

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

**Troedyrhiw Infant School
The Square
Troedyrhiw
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 1EN**

**By Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales**

School Number: 675/2028

Date of Inspection: 23-25 May 2005



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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**

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Troedyrhiw Infant 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 more information about their child's school.

The inspection of Troedyrhiw Infant School took place between 23 and 25 May 2005. A team of independent inspectors, led by Brenda Meredith HMI, undertook the inspection. The inspection team included a team inspector, a lay inspector and a nominee from the school.

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.

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, nursery schools and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Grade descriptions

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

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

Year	R	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 Troedyrhiw Infant school is located in the village of Troedyrhiw, two miles south of Merthyr Tydfil. There are currently 162 children aged between three and seven years on roll, including 60 nursery aged children who attend on a part-time basis. The school serves the village itself and pupils also come from nearby Pentrebach, Merthyr Vale, Ynysowen. A small number attend from other areas of Merthyr. Troedyrhiw is a Communities First area. The school describes its catchment area as mainly disadvantaged with some severe social deprivation and 27% of pupils are entitled to free school meals.
- 2 English is the home language for the majority of pupils and 4% of pupils have English as an additional language. There are 29 pupils on the special needs register. There are no pupils for whom a statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) has been made. There have been no pupil exclusions in the last year.
- 3 Nursery children are admitted to the school at three years old. Teachers' initial assessments indicate that many have limited social, communication and number skills on entry. Children attend school full-time from the beginning of the school year in which they reach their fifth birthday.
- 4 The school has won several awards including the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, Eco Schools Green Flag Award, Wales Quality Mark, Investors in People and Healthy Schools accreditation.
- 5 The headteacher was appointed in January 1998 and the deputy headteacher was appointed in November 2004. At the time of the inspection, one member of teaching staff was filling a post on a temporary basis.
- 6 The school was previously inspected in February 1999.
- 7 The school is a pilot setting for the Welsh Assembly Government's Foundation Phase. The Foundation Phase is currently being implemented in the under-fives unit and will extend to year 1 and year 2 pupils in September 2005.

The school's priorities and targets

- 8 The school's mission statement is:
- 'We aim to enjoy today and prepare for our tomorrows.'
- 9 The school's aims include:
- maximising opportunities to prepare children for lifelong learning by developing their basic skills;
 - respecting and caring for the environment;
 - being proud of being Welsh; and
 - developing creatively in both their thinking and the expressive arts.
- 10 The school states: 'We will do this by providing a range of learning styles to ensure high standards of achievement and behaviour and to make learning fun; and will encourage all children to become confident, independent, resilient, resourceful and reflective.'
- 11 The school's ongoing priority is to put children first through the development of their personal, social skills and language and literacy skills.
- 12 The school's priority for the current school year is the improvement of provision and standards for children under-five, through the development of the Foundation Phase. The pilot stage will then be extended over the next three years into key stage 1.
- 13 School targets place a strong emphasis on reviewing and improving the provision of new resources and evaluating the impact of these on teaching and learning.
- 14 The school's development plan focuses on continual review of its practice and the updating and implementation of good practice, which includes an emphasis on a whole school approach to self-evaluation.

Summary

- 15 Troedyrhiw Infant School is a good school with some outstanding features. The school cares well for its pupils and helps them to achieve good standards through a stimulating learning environment. The school has a good ethos of equality and inclusion for all. The way staff work as a team is an outstanding feature. Progress since the last inspection is good. The headteacher and governing body lead the school well and it provides good value for money.
- 16 The inspection team generally agrees with the school's self evaluation report and the judgements made by the school in each of the seven key questions.

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?	1
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	1
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	1
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

Subjects and the areas of learning in the early years

- 17 Children under-five and key stage 1 pupils, including those with SEN, achieve good knowledge, understanding and skills. They make sound progress.
- 18 Standards of achievement in the lessons observed in the subjects and areas inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
45%	41%	14%	0%	0%

- 19 The majority of Grade 1 standards were in the under-fives unit.
- 20 The high percentage of good standards or better exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government's target of at least 65% grade 2 or better standards by 2007, and represents very good progress since the last inspection.

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

Area of learning in the Foundation Phase	Grade
Personal and social development and well-being	1
Language, literacy and communication	1
Mathematical development	1
Bilingualism and multicultural understanding	-
Knowledge and understanding of the world	1
Physical development	1
Creative development	1

- 22 Baseline assessments, school data and observations during the inspection indicate that children enter the school with low levels of language skills and personal and social development. Children under-five make very good progress from this low baseline, both academically and in terms of their personal development. The very high priority given to how children and adults work together promotes children's personal development and well-being. This also develops good standards of listening and speaking.

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

Subject	Key Stage 1
English	2
Design and Technology	2
Geography	1
Music	2
Religious Education	2

- 24 Children under-five and pupils in key stage 1 have very good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).
- 25 The consistent use of incidental Welsh throughout the day by adults and children results in bilingual competence throughout the school.
- 26 All children make good progress in their spiritual, moral and social development. They respect different beliefs, cultures and attitudes. Pupils know about the social and cultural traditions of other faiths and cultures. They show consideration of others less fortunate. Pupils' understanding of equality of opportunity is well developed.
- 27 The school has a strong Welsh ethos and all pupils know their school is part of Wales. Pupils have an understanding of their local culture and heritage, and that of Wales. Staff integrate the Cwricwlwm Cymreig well into all subjects. The school promotes bilingualism well. All adults use Welsh as part of their every day language, and pupils show an increasing competency in the language.

- 28 Children under-five develop very good creative, problem-solving, personal and learning skills. The standard of these skills within the under-fives unit is an outstanding feature of the school.
- 29 All pupils have good personal, social and learning skills. This is an outstanding feature of the school. The school clearly places children first. Pupils enjoy school, have a good attitude to work, are enthusiastic and have high self-esteem.
- 30 In the under-fives unit, even the youngest and newer children show good self discipline and decision making skills as they select and carry out activities. By year 2, most pupils have a degree of self-discipline when they organise group activities, role play or solve problems together. Under-fives are beginning to recognise how they like to work. The majority work with purpose and independence. The level of enthusiasm and interest of children in the under-fives unit is an outstanding feature.
- 31 Behaviour within the school is very good and children show respect for others. There have been no exclusions in the last 12 months.
- 32 Attendance rates average 93% over the last three terms. The majority of absenteeism is due to illness. Most pupils are punctual. Staff carry out registration efficiently and in compliance with statutory requirements. The school complies with all statutory attendance requirements.
- 33 The school has responded very well to national priorities. It takes part in many community activities and is proud to be an Eco school.
- 34 The school has made very good progress since the last inspection.
- 35 The school is a supportive, happy and stable community with a priority of children at the centre.

The quality of education and training

- 36 Inspectors observed 24 lessons, in whole or in part, during the inspection. The grades awarded for the quality of teaching are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
34%	29%	37%	0%	0%

- 37 The quality of teaching exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government's targets for 50% of teaching to be a grade 1 or grade 2 by 2007.
- 38 Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Staff are successful in developing pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- 39 Teachers have good subject knowledge in areas of learning and subjects inspected. They understand well how young children learn. Teachers' understanding of the common requirements of the National Curriculum (NC) and Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is good.

- 40 In the under-fives unit teaching is consistently good with outstanding features. In the best lessons in key stage 1, learning objectives are clear to pupils. Explanations within lessons are usually clear and teachers use questions effectively to develop and extend pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of NC assessment data to identify trends in the core subjects, and to set suitable targets for improvement. They use assessment information well to improve pupils' standards.
- 41 Teacher's planning is very good and identifies opportunities for general progress and development, for assessment and for the development of key skills. Teachers have adapted the curriculum well to meet the needs of individual children in relation to their stage of development. An outstanding feature of the under-fives unit is the way children learn early on to be independent. For example, they can fetch the class fruit and milk for the day.
- 42 Staff have a good knowledge of children's individual learning needs. In the under-fives unit, adults pay particular attention to the development of children's self-esteem and confidence, together with the development of their listening and speaking skills.
- 43 The school identifies children with special needs early and supports them appropriately. Throughout the school, staff cater for the needs of those children and also for the language needs of those learning English as an additional language. Children looked after by the local authority make good progress that is similar to their peers. More able children respond well to additional challenges set for them. Teachers set appropriate targets for those with particular needs in their individual education plans.
- 44 Teaching staff work very well with support staff in planning for children's work and teaching and in reviewing. All employ a wide range of teaching methods. Within the under-fives unit, support workers are particularly effective and offer challenging activities to children. However, in key stage 1, they carry out tasks that are more supervisory and less stimulating for the pupils. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Classrooms are well organised and orderly routines contribute to children's sense of security.
- 45 The school responds very well to all pupils' learning needs and interests. It provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's learning, the National Curriculum and the agreed LEA syllabus for religious education. Most pupils participate in the out-of school clubs such as computer, musical activity and science clubs.
- 46 The school makes very good use of the community as a learning resource. Educational visits and visitors into the school make a positive contribution to the curriculum and to pupils' learning and standards.
- 47 The curriculum for children under-five has many outstanding features. Learning experiences lead appropriately into the National Curriculum programmes of study in key stage 1.

- 48 The school is successfully piloting the Foundation Phase. Staff introduce children to a wide range of activities and experiences, usually based on a topic. Children have very good experiences of role play and experimenting with a variety of materials. Children ask questions and find out about the world around them. Adults encourage children to express their feelings and share opinions from the youngest age. Children experience for themselves while adults support them and lead them onto the next stage of learning. The development of children's independence and learning in this way meets the aims of the Foundation Phase.
- 49 First-hand experiences within the school and outside develop children's 'speaking and listening' skills, enrich their written language development and promote self esteem. This approach helps support their personal development and well-being. The development of basic and key skills is a priority within the school and the school builds these into learning.
- 50 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with outstanding features. All staff create a sensitive, supportive ethos with the child at the centre. The daily act of collective worship makes a significant contribution to this. Assemblies are meaningful occasions with high levels of pupil participation. Children are encouraged to think about their experiences and to consider the values and beliefs of others.
- 51 Self-esteem for pupils is an important priority in the school. An outstanding feature of the school is the way children appreciate, from an early age, that they are valued as individuals.
- 52 There is very good provision for pupils' personal and social education and health education. These take account of all relevant guidelines. The school takes part in the Healthy School's initiative and puts children's health and well-being as a high priority. This has a highly significant impact on children's general development.
- 53 The headteacher and staff place a high priority on the care and well-being of all children. Staff know pupils very well and effectively monitor and support their educational progress, social development and personal welfare. The school has good working relationships with parents and liaises closely with the LEA and a range of relevant support agencies such as health and social services.
- 54 The school takes good account of pupils' social, educational, ethnic and linguistic background. It values and celebrates diversity and, as a result, successfully promotes good race relations. The school has a good policy and action plan for the promotion of racial harmony.
- 55 The school carefully monitors pupil attendance and punctuality. Effective procedures are in place to encourage good attendance and punctuality, to ensure absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations where necessary. Behaviour is very good. There are effective measures in place to eliminate poor behaviour, bullying and other forms of harassment. No pupil was excluded in the past twelve months. The school positively manages and supports pupils with challenging behaviour and those in vulnerable circumstances.

- 56 The support for all pupils' with special educational needs (SEN) is very good. The emphasis on personal development and well-being, along with the sound development of listening and speaking in the under-fives unit, helps staff to diagnose children's needs at an early stage. It gives children who have particular skills or interests and gifted or talented pupils good opportunities to extend their learning.
- 57 All adults in the school provide very good support for children when they start and children settle quickly and confidently into the new environment. The school procedures for transfer ensure that pupils move happily to new classes or to the junior school.
- 58 The school has successful partnerships with institutes of further and higher education and provides training for students undertaking childcare and education courses. Pupils from secondary schools regularly undertake work-experience placements. The school benefits from new ideas that students bring to the school.

Leadership and management

- 59 The school's aims and values are reflected in its daily programmes and are appropriate to the age of the pupils, and to the local community served by the school. All staff, including non-teaching staff and governors share values, aims, objectives and targets.
- 60 The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. She gives a positive and clear direction to the work of the school. Working well with governors and staff members, she has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the work of the school in order to further raise the quality of teaching and standards in the school.
- 61 The governing body fully meets its regulatory and legal requirements. It is supportive, and works well with the headteacher and senior management team to lead strategic management of the school. Governors know the school and appreciate its strengths and shortcomings. They are involved in monitoring the quality of provision in the school as part of the school's self-evaluation process.
- 62 Self-evaluation has appropriately involved the whole school and has focused clearly on improving standards and the quality of education. Children, parents, staff and governors complete questionnaires. Parents, in their comments during the pre-inspection meeting and in the pre-inspection questionnaire, expressed satisfaction with the school. The involvement of pupils in evaluation is an outstanding feature.
- 63 The school's use of self-evaluation is very good. The school development plan is an effective working document which sets out clear actions for improvement. Priorities for development are realistic and reflect the analysis and monitoring carried out throughout the year. Targets set for individuals and the school are also realistic but offer challenge.

- 64 There are enough well-qualified teachers and support assistants to provide for the needs of pupils, including those with SEN and the under-fives. Job descriptions are agreed and reviewed regularly with staff.
- 65 Ancillary staff, including the school administrator, breakfast club operators, mid-day supervisors, canteen staff, caretaker and cleaners, make a valuable contribution to the smooth running and good quality of life in the school.
- 66 The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and is clean and well maintained. The building is secure and safe. The school uses the available space well and provides a stimulating learning environment. Bright, attractive display is used successfully in classrooms and elsewhere to celebrate pupils' achievements and as a tool for learning.
- 67 The school playground has attractive markings organised for activities to encourage group co-operation and team games. Teachers in key stage 1 are using the outdoors more often for some group activities. Children under-five have access all day to a secure outside area. Although this is only a small walled area of hard tarmac, staff provide a range of stimulating activities daily.
- 68 Governors and managers budget for school priorities wisely. Spending decisions benefit all pupils and, overall, the school gives good value for money.

Recommendations

- 69 The governing body, headteacher and staff should maintain the good progress made since the last inspection and:
- R1 improve standards in music; and
 - R2 ensure that the outstanding features of teaching and learning in the under-fives unit are applied consistently across the school.
- 70 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

- 71 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 72 Children under-five and key stage 1 pupils, including those with SEN, achieve good knowledge, understanding and skills. They make sound progress.
- 73 Standards of achievement in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
45%	41%	14%	0%	0%

- 74 The majority of Grade 1 standards were in the under-fives unit and outstanding features are mainly attributed to the under-fives.
- 75 The high percentage of good standards exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government's target of at least 65% grade 2 or better standards by 2007, and represents very good progress since the last inspection.
- 76 The overall quality of educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make very good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The standards of achievement of children under-five are as follows:

Area of learning for the Foundation Phase	Grade
Personal and social development and well-being	1
Bilingualism and multicultural understanding	-
Language, literacy and communication	1
Mathematical development	1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	1
Creative development	1
Physical development	1

- 77 Baseline assessments, school data and observations during the inspection indicate that children enter the school with low levels of language skills and personal and social development. Children under-five make very good progress from this low baseline, both academically and in terms of their personal development. The very high priority given to how children and adults work together promotes children's personal development and well-being. This also develops good standards of listening and speaking in the unit.

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

Subject	Key Stage 1
English	2
Design and Technology	2
Geography	1
Music	2
Religious Education	2

- 79 The figures for attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2004 in English, mathematics and science were above the national average and above the local authority average. Compared with similar schools (on the basis of free school meal entitlement), attainment was in the top 25% of schools in mathematics, close to the top 25% in English and in the top 50% in science. Results have been similar over the last three years. Despite efforts by the school to close the gap between boys and girls there is a difference in attainment with figures for boys falling just below local and national averages while figures for girls are above the average.
- 80 Children under-five and pupils in key stage 1 have very good standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).
- 81 Children who are under-five listen well and take turns to talk. They enjoy language games and rhymes as well as listening to or telling stories. The children at the earliest development stage make marks and attempt to draw and write. More advanced learners are able to write their own names and to write at length.
- 82 Most children recognise a number of letters and sounds and read their own names and other names. Children understand that words have meaning and some under-fives are progressing well on reading schemes.
- 83 Most children under five use number language in their everyday play and to describe and talk about their work in terms of shape, colour and size.
- 84 Children under-five use the computer, operating the basic controls and using the mouse. They operate other electronic and mechanical devices with confidence.
- 85 Pupils in key stage 1 are generally good listeners and speak with confidence, using a wide range of vocabulary. They speak at length and can discuss issues.
- 86 Children under- five and pupils in key stage 1 can write for a range of purposes and at length. This good attitude towards writing is a strong feature of the school. However, handwriting is not always accurate.
- 87 Pupils read their own work enthusiastically. Most read accurately at an appropriate level to their age.

- 88 Pupils in key stage 1 have good numeracy skills. Pupils are able to use mental mathematical skills. They are competent users of ICT equipment. Most pupils are able to use a computer to operate simple programmes and to word process. The majority of pupils in year 2 can effectively search the internet and send and retrieve email.
- 89 The consistent use of incidental Welsh throughout the day by adults and children results in bilingual competence throughout the school.
- 90 Children in the under-fives unit recognise Welsh when spoken and are enthusiastic learners of the language. They understand many words and phrases and use Welsh in their conversation and play. Key stage 1 pupils respond well in Welsh to questions, commands and comments.
- 91 All children make good progress in their spiritual, moral and social development. They respect different beliefs, cultures and attitudes. Pupils know about the social and cultural traditions of other faiths and cultures. They show consideration of others less fortunate. Pupils' understanding of equality of opportunity is well developed.
- 92 Children under-five develop very good creative, problem-solving, personal and learning skills. The standard of these skills within the under-fives unit is an outstanding feature of the school.
- 93 All pupils have good personal, social and learning skills. This is an outstanding feature of the school. The school clearly places children first. Pupils enjoy school, have a good attitude to work, are enthusiastic and have high self-esteem.
- 94 In the under-fives unit, even the youngest and newer children show good self discipline and decision making skills as they select and carry out activities. By year 2, most pupils have a degree of self-discipline when they organise group activities, role play or solve problems together. Under-fives are beginning to recognise how they like to work. The majority work with purpose and independence. The level of enthusiasm and interest of children in the under-fives unit is an outstanding feature.
- 95 All children under-five and pupils in key stage 1 regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, including those with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress. Those with English as an additional language, children looked after by the local authority and those who have particular skills or interest also make good progress in key skills and in standards across the curriculum.
- 96 All children under five and pupils in key stage 1 attain the agreed learning targets. Staff identify individual needs of individuals at an early stage and this helps them give purposeful, well-directed support.
- 97 Behaviour within the school is very good and children show respect for others. There have been no exclusions in the last 12 months.
- 98 Attendance rates are satisfactory. The majority of absenteeism is due to illness. Most pupils are punctual. Registration is conducted efficiently and in compliance with statutory requirements. The school complies with all statutory requirements.

- 99 All children make good progress in their spiritual, moral and social development. They respect different beliefs, cultures and attitudes. Pupils know about the social and cultural traditions of other faiths and cultures. They show a consideration of others less fortunate.
- 100 The school is a supportive, happy and stable community with a priority of children at the centre.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

102 Inspectors observed 24 lessons, in whole or in part, during the inspection. The grades awarded for the quality of teaching are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
38%	25%	37%	0%	0%

103 All the teaching judged to be Grade 1 was observed in the under-fives unit.

104 The quality of teaching exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government's targets for 50% of teaching to be a grade 1 or grade 2 by 2007.

105 Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Staff are successful in developing pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning.

106 Teachers have good subject knowledge in areas of learning and subjects inspected. They understand well how young children learn. Teachers' understanding of the common requirements of the National Curriculum (NC) and Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is good.

107 In the under-fives unit teaching is consistently good with outstanding features. Teacher's planning is very good. Teachers have adapted the curriculum well to meet the needs of individual children in relation to their stage of development. An outstanding feature of the under-fives unit is the way children learn early on to be independent. For example, they can fetch the class fruit and milk for the day.

108 Staff have a good knowledge of children's individual learning needs. In the under-fives unit, adults pay particular attention to the development of children's self-esteem and confidence, together with the development of their listening and speaking skills.

109 The school analyses all pupil assessments including baseline information for reception class children. They make good use of this to improve teaching and learning, and especially to target pupils who require further attention. The school sets realistic and achievable targets for individual pupils for both academic and personal development. Even the youngest children know their targets and are keen to achieve them. This is having a very positive impact on standards.

110 The school identifies children with special needs early and supports them appropriately. Throughout the school, staff cater for the needs of those children and

also for the language needs of those learning English as an additional language. Children looked after by the local authority make good progress that is similar to their peers. More able children respond well to additional challenges set for them. Teachers set appropriate targets for those with particular needs in their individual education plans.

- 111 Staff use resources very well in the under-fives unit and give children the opportunity to handle and use materials. In other areas of the school, staff use resources to good effect but there are less opportunities for children to handle materials. Pupils in key stage 1 make some use of the ICT suite but it is not yet fully integrated into teaching and the use of interactive white boards is very limited.
- 112 Teaching staff work very well with support staff in planning, teaching and reviewing. Teacher's planning is very good. All employ a wide range of teaching methods. Within the under-fives unit, support workers are particularly effective and offer challenging activities to children. However, in key stage 1, they carry out tasks that are more supervisory and less stimulating for the pupils. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Classrooms are well organised and orderly routines contribute to children's sense of security.
- 113 Teachers have good subject knowledge in areas of learning and subjects inspected. They understand well how young children learn. Teachers in the under-fives unit have adapted the curriculum well to meet the needs of individual children in relation to their stage of development. An outstanding feature of the under-fives unit is the way children learn early on to be independent. For example, they can fetch the class fruit and milk for the day.
- 114 Plans include opportunities to develop key skills. In the best lessons in key stage 1, learning objectives are clear to pupils. Explanations within lessons are usually clear and teachers use questions effectively to develop and extend pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of NC assessment data to identify trends in the core subjects, and to set suitable targets for improvement. They use assessment information well to improve pupils' standards.
- 115 In key stage 1 pupils benefit from a range of teaching strategies and a balance between sessions of more formal teaching alongside group work and role play. The level of pupil's tasks meets their needs well. The pace of lessons is mostly appropriate, although in some sessions, pupils can become distracted when tasks are repetitive, rather than reinforcing skills.
- 116 In the under-fives unit children benefit from being grouped in different ways according to their stage of development rather than by age. They can therefore work at different paces. The grouping is reviewed and adapts as children progress. This is an outstanding feature of this aspect of development of the Foundation Phase.
- 117 The school addresses bilingual needs effectively. Staff use incidental Welsh well throughout the day to question, give instructions and to comment. Very effective use is made of the services of the Athrawon Bro to help improve pupils' bilingualism.

- 118 Teachers' planning is very good. Teachers use a range of strategies to support or challenge all pupils. Planning ensures that teaching and learning consistently builds on previous work.
- 119 Where children choose their own activities and lines of enquiry, adults are quick to support and offer challenge. In the best lessons in key stage 1, learning objectives are clear to pupils and they know what they are expected to achieve.
- 120 Curriculum leaders know about standards of teaching and learning in their area of responsibility and use this information well to plan the next stages. Comprehensive schemes of work are in place. Informative portfolios of pupils' work show their progress and achievement. Work in core subjects has been levelled against NC criteria Assessment information is also used to support planning and to track pupils' progress.
- 121 The arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' attainment and progress are good, and these meet statutory requirements.
- 122 Informal, regular contact with parents, particularly those with children under-five, forms a valuable part of children's assessment and enables good target setting.
- 123 Praise and encouragement by staff are important factors in helping children achieve their personal targets. These, in turn, involve pupils in judging their own progress and improvement. All children are aware of their individual targets and keen to reach them.
- 124 Annual reports to parents on pupil's progress provide good information about the standards achieved and indicate how further progress can be made. They also comply with statutory requirements.
- 125 Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and, in general, comments show how pupils can improve their work.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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- 126 The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation. The school judged this key question as Grade 2, but the inspection team judged there to be outstanding features in the learning experiences that the school provides.
- 127 The school responds very well to all pupils' learning needs and interests. It provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's learning, the National Curriculum and the agreed LEA syllabus for religious education. Most pupils participate in the out-of-school clubs such as computer, musical activity and science clubs.

- 128 There is good continuity and progression in pupils' knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. The school has received the Basic Skills Quality Mark.
- 129 The curriculum for children under-five has many outstanding features. Learning experiences lead appropriately into the National Curriculum programmes of study in key stage 1.
- 130 The school is successfully piloting the Foundation Phase. Staff introduce children to a wide range of activities and experiences, usually based on a topic. Children have very good experiences of role play and experimenting with a variety of materials. Children ask questions and find out about the world around them. Adults encourage children to express their feelings and share opinions from the youngest age. Children experience for themselves while adults support them and lead them onto the next stage of learning. The development of children's independence and learning in this way meets the aims of the Foundation Phase.
- 131 First-hand experiences within the school and outside develop children's 'speaking and listening' skills, enrich their written language development and promote self esteem. This approach helps support their personal development and well-being. The development of basic and key skills is a priority within the school and the school builds these into learning.
- 132 The school is situated at the heart of the locality and makes very good use of the community as a learning resource. Educational visits and visitors into the school make a positive contribution to the curriculum and to pupils' learning and standards. Pupils know about the world of work and have a good understanding of a range of jobs people do.
- 133 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with outstanding features. All staff create a sensitive, supportive ethos with the child at the centre. The daily act of collective worship makes a significant contribution to this. Assemblies are meaningful occasions with high levels of pupil participation. Children are encouraged to think about their experiences and to consider the values and beliefs of others.
- 134 Parents are pleased with the quality of education and care their children receive. They are able to participate in a variety of programmes to support their children's learning, such as the Learning and Play programme for those with children just starting school.
- 135 The school has a strong Welsh ethos and all pupils know their school is part of Wales. Pupils have an understanding of their local culture and heritage, and that of Wales. Staff integrate the Cwricwlwm Cymreig well into all subjects. The school promotes bilingualism well. All adults use Welsh as part of their every day language, and pupils show an increasing competency in the language.
- 136 Pupils show an interest in the wider world. Pupils know about the world of work and have a good understanding of a range of jobs people do in Wales and other countries. The school celebrates cultural diversity, and pupils know about the social

and cultural traditions of other faiths and cultures. The school has a good policy and action plan for the promotion of racial harmony.

- 137 There is very good provision for pupils' personal and social education and health education. These take account of all relevant guidelines. The school takes part in the Healthy School's initiative and puts children's health and well-being as a high priority. This has a highly significant impact on children's general development.
- 138 The school teaches the personal and social education (PSE) programme in line with the ACCAC recommendations.
- 139 The school has successful partnerships with institutes of further and higher education and provides training for students undertaking childcare and education courses. Pupils from secondary schools regularly undertake work-experience placements. The school benefits from new ideas that students bring to the school.
- 140 The school has responded very well to national priorities. It takes part in many community activities and is an Eco school.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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- 141 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
- 142 The headteacher and staff place a high priority on the care and well-being of all children. Staff know pupils very well and monitor and support effectively their educational progress, social development and personal welfare. The school has good working relationships with parents and liaises closely with the LEA and a range of relevant support agencies such as health and social services.
- 143 The prioritising of children's well-being has a significant impact on children's general development. It also contributes well to the good ethos in the school. The school manages and supports pupils with challenging behaviour and those in vulnerable circumstances. The school helps those children who have particular skills or interests and gifted or talented pupils are given good opportunities to extend their learning.
- 144 Self-esteem for pupils is an important priority in the school. An outstanding feature of the school is the way children appreciate, from an early age, that they are valued as individuals.
- 145 Relationships throughout the school are very good and this contributes significantly to pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Children of all ages carry out their tasks in a responsible way. Behaviour throughout the school is good and pupils understand right from wrong. All staff are good role models for pupils. There is very good provision for pupils' personal and social education and health education. These take account of all the relevant guidelines.

- 146 All adults in the school provide very good support for children when they start and children settle quickly and confidently into the new environment. The school procedures for transfer ensure that pupils move happily to new classes or to the junior school.
- 147 Pupils learn in a happy, supportive environment where they feel secure and valued by staff. Children are confident and will turn to adults for help and support if needed. Children know they are listened to and respected. The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good. This is an outstanding feature of the school.
- 148 The school takes good account of pupils' social, educational, ethnic and linguistic background. It values and celebrates diversity and, as a result, successfully promotes good race relations. The school has a good policy and action plan for the promotion of racial harmony. The school positively manages and supports pupils with challenging behaviour and those in vulnerable circumstances. It gives children who have particular skills or interests and gifted or talented pupils good opportunities to extend their learning.
- 149 The school carefully monitors pupil attendance and punctuality. Effective procedures are in place to encourage good attendance and punctuality, to ensure absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations where necessary. Behaviour is very good. There are effective measures in place to eliminate poor behaviour, bullying and other forms of harassment. No pupil was excluded in the past 12 months. The school positively manages and supports pupils with challenging behaviour and those in vulnerable circumstances.
- 150 A detailed policy and procedures and risk assessment support the promotion of health and safety. The school is successfully encouraging pupils in a healthy diet and lifestyle. Even the youngest children in the under-fives unit recognise that fruit and vegetables are good for them. The school is involved in the 'Healthy Schools Initiative'.
- 151 The school has appropriate policies and procedures, including those for child protection to ensure that children are adequately protected. The headteacher has designated responsibility for child protection. All adults in the school are aware of the correct child protection procedures to be followed.
- 152 The support for all pupils' with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is very good. The emphasis on personal development and well-being, along with the sound development of listening and speaking in the under-fives unit, helps staff to diagnose children's needs at an early stage. It gives children who have particular skills or interests and gifted or talented pupils good opportunities to extend their learning.
- 153 The school's policy for SEN is comprehensive and complies fully with the Code of Practice. Two teachers share the role of SEN co-ordinator but liaise well so that pupils receive good support from class teachers, specialist teachers and support assistants. Pupils generally achieve the targets in their individual education plans.

154 The arrangements for withdrawing pupils from class are very well planned and result in effective learning. The school keeps parents well informed of the progress of children. As a result, parents are able to support their child at home.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 155 The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's self-evaluation.
- 156 The school's aims and values are reflected in its daily programmes and are appropriate to the age of the pupils, and to the local community served by the school. Values, aims, objectives and targets are shared by all staff, including non-teaching staff, and by the governors.
- 157 The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. She gives a positive and clear direction to the work of the school.
- 158 A senior management team supports the headteacher well in managing the school. The deputy headteacher takes a prominent role in the good management of the unit for under-fives and other key roles. Another senior management member has the key stage 1 SENCO role. All teachers have subject co-ordinator roles and carry out their responsibilities well.
- 159 The governing body fully meets its regulatory and legal requirements. It is supportive, and works well with the headteacher and senior management team. Governors know the school and appreciate its strengths and shortcomings.
- 160 The management of the school sets realistic yet challenging targets and goals. Many whole school targets have been achieved and exceeded.
- 161 The school has responded very well to national priorities. It has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Investors in People award, the Assembly Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Initiative and the Eco School Award.
- 162 The school participates in LEA initiatives such as Pupils Accelerated Learning skills (PAL) and Learning and Play (LAP). This provides opportunities for parents to improve their own skills and support their children's learning.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 163 The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's self-evaluation for this and most other key questions.
- 164 The self-evaluation report is of very good quality and is a working document reflecting a very good self evaluation process. The report identifies the school's

strengths and the areas for improvement and is supported by an appropriate evidence base.

- 165 The headteacher has worked well with governors and staff members and has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the work of the school in order to further raise the quality of teaching and standards. Governors are involved in monitoring the quality of provision in the school, as part of the school's self-evaluation process.
- 166 Self-evaluation has appropriately involved the whole school and has focused clearly on improving standards and the quality of education. Children, parents, staff and governors complete questionnaires. Parents, in their comments during the pre-inspection meeting and in the pre-inspection questionnaire, expressed satisfaction with the school. The involvement of pupils in evaluation is an outstanding feature.
- 167 The school's use of self-evaluation is very good. The school development plan is an effective working document which sets out clear actions for improvement. Priorities for development are realistic and reflect the analysis and monitoring carried out throughout the year. Targets set for individuals and the school are also realistic but offer challenge.
- 168 Performance management is already having a good effect on the school. Senior management and subject co-ordinators monitor teaching very well. Information from external training and development is shared with other staff members. However, the direct impact of this training on standards is not always clearly identified.
- 169 The self evaluation process has led to measurable improvement in all areas previously identified in inspection as having shortcomings. An outstanding example of evaluation is the analysis of the impact of the creativity programme on children's development. Standards across the school and the quality of teaching have improved significantly because of the programme.
- 170 There has been a clear improvement in standards in subjects inspected, and in particular, there has also been a very significant improvement in standards and the quality of teaching in the under-fives unit since the last inspection.
- 171 The school has made very good progress since the last inspection.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 172 The findings of the inspection team did not match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation. There are many good features and no important shortcomings. However, the inspection team did not find outstanding features to merit a grade 1 judgement.

- 173 There are enough well-qualified teachers and support assistants to provide for the needs of pupils, including those with SEN and the under-fives. Job descriptions are agreed, appropriate and reviewed regularly with staff.
- 174 All classroom support assistants give pupils good support. Those working in the under-fives unit give very good support, particularly in children's language development, their personal and social education and well-being. Support workers in the under-fives unit work effectively with teachers in planning, teaching and recording children's progress.
- 175 Ancillary staff, including the school administrator, breakfast club operators, mid-day supervisors, canteen staff, caretaker and cleaners, make a valuable contribution to the smooth running and good quality of life in the school.
- 176 The management, training and deployment of teaching and support staff is good. All staff undertake appropriate training to support their professional development and the outcomes of this are disseminated to all members of staff within the school.
- 177 The provision and quality of learning resources throughout the school are good and are appropriate to pupils' age, stage of development and needs. The quality and quantity of resources is audited regularly.
- 178 The use of resources within the under-fives unit enables children to explore and handle materials, giving them broader first-hand experiences. The use of resources in key stage 1 is less well developed and the practical opportunities offered are too narrow. Books are not attractively displayed for children to see and this means they are not used enough. Planning does not build in the use of ICT enough because of the location of the ICT suite. The school has only one interactive whiteboard but teachers do not use this often enough.
- 179 The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and is clean and well maintained. The building is secure and safe. The school uses the available space well and provides a stimulating learning environment. Bright, attractive display is used successfully in classrooms and elsewhere to celebrate pupils' achievements and as a tool for learning. The new feature of the under-fives unit is used to very good effect in supporting teaching and learning.
- 180 The school playground has attractive markings organised for activities to encourage group co-operation and team games. Teachers in key stage 1 are using the outdoors more often for some group activities. Children under-five have access all day to a secure outside area. Although this is only a small walled area of hard tarmac, staff provide a range of stimulating activities daily.
- 181 Fruit is available to children every day and water fountains have been installed in the school as part of the healthy schools initiative.
- 182 Governors and managers budget for school priorities wisely. Spending decisions benefit all pupils and, overall, the school gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under-Fives

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 183 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in all areas of learning.
- 184 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 185 Children in the under-fives unit are a mixture of nursery and reception aged children. They play and learn according to their appropriate stage of development and their needs. Children may move groups according to the activity being carried out. Children are not categorised as Nursery or Reception class.
- 186 Many children who have not yet reached five years of age have exceeded the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 187 The unit is a pilot setting for the Wales Assembly Government Foundation Phase. The Foundation Phase has seven areas of learning and these are reported on below.

Personal and social development and well-being

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

- 188 The high standard in children's personal and social skills is an outstanding feature because of the young age of the children. Children under-five:
- are developing good self esteem, confidence and independence;
 - have a good awareness of their own needs and those of others;
 - behave very well, are polite and co-operate with each other;
 - show a caring, sensitive, attitude to others;
 - talk openly about their feelings, their likes and dislikes with each other and with adults;
 - select their activities calmly and confidently;
 - have individual targets to achieve and are keen to do this;

- are highly motivated and want to share their achievements with adults and other children; and
- take on the responsibility for tasks within the unit and go on adult-directed messages in the school.

Good features

189 All aspects of children's personal and social development and well being are at least good for the age of the children and their stage of development.

Children under-five:

- know the routines and respond well to the musical cue for tidying up;
- are able to follow hygiene routines. Less able children or those less advanced in their development will first try a task, such as fastening their coat and then seek help if needed;
- are self-disciplined;
- are confident enough to say they will complete their playing before joining a teacher for a specific task;
- listen carefully and demonstrate very good attitudes towards their work;
- co-operate well with each other;
- have a sense of fair play and take turns;
- concentrate for increasing lengths of time, according to their stage of development; and
- are keen to complete work accurately.

Shortcomings

190 There are no important shortcomings.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

191 Many children enter the school with low levels of speaking and listening skills but they quickly improve and the standards reached are outstanding for children of this age.

Children:

- listen and speak very well;
- sometimes speak in complex and advanced sentences;
- talk to each other and discuss their play without the prompting of an adult;
- can name characters from a story and know what an author is; and
- some children, for example the early readers, are confident to try and write their own labels, poems, stories and facts using either pencils or the computer.

Good features

192 Children show many good standards in this area, they;

- listen well to stories;
- have an understanding of sequence and can retell stories;
- can make up their own stories;
- choose books and handle them correctly as they pretend to read by interpreting the pictures;
- enjoy sharing rhymes and playing language games;
- the majority know some sounds and can recognise the first letter of their name. Most reception children are confidently progressing on the first stages of the school reading scheme; and
- use many opportunities to develop their writing. In their role play children write make-believe lists. They use pens, chalks, pencils and crayons to draw and write freely. There is a clear progression in children's drawings.

Shortcomings

193 There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematical development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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Outstanding features

194 The youngest and the newest children to the school are developing very good mathematical skills and this is an outstanding feature.

Most children:

- recognise and count numbers to 10 and many can count beyond;
- use mathematical language in their everyday play to describe size, shape and indicate more or less;
- understand the need to weigh ingredients in order for the recipe to work;
- can describe positions of over, under, behind and in-front;
- can recognise some coins and know which is more in value; and
- some children are beginning to add numbers together and subtract.

Good features

195 All children are achieving at least good standards in their learning, they:

- count to five and enjoy singing a range of number rhymes;
- accurately match and sort a range of objects, for example mini-beasts were sorted according to size, colour and number of legs;
- match and develop patterns in play and when directed by an adult; and
- most children recognise and can name shapes.

Shortcomings

196 There are no important shortcomings.

Bilingualism and Multicultural understanding

This is a new area of learning and has not been graded separately

Outstanding features

197 No children in the under-fives unit come from a Welsh speaking background. Their confidence and willingness to use the Welsh language is an outstanding feature.

Children:

- recognise when Welsh is spoken;
- respond well to direction and praise;
- the majority know a large number of Welsh words;
- respond in Welsh to questions about themselves and about the weather;
- ask the meaning of new words; and
- some try to write in Welsh.

Good features

198 Children respond well to this area of learning and standards are at least good.

Children:

- have a good repertoire of Welsh songs and rhymes and can count in Welsh;
- are beginning to recognise the written form of some Welsh words;
- know their Welsh identity and many can identify features associated with Wales;
- respect each other; and
- know that people may live in different ways, speak different languages and believe different things to them.

Shortcomings

199 There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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Outstanding features

200 Children under-five unit benefit from a wide range of first hand experiences available to them everyday. The way that children explore these activities is an outstanding feature.

Children:

- have good observation skills;
- create their own designs;
- make a variety of large and small items using a variety of materials;
- understand that you can create things as you go along or you can plan and design;
- understand about some elements of cooking;
- can explain the safety and hygiene associated with cooking;
- use a rich vocabulary and use the correct name for objects;
- are interested in, respond well to visitors and ask them appropriate questions; and
- through topic work, the children know some features of an African village and they can compare this with life they know in Wales.

Good features

201 All children achieve at least good standards in their learning.

Most children:

- have a very good understanding that living things should be treated with care and concern;
- know that plants need water and sunshine to grow;
- talk about their families and homes;
- can describe a range of jobs people do;
- know that most rubbish should be recycled;

- operate the computer and successfully manipulate the mouse to operate sound or visual effects on computer programs;
- some children have used word processing to produce some written work;
- have an idea of the sequence of time and identify the days of the week and seasons; can describe the weather and can give examples of suitable clothes to wear;
- know that fruit and vegetables are healthy foods and that they need food to grow; and
- have a good knowledge of road safety.

Shortcomings

202 There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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Outstanding features

203 Children in the under-fives unit have very good physical skills and their enthusiasm to develop and perfect their skills is an outstanding feature. They concentrate hard, practice and perfect their skills.

All children:

- ride a tricycle with confidence;
- have an awareness of others as they move around;
- can balance, climb, run, dance, jump, roll and hop;
- develop good manipulative skills using tools, markers, cutters and scissors; and
- have very good control and can generally direct the tools for the purpose they want.

Good features

204 Many children enter the unit without the ability to balance or ride a tricycle or hold a pencil correctly. However, after a very short time in school, they develop good or better large physical movement and skills and are able to use a variety of small tools well.

Shortcomings

205 There are no important shortcomings.

Creative development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

Outstanding features

206 Children's creative skills are outstanding and the standard children achieve has benefited from a creativity programme and from the input from an artist.

Children:

- choose to make or create from a range of play activities;
- choose their materials from a wide range on offer;
- understand that they can experiment with materials, mix colours and put things together;
- make very good use of role play situations. They imagine they are someone else or in a different situation;
- initiate activities to create and make and share their ideas;
- are developing a sense of rhythm. They can tap out the syllables to words and play a percussion instrument in time to music;
- sing, dance or move to music, changing their movements to match the music;
- recognise the sound and name of some musical instruments;
- listen carefully and identify specific features in the music,
- enjoy creating; and
- express their likes or dislikes about an activity, a picture or a piece of music.

Shortcomings

207 There are no important shortcomings.

English in key stage 1

Grade 2: Good and no important shortcomings
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208 The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 1 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report. The inspection team judged that there were good features but did not find outstanding features.

Good features

209 Pupils listen well and speak with enthusiasm. The majority take an active part in lessons and are willing to answer and ask questions. Most pupils have a good vocabulary and speak with increasing confidence. For example, when engaged in role-play, pupils voice their opinions freely.

210 Pupils have good listening skills. They have good recall of what they have heard. Most pupils pay close attention to instructions and carry them out accurately.

211 The majority of pupils throughout key stage 1 read well at a level appropriate to their age. Many read aloud with good expression and pace. Most have a sound understanding of what they have read. They are also enthusiastic readers of their own written work. Most use their knowledge of phonics well in tackling new words.

212 Pupils write enthusiastically and with interest for a number of purposes, using a wide range of forms. However, some pupils do not use spell check to correct errors or search for words in their word processing. Pupils' writing conveys meaning through the use of phrases or short sentences. Most pupils are aware of full stops and capital letters. The majority are very confident in their ability to write independently without guidance.

Shortcomings

213 In most cases, pupils' range of reading is too narrow. Few pupils can recall books they enjoy, other than those they have read within the school's reading scheme.

214 There is not enough evidence of pupils' writing at appropriate levels of accuracy in spelling and punctuation. Most pupils do not make enough progress in handwriting.

Design and technology in key stage 1

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

215 The findings of the inspection team do not match the grade 1 of the school's self-evaluation. The inspection team did not find outstanding features to enable the judgement to be grade 1.

Good features

216 Pupils use a range of materials and can comment on their properties, such as colour and texture. They can express their likes and dislikes for materials and give reasons.

- 217 Pupils relate well their knowledge from experiences within school, and from school visits. Pupils are developing an understanding of materials and their suitability for different purposes.
- 218 Pupils can talk about their work in progress and are able to apply knowledge of some situations to other applications, such as why tyres might have different treads.
- 219 Pupils have good manipulative skills and are able to carry out simple tasks and use their knowledge of materials to fix things together.
- 220 Pupils use their key skills from other areas of work well, such as using mathematical skills when measuring.

Shortcomings

- 221 Pupils do not always fully investigate or test their ideas because they are too concerned with finding the answer for the teacher. They do not fully benefit from inventing or learning by their mistakes.

Geography in key stage 1

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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- 222 The inspection team did not agree with the grade 2 judgement of the school's self evaluation as they found the subject to have outstanding features, thus making it a grade 1.

Outstanding features

- 223 Pupils' awareness of geography around them is outstanding feature.

Pupils:

- have a very good knowledge of the local area and understand its context within the United Kingdom.
- can identify the characteristics of a place from a map;
- know the characteristics of villages and towns in Wales and some other countries;
- are able to compare and contrast locations in Wales and elsewhere with increasing knowledge;
- have a very good sense of direction and location and can correctly describe how to get from one place to another;
- are observant in the way they discuss features on a map or picture; and
- are able to apply reason to their debate;

Good features

224 There are many good features.

Pupils:

- use books, brochures and the internet to find information;
- are able to identify locations on a globe and maps;
- can identify the local shops and church and understand the context and use that is made of them; and
- can associate buildings with people and the nature of their jobs.

Shortcomings

225 There are no important shortcomings.

Music in key stage 1

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

226 The school did not make a judgement in the self-evaluation report.

Good features

227 The majority of pupils show confidence and enjoyment in musical activities. They are able to recall and perform a range of rhymes, songs and hymns. The majority of pupils sing with correct pitch and a good level of volume.

228 Many pupils can identify and produce a range of good quality sounds. They are able to imitate and create a good range of rhythmic patterns.

229 Pupils use percussion instruments well to create musical stories and rhymes. In compositions related to their project work, for example on mini beasts, pupils are able to choose sounds to reflect their ideas.

230 Instrumental performance is developing well, as pupils are becoming used to new instruments.

231 Older pupils choose music from various styles to listen to in assembly and can identify some of the instruments. Pupils' appraisal skills are developing well and a few make a good attempt to use musical terms to evaluate their work.

Shortcomings

232 Pupils' ability to follow and create simple written scores is not developed enough.

Religious Education in key stage 1

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

Good features

234 Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of celebrations in their own lives and in those of others. They are familiar with the main Christian festivals and of other world faiths and traditions. Their understanding of religious symbols is developing well through access to a range of artefacts.

235 Pupils express their opinions confidently, ask questions, and identify with characters in familiar Bible stories. Pupils are able to talk informatively about visiting the church to observe a 'mock' baptism.

236 Through their 'Eco School' activities, pupils are very aware that they must take care of the natural world. They understand the need for rules to create a civilised society and have produced their own class and school rules. Most are well aware of the importance of human relationships, the need to think of others and to help those who are less fortunate.

Shortcomings

237 There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

Both the governors and staff are delighted with the findings of our inspection report. The inspection was carried out with meticulous attention to detail, and the team was wholly professional in its approach. We were particularly pleased with the team's skill in making such young children comfortable with them.

It is always a joy for a school when its qualities and values are recognised and commended, and we have in our report an affirmation of the standards we achieve in curriculum, ethos, in our care and support and in our leadership and management. It gives us particular pleasure that the contribution of all members of our community is recognised.

Of course, there is always room for improvement and the inspectors identified music and reading and writing as areas for further development. We agree with their findings. We intend to further develop our current practice in music so that all pupils reach high standards of achievement. It will also be a priority of ours to further enhance the library and thus the literacy skills of our pupils.

We are pleased that the school has been commended on its progress since the last inspection in 1999.

The real challenge will be to maintain our standards of excellence. We are a self-generating school and continually strive to enrich and improve the provision for our pupils. Piloting the Foundation Phase is our main focus at present, however, as with all our initiatives, robust self-evaluation and assessment will be used to monitor its impact effectively.

We are grateful to the inspection team for its insight and perception and we will give of our best in addressing its recommendations.

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

Staff and governors are committed to continually striving to provide the highest quality education for the pupils of the school.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Troedryhiw Infant School
School type	Nursery and Infant
Age-range of pupils	3-7 years
Address of school	The Square Troedryhiw Merthyr Tydfil
Post-code	CF48 IEN
Telephone number	01443 690252

Headteacher	Mrs Jill Evans
Date of appointment	1 st January 1998
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs P Parry
Reporting inspector	Mrs Brenda Meredith HMI
Dates of inspection	23-25 May 2005

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Total
Number of pupils	30	33	31	36	102

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	6	1	6.2

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	25.5:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	25.5
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Term	N	R	KS1
Spring 05	86.5	83	94
Autumn 04	85	83	95
Summer 04	85	83	91

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	27
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y2:					35
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	11	44	45	0
		National	0	4	14	63	20	0
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	8	49	43	0
		National	0	4	14	55	27	0
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	13	53	34	0
		National	0	5	14	69	11	0
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	44	46	0
		National	0	3	12	63	22	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	55	40	0
		National	0	2	11	63	24	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	11	50	39	0
		National	0	2	10	66	22	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	83	In Wales	80
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Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- A team of three inspectors who were present at the school seven inspector days carried out the inspection.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school.
- Nine questionnaires were completed by parents and carefully analysed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and staff with responsibilities, and support staff.
- School documentation and samples of pupils' work were examined.
- Twenty four sessions or part sessions were observed.
- A sample of pupils' work from across the ability range in each year group and class was examined.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils from each year group reading.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work and the life of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during break periods, at lunchtime and at the end and beginning of the school sessions.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and observed out of school activities.
- Post inspection meetings were held with the staff and the governing body.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs Brenda Meredith HMI Reporting Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations KQ1 KQ2 KQ3 KQ5 (except 5.7, 5.8, 5.9) Under-fives Design and Technology Geography
Dr Prydwen Elfed-Owens Team Inspector	KQ4 (sections 4.10, 4.11, 4.12) KQ5 (5.7, 5.8, 5.9) KQ6 KQ7 (7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.5) English. Music RE
Mr Grayham Jones Lay Inspector	KQ4 (except 4.10, 4.11, 4.12) KQ7(7.4,7.6,7.7)

Acknowledgement

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