Following the remodelling and extension to the school in 2002, the standard of accommodation is good. The large all weather community pitch is an outstanding feature which is used to provide a range of opportunities for pupils to participate in sports and other activities. There has been considerable investment in developing the outdoor learning environment in preparation for the Foundation Phase, however its integration into children's daily learning experiences needs to be developed.
152. Staff members have worked hard to provide a stimulating environment. Good quality displays throughout the school celebrate pupils' work and support their learning. The school is fully accessible by all pupils and if required by those with physical disabilities.

153. The school manages its budget well. The governors' Finance and Staffing Committee meets regularly to monitor budget spending. Overall, the school provides value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

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

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

154. Standards in speaking and listening are good in both key stages. At key stage 1, pupils are able to take turns and listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and to what other pupils have to say. By the end of the key stage most possess a good vocabulary, including subject specific words and they express themselves confidently using good English.
155. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils use appropriate speech for a range of purposes. They discuss their activities in groups when given the opportunity to do so and most pupils demonstrate that they are able to articulate their ideas with confidence and clarity. Most pupils at the end of the key stage have a good knowledge of subject specific vocabulary.
156. Standards in reading in both key stages have good features which outweigh shortcomings. Younger pupils in key stage 1 recognise familiar words in simple texts and have a good knowledge of sound-symbol relationships. The more able key stage 1 pupils read fluently and expressively and understand the way in which punctuation affects expression, for example, they emphasise words printed in bold. They understand what title and author mean. Others read accurately but mechanically and are over-reliant on phonic cues.
157. Pupils in the lower end of key stage 2, continue to read from a structured reading scheme and group reading texts. The older and more able readers read from a broader range of texts with increasing fluency and accuracy.
158. At the end of the key stage, the more able pupils use the library in order to acquire simple information and are developing effective higher order reading skills. They know the purpose of a glossary, an index and a blurb. Some pupils are developing a preference for particular genres and can name their favourite books and authors. Pupils of middle and lower abilities, however, read accurately but mechanically and rely solely on phonic cues to read unfamiliar words
159. Pupils' writing at key stage 1, has good features and no important shortcomings. Pupils write simple sentences using capital letters and full stops and the older and more able use question marks, exclamation marks and, in the case of the most able, speech marks accurately. Most pupils can spell a number of familiar words and write for a limited range of audiences including re-telling stories, accounts of visits and instructions. They can identify certain spelling patterns and many can write at length when producing stories. Year 2

pupils have produced individual books of their version of a familiar story which contain an appropriate structure and are of a good standard. All work is presented very well.

160. At key stage 2, pupils' writing has some good features which outweigh shortcomings. Pupils at the lower end of key stage 2 have completed a number of grammar and writing exercises including: accounts; adjectives; speech marks; instructions; comprehension; powerful verbs; play scripts; suffixes and dictionary work, some of which is of a good standard. Pupils have completed exercises on literary devices used in poetry such as: alliteration; onomatopoeia and similes and some have produced effective poems about fireworks.
161. Pupils at the top end of the key stage have produced grammar and writing exercises on: letter writing; dictionary work; comprehension; prefixes; clauses; adjectives; dialogue; plurals; descriptions; story openings; a character study; features of letters of complaint; metaphors; myths; legends and fables. There are effective examples of re-telling stories which demonstrate good punctuation, the appropriate use of paragraphs, accurate spelling and some complex sentences. Work is generally very well-presented and pupils use a good cursive script from year 2 upwards.

Shortcomings

162. In neither key stage do pupils use a wide range of cueing strategies and their over-dependence on the phonic strategy impairs their fluency, understanding and enjoyment of what they read.
163. Pupils in both key stages produce little original writing and their creative writing skills are under-developed.
164. At key stage 2, pupils' writing across the curriculum is restricted.
165. The range of writing at key stage 2 is limited and, with the exception of re-telling stories, pupils' work lacks depth.
166. At the upper end of key stage 2, pupils' understanding of the grammar covered is insecure, for example, they cannot explain metaphors, similes or prefixes.

Science

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

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

167. Pupils across the school develop their knowledge and understanding of science well and make good progress overall.
168. At key stage 1, pupils have a good scientific vocabulary which they use with understanding. They have a sound knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
169. They recognise and name various parts of a plant. They know that plants need food, water and light for healthy growth and development.
170. They name the main external parts of the human body and recognise similarities and differences between themselves and other pupils. They understand that taking exercise and eating the right types and amount of food is important to keep healthy.
171. Their recall of activities associated with for example, pushing and pulling demonstrates a good understanding of scientific facts. They describe the movements of familiar things and know that to push or pull can make something speed up, slow down or change direction.
172. Pupils understand that many everyday appliances use electricity and that they should be used with care. They construct and explore simple circuits involving batteries, wires and bulbs and understand that electrical devices will not work if there is a break in the circuit.
173. They understand that ideas can be investigated and recognise that a test needs to be fair.
174. At key stage 2, pupils continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes well. Pupils' use of scientific vocabulary is good.
175. Pupils show a good understanding of materials and their properties and use appropriate vocabulary to describe their investigations. They compare materials successfully on the basis of their properties such as hardness, strength, flexibility and magnetic behaviour and relate these properties to everyday use of the materials. Pupils explore changes to materials and recognise those that can be reversed and those that cannot.
176. Pupils understand that there are magnetic forces of attraction and repulsion and describe the investigations they have done to explore this behaviour.

177. Observation of pupils' books show that that they understand that a complete circuit is needed for a current to flow and how switches can be used to control electrical devices.
178. Pupils understand that humans and some other animals have skeletons and muscles to support and protect their bodies and help them to move. They understand the functions of the different organs in the human body and know that the heart acts as a pump and what effect exercise has on the pulse rate. They know that certain human behaviour can be good and that others are bad for your health.
179. Pupils understand that ideas can be investigated and that factors in a test need to be controlled so that a fair test can be carried out. They are familiar with the idea of making predictions and that they can compare predictions to outcomes at the end of an investigation.

Shortcomings

180. At key stage 2, pupils' knowledge in setting up and recording investigations for themselves are less well developed than their knowledge of scientific facts.

History

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

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

Good features

181. Pupils at key stage 1, use an appropriate vocabulary to describe the passing of time. They are introduced to simple time lines early and construct their own which they explain with confidence. They understand that change occurs over time and that peoples' life in the past was very different from their own.
182. They understand that they learn about the past through stories from different periods and cultures. They know that they can find out about the past from a range of historical resources, including artefacts, visits and adults talking about their own past. Through role-play, they recognise why people did things, why events happened and what happened as a result.
183. At key stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding develops well. They understand the characteristics of the period they have studied for example, the Romans, Tudors and Victorians. They use a range of resources including representations, interpretations and where appropriate, ICT to investigate historical topics. They confidently ask and answer questions about the past.
184. With increasing confidence, the majority of pupils describe the main events of the period they have studied and the changes that took place during that period for example, World War Two. They identify the causes and consequences of

the war and the effect it had on peoples' lives. Pupils understand how opinions can influence what we read about in history.

185. Pupils' understanding of chronology is developing well. They have an increasing awareness that the past can be divided into different periods of time and recognise similarities and differences between these periods. The majority of pupils are now beginning to use and understand chronological frameworks and use appropriate language to describe the passing of time for example, century, decade, BC, AD.

Shortcomings

186. A minority of pupils at both key stages are still insecure in their understanding of chronology.

Geography

Key Stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

187. At key stage 1, pupils have written about where they live and compared their homes effectively with that of a Mexican family.
188. They have located Mexico on a world map and have started to identify Tocuaro's main features effectively.
189. Pupils have kept a labelled record of the weather and use weather symbols accurately. They have studied the water cycle and can explain it well.
190. They have labelled a map of Wales and confidently locate Mold on it.
191. Pupils are developing early mapping skills well by making a plan of the school and devising their own key. They have also drawn a plan of their classroom and cut out objects to demonstrate where they are positioned.
192. Pupils at key stage 2 have looked at different ways in which they could improve their environment and have effectively explored ways of recycling litter.
193. They have accurately located Snowdonia, the Cambrian Hills and the Brecon Beacons and the river Severn and its major settlements on a map of Wales. They have identified Wales, Scotland, Ireland and England on a map of the UK and filled in a key.
194. Pupils have completed a worksheet accurately about different features of a river namely source, tributary, waterfall and mouth.

195. Pupils have studied river pollution and have written in some detail on a worksheet about the effect of the flow of a river on its banks and how this causes erosion.
196. They have gathered facts about Wales and Cardiff and have a good knowledge of how to use a scale to estimate distances on maps. Pupils have also used simple co-ordinates accurately.
197. They have compared effectively Sychdyn with Llanarthne in Carmarthenshire and have answered questions on a worksheet about the population, use of land and have compared the similarities and differences between both.
198. Pupils in year 5 have written accurately about the permeability of rocks and have undertaken a quarry study to find out about its effects on the environment.
199. They have studied a place in France and gained much information about Montreuil. They have a good knowledge of France and its surrounding countries, its population, currency and geographical features such as mountains and rivers. They have used maps to estimate the length of journeys and used a variety of sources effectively to abstract information. Pupils have also interpreted a survey in order to gain further information about Montreuil. They are developing a good knowledge of how to use four-figure co-ordinates to gain information from maps.
200. Year 5 pupils, have visited a water filtration plant to trace the route of water from reservoir to home and have looked at the world wide implications of issues about water with sensitivity to people's needs.
201. Pupils have studied St Lucia and its currency, settlements, life in its villages and towns, land use, tourism and have compared the school day in Castries with that of Sychdyn effectively.

Shortcomings

202. Pupils' knowledge of work covered at both key stages is insecure.
203. Pupils' geographical and enquiry skills are underdeveloped in both key stages.
204. At neither key stage do pupils observe and collect information from first hand sources sufficiently nor do they use the outdoor school learning environment to develop their geographical knowledge.
205. Pupils do not have a good knowledge of the geography of their locality at key stage 2.
206. Pupils are unable to make connections between the disparate units studied, for example, they cannot see the links between geographical features and issues.

Art

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

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

207. At key stage 1, pupils are developing their observation skills and are beginning to experiment with line, tone and colour to produce drawings which include some good examples of drawings of owls.
208. Pupils have used oil and pastel to explore line and colour to produce attractive observational sketches of teddy bears. These drawings are of a good standard.
209. They have used a computer programme to produce attractive pictures in the style of Seurat.
210. In year 2, pupils have made colourful Mexican masks of a high standard while exploring 3 dimensional work.
211. At key stage 1, pupils have looked at pieces of printed fabric designed by Laura Ashley and have explored line, texture and colour when reproducing it.
212. Pupils at key stage 1 have developed a good knowledge of colour and mix their own paints very competently in individual palettes from primary colours and white. They know the meaning of primary and secondary colours and also create tertiary colours which they use very effectively.
213. In lower key stage 2, pupils continue to mix their own colours and to develop a growing understanding of colour by matching colours well from observation and painting attractive leaves. They develop their exploration of line, tone and form well by producing observational drawings of leaves using drawing pencils.
214. Pupils further explore colour by making leaf sculptures in the style of Welsh artist Tim Pugh. Some have produced landscapes in the style of Kyffin Williams which are of an adequate standard.
215. They have looked at the work of Picasso and have evaluated his work effectively and have explored the feelings conveyed by colour in their self-portraits effectively.
216. They have begun to explore 3 dimensional work and have made interesting figures using artificial clay.
217. At the upper end of key stage 2, pupils have drawn self-portraits which are of a good standard, using chalk pastels and paint.

Shortcomings

- 218. At both key stages, pupils' ability to explore art, craft and design of Welsh artists from different times and other cultures is under-developed.
- 219. Pupils' work does not demonstrate sufficient progression at the upper end of key stage 2.
- 220. At the upper end of key stage 2, pupils do not further develop their understanding of line, tone, colour, pattern, texture, shape, form or space and are unable to apply these effectively in their own work.

Physical education

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

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

Good features

- 221. At both key stages, pupils are appropriately dressed for activities, and understand the importance of this along with the need to show due regard to safety rules. They are aware that regular physical activities are important for a healthy life-style.
- 222. Pupils at both key stages undertake 'warm up' activities enthusiastically and understand the purpose of them. They respond well to instruction, showing good sporting behaviours as individuals, in pairs and in groups.
- 223. In dance lessons pupils at both key stages show good control when exploring movements using the basic actions of travelling, jumping, turning, gesture and stillness. They responded well to the teacher and taped instruction, linking their dance well to a story. They are aware of the right posture required to perform successfully.
- 224. They are given opportunities to evaluate their work, this they do successfully and when asked to demonstrate to others do so with pride and enthusiasm.
- 225. In their gymnastics lesson at key stage 2, pupils again respond well to instructions during the warm up activities and link actions fluently to form a sequence. They demonstrate good control and imagination, varying their methods of travel around the hall using space well. Pupils adapt and refine their movements as they transfer weight from feet to hands, balancing and turning as they do so.
- 226. Pupils in year 5 and 6, show confidence in their swimming activities. They build on the techniques of the different strokes taught to them and demonstrate good

progress. A large number of pupils achieve good standards. Only a few pupils are unable to swim by the time they leave for the high school

227. Evaluation of work is a strong feature of lessons at key stage 2. Pupils observe each other and offer positive feedback on movements.

Shortcomings

228. There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

229. The Head teacher, staff, governors and pupils of Ysgol Sychdyn wish to thank the inspection team for the thorough and professional way they conducted our inspection. The school feels that the report accurately reflects where the school is at this point in time, recognising its strengths and, in its recommendations, showing what the school needs to address to ensure its continuous improvement.
230. The school is pleased that its caring ethos, the discipline and behaviour of its pupils is of a very high standard and the knowledge and understanding of the children in the subjects inspected was also seen to be of a good standard overall. The school recognises that it needs to move towards developing children's investigational skills and that monitoring needs to be more rigorous and consistent throughout the whole school. The report recognises that the school provides a safe and secure environment as well as offering many opportunities outside normal teaching hours to enrich pupils' learning. Parents will be pleased to note that the school gives value for money
231. The school will use the findings of the report as a 'springboard' for development and improvement. The action plan will address the shortcomings identified, as well as preparing for the proposed changes to the National Curriculum (2008) and the implementation of the Foundation Phase for 3 to 7 year olds. The school recognises that one of the factors in its continued success is the strong support and involvement of the parents and the wider community of the village of Sychdyn.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Sychdyn C.P. School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Vownog Road, Sychdyn, Flintshire
Postcode	CH7 6ED
Telephone number	01352 753654

Headteacher	Mr Nigel Parry
Date of appointment	September 1992
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Vivian Williams
Registered inspector	Merfyn Lloyd Jones
Dates of inspection	20 th – 22 nd November 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	9.5	27	27	25	23	27	21	28	187.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	8	1.1	9.1

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22.6:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	14.5:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24.6
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Autumn 2005	91.4	95.4	96.0
Spring 2006	92.0	90.3	92.4
Summer 2006	90.0	94.6	95.5

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	6
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 pupils in Y2:		22		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	45	82	13.5
		National	0.4	3.6	12.2	64.0	19.7
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4.5	45.5	50
		National	0.4	3.7	13.6	55.8	26.5
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4.5	82	13.5
		National	0.4	4.9	14.0	69.1	11.6
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	9	82	9
		National	0.4	2.3	10.5	63.9	22.9
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	9	60	31
		National	0.3	2.3	10.1	63.4	23.8
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4.5	68	27.5
		National	0.3	1.5	8.8	65.4	24.0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	91	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		27		
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	4	11	74	11
		National	0.4	0.1	1.1	0.3	0.7	4.1	14.7	46.7	31.7
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School									
		National									
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	74	11
		National	0.4	0.1	1.0	0.3	0.5	3.4	15.1	47.2	32.0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	4	11	78	7
		National	0.4	0.1	1.0	0.3	0.3	1.6	10.6	51.1	34.6

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	78	In the school	N/A
In Wales	73	In Wales	N/A

- 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

A team of three inspectors and a peer assessor inspected the school over a period of 8 inspector days.

The head teacher was the nominee and he played an extensive role during the inspection.

Twenty nine lessons or part lessons were observed and a selection of the pupils' practical and written work was scrutinised.

Registration, collective worship and extra-curricular activities were inspected.

Discussions were held with staff and pupils about their work.

All documents presented by the school prior to and during the inspection, were scrutinised.

Meetings were held prior to the inspection with the head teacher, staff, parents and the governing body.

Seventeen parents attended the meeting held prior to the inspection, and the parents' responses (88 in all) to the questionnaires distributed were analysed.

Post inspection meetings were held with the head teacher, staff and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Merfyn Lloyd Jones (Registered Inspector)	Context, summary and recommendation. Key questions 1, 5, 6 and 7, science, history and physical education.
Mrs Branwen Llewelyn Jones (Team Inspector)	Key questions 2, 3 and 4, English, geography and art.
Mrs Eirlys Edwards (Lay inspector)	Contribution to all seven key questions.
Mrs Rachel Humphreys (Peer Assessor)	Contribution to all seven key questions.
Mr Nigel Parry	Nominee

Contractor:

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Acknowledgement:

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