

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

Usk Church in Wales Primary School

**Monmouth Road,
Usk,
Monmouthshire
NP15 1SE**

School Number: 679/3022

Date of Inspection: 13 – 16 September 2004

by

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WO/15698**

Date: September 30th 2004

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Usk Church in Wales Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The school was inspected under new arrangements which include:

- The use of a new inspection framework;
- An emphasis on the school's own evaluation of its work; and
- A representative of the school staff, in this case the headteacher, who worked with the inspection team as a nominee.

Before the inspection, governors and staff produced a self-evaluation report that included their judgements on the work of the school. Inspectors used this report to chose areas to examine in order to confirm the accuracy of the school's judgements.

The inspection of Usk Church in Wales Primary School took place between 13 – 16 September 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Allan Fear 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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.

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 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 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. Usk Church in Wales Primary School with 325 pupils aged 4 to 11 years of age, is in the historic market town situated in the county of Monmouthshire. The school serves the town of Usk and many of the surrounding hamlets and villages. Consequently a large proportion of pupils are transported to school through contract bus companies. A minority of pupils, approx.7%, whose parents have expressed a preference for the school, come from other areas. The school reports that the area from which pupils are drawn is relatively advantaged and prosperous; 1.2% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is lower than the local education authority's average of 9.7% and the all-Wales average of 19% of pupils entitled to free meals. Around 9% of pupils have special educational needs (SEN), including eight pupils with statements of special educational need. The home language of all pupils is English.
2. The school was last inspected in October 1998. Since that time areas of the school grounds have been developed with an extensive nature walk and organic garden. Major changes have occurred in the senior management of the school since the last inspection with the appointment of the current headteacher in April 2003 and deputy headteacher in September 2004. At the time of the inspection, two of the teaching staff were on short-term absence. Their classes were taught through the extended use of part-time staff and a supply teacher.

The school's priorities and targets

3. The school's aims include:
 - a. to have a curriculum which is flexible and stimulating.
 - b. to help pupils acquire knowledge and practical abilities, especially those of problem-solving, investigating and effective use of literacy and numeracy skills.
 - c. to provide a happy environment within the school where each child can feel secure and sensitively cared for.
 - d. to provide an opportunity for children and staff to explore their own beliefs and bring us all to a deeper understanding of God's Love.
4. The school's major priorities and targets for 2004/2005 include:
 1. implementing strategies to meet the needs of the more able pupil.
 2. raise standards in reading and spelling.
 3. develop the use and application of investigational work in mathematics and target the teaching of mental maths strategies.
 4. extend the use of numeracy and ICT in the recording of scientific investigations.

Summary and recommendations

5. Usk Church in Wales Primary School is a good school, which has improved standards since the last inspection. The inspection team agreed with the judgements made by the school about the standards pupils achieve and with some of the school's judgements about other areas of its work. Where there were disagreements the inspection considered that the school had underestimated the impact of its current strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning and ethos of the school.

Table of grades awarded

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?	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?	2
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

6. During the inspection, children were attending the reception class on a part-time basis with the exception of the last day which was the children's first full day in school. On the basis of this evidence and scrutiny of last year's work, 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.
7. In 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
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 3
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2

8. Children in the reception classes make good progress in their development of key, personal, social and learning skills.
9. Pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT), across the curriculum are good. While pupils speak clearly with increasing confidence and using an extensive vocabulary with good accuracy, there are shortcomings in pupils' ability to listen, in particular giving due attention to the views of their peers. Pupils make good use of their key skills in all subjects of the curriculum and teaching is structured effectively to achieve this goal. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills to measure and calculate accurately, for example, in science. Pupils use ICT confidently to support their learning, such as to research information in history and to present ideas.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
11. At the end of key stage 1, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were, with the exception of English, below the local and national averages. Results in the core subjects were lower than the average when compared to similar schools across Wales. Historical assessment data shows attainment was significantly higher in 2003. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls, although, overall boys tend to achieve the higher levels in the latest results in science and English.
12. In key stage 2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were well above the local and national averages. Results in the core subjects were above the average when compared to similar schools across Wales. Historical assessment data show attainment has risen significantly from 2003. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls, although, overall, girls tend to do better than boys.
13. Overall trends in performance over the last few years have been variable but show a broad pattern of continuous improvement.
14. Pupils show clear progress in acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills and make good progress towards fulfilling their potential. While the school has introduced a programme, and a series of measures, to increase pupils' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do to improve, this is still an area for further development to reduce variability across the school.
15. Pupils' attitude to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are good features. Pupils work hard in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously; they readily join in the range of activities provided, and show enthusiasm for their work.
16. Pupils are well behaved, understand what is expected of them and are considerate, courteous to each other and adults and visitors. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and exercise a high degree of self-discipline.

17. Pupils take an active part in the life and work of the school, for example the School Council, various events and the organic garden and show by their attitudes that they see themselves as part of a community in which they support each other. While pupils are able to plan and organise their work without constant supervision very often they are on tasks exclusively structured by the teacher. Pupils need to improve their own decision-making and problem-solving skills through the development of independent tasks.

The quality of education and training

18. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	39%	37%	0%	0%

19. The percentage of lessons judged at least good is above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of 95% satisfactory or better and the percentage of very good lessons is well above the WAG target of 50% good or better. The quality of relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils is very good. A positive and productive working environment supports pupils' learning.

20. The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. There is good provision for pupils' personal and social education. Pupils also benefit from opportunities to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

21. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and plan thoroughly. Medium and short term planning are well constructed and, overall, give due attention to strategies for differentiation. Inclusion of enquiry based work in planning is improving but has not yet impacted on standards of achievement by pupils.

22. Teachers' questioning is used well to assess pupils' understanding of lesson content and, overall, teachers interact well with pupils to gauge progress and set targets for improvement.

23. Record-keeping systems are well focused and helpful. Evaluation of short-term planning is used well by teachers to focus on successes and areas of need for future learning. Older pupils in KS2 are required to identify targets for the term in core subjects. There is less evidence of involvement of pupils in setting targets on a day to day, lesson by lesson basis.

24. Learning experiences effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a clear sense of ownership and responsibility to the school and its environment. Collective worship makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of moral issues. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is a strong feature of the school and is planned as an integral part of the curriculum. A range of opportunities are in place to promote pupils' bilingual skills through regular speaking and listening activities in all classes.

25. Support systems are firmly in place and ensure equality of opportunity and respect for diversity. Teachers know pupils well, are approachable and respond positively to pupils' requests for help. Staff operate effectively as a team and implement support systems consistently and efficiently.
26. Arrangements for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs are effective and their progress is logged carefully. The quality of individual educational plans is very good; targets and success criteria are identified clearly and there is involvement of outside agencies where appropriate.
27. Pupils with SEN are supported effectively through a range of provisions. Support staff provide good specific support for individual pupils and forge positive relationships where they raise pupils' self-esteem as well as addressing identified needs. Operating mostly alongside class teachers, they provide invaluable support and pupils make good progress.
28. There are very good links with parents. A substantial number of adults are involved in supporting teachers in both key stages through a variety of reading initiatives and other activities. In their responses to questionnaires and the pre-inspection meeting, parents expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children and the values promoted by the school. Links with the community are effective and extend the range of experiences for pupils at the school.
29. Systems for child protection are well established. Teachers are aware of pupils with particular needs and are knowledgeable about procedures in the event of accidents or emergencies, such as how to help pupils with identified allergic reactions. Risk assessment arrangements are extensive and teachers are well aware of health and safety issues.

Leadership and management

30. The quality of leadership shown by the headteacher, a relatively recent appointment, is very good. His management is very positive and gives a clear direction to the work of the school. There is a clear sense of purpose that promotes and sustains improvement with a clear sense of high expectations. A particularly strong feature is the headteacher's capacity to build and co-ordinate a team of staff, who all have a common purpose and the encouragement of staff towards that common goal. The school operates in an environment based on mutual trust and understanding.
31. There have been major changes in the senior management of the school. The current headteacher has been in post for less than two years and the deputy headteacher is a very recent appointment. During this relatively short period considerable improvements in the strategic management of the school have taken place. The clear focus has been one of raising standards and improving provision, the establishment of effective procedures for identifying staff development needs and evaluating the impact of staff development on improving standards and quality.

32. The governing body is very supportive, well informed and fully involved in the life of the school. They have a clear understanding of their role and make a substantial contribution to strategic planning. Governors are fully involved in an evaluation of the quality of the school's work and with the management of the school, have been involved in taking appropriate and effective decisions. The governing body fully meets all regulatory and legal requirements.
33. The headteacher, governors and staff are committed to improving standards and the quality of the learning experience pupils receive. All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process and the views of parents and pupils have also been taken into account.
34. Senior managers in the school have been able to use the information gained from the self-evaluation arrangements to implement effective strategies for the improvement of standards. Subject co-ordinators have been involved in ensuring progression and continuity in the subjects for which they have responsibility but have yet to be fully engaged in the use of comparative and historic data or obtaining first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning and the evaluation of standards pupils achieve. The school has yet to complete the 5 stage model of monitoring and while great strides have been made there is a need to swiftly complete the model to ensure all co-ordinators are fully engaged and informed about pupils' performance.
35. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed well.
35. The quality and quantity of resources for the subjects is good overall. There are seventeen laptops computers which are regularly used by all classes which successfully supports pupils' skills and contributes to the raising of standards in information technology. Recent resources have been purchased for the under-fives which supports their development but there are limited stimulating resources particularly in relation to equipment for outdoor play.

Recommendations

36. In order to improve the school in the areas inspected, the staff and governing body need to:
- . raise standards in pupils' mental mathematical reasoning;
 - . raise standards in pupils' reading and writing in Welsh as a second language in key stage 2;
 - . raise standards in pupils' listening skills in both key stages;
 - . further develop the role of the subject co-ordinator in the evaluation of standards;
 - . further develop pupils' enquiry-based learning skills;
 - . provide additional resources in the early years areas to provide a more varied and stimulating environment.

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh some shortcomings

37. Overall, the findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

Pupils' Standards of achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	0%	73%	27%	0%	0%

38. Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons observed are well above the Welsh Assembly Government's all-Wales targets for 95% of standards to be at least satisfactory and 50% to be at least good. These judgements only apply to the particular subjects inspected.

39. 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.

40. Children in the reception classes make good progress in their development of key, personal, social and learning skills.

41. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, in the subjects inspected, the standards of achievement are as follows:

Subjects	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 3
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2

42. Pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT), across the curriculum are good. While pupils speak clearly with increasing confidence and use an extensive vocabulary with good accuracy, there are shortcomings in pupils' ability to listen, in particular giving due attention to the views of their peers. Pupils make good use of their key skills in all subjects of the curriculum and teaching is structured effectively to achieve this goal. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills to measure and calculate accurately, for example, in science. Pupils use ICT confidently to support their learning, such as to research information in history and present ideas.

43. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.
44. At the end of key stage 1, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were, with the exception of English, below the local and national averages. Results in the core subjects were lower than the average when compared to similar schools across Wales. Historical assessment data shows attainment was significantly higher in 2003. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls, although, in 2004, boys achieved the higher levels more than girls in science and English.
45. In key stage 2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were well above the local and national averages. Results in the core subjects were above the average when compared to similar schools across Wales. Historical assessment data show attainment has risen significantly from 2003. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls, although, overall, girls tend to do better than boys.
46. Overall trends in performance over the last few years have been variable but show a broad pattern of continuous improvement.
47. Pupils show clear progress in acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills and make good progress towards fulfilling their potential. While the school has introduced a programme, and a series of measures, to increase pupils' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do to improve, this is still an area for further development to reduce variability across the school.
48. Pupils' attitude to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are good features. Pupils work hard in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously; they readily join in the range of activities provided, and show enthusiasm for their work.
49. Pupils are well behaved, understand what is expected of them and are considerate, courteous to each other and to adults and visitors. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and exercise a high degree of self-discipline. Older pupils show a high level of maturity and are engaged in a wide range of activities which enhances the quality of life and the range of educational experiences provided by the school. The responsible attitude of pupils has a positive impact on the progress they make in their learning.
50. The average attendance for the three terms before the inspection was 95%. Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual at the start of the school day.
51. Pupils take an active part in the life and work of the school, for example the School Council, various events and the organic garden and show by their attitudes that they see themselves as part of a community in which they support each other. While pupils are able to plan and organise their work without constant supervision very often they are on tasks exclusively structured by the teacher. Pupils need to

improve their own decision-making and problem-solving skills through the development of independent tasks.

52. Pupils progress well in their personal, moral, social and wider development; in their ability to work with others, show concern, take responsibility for their actions and show honesty and fairness.

53. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of equal opportunities issues is well developed. They recognise, understand and respect the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within society. The oldest pupils give thoughtful responses to issues of diversity within society. Through many visits into the local community, involvement in community activities in the school and links to the workplace, pupils show a good understanding of their community and the world of work.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

54. The findings of the inspection team exceed the judgement of Grade 3 made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

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

The quality of teaching in the subjects and areas of learning inspected	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
		24%	39%	37%	0%

56. The quality of relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils is very good. A positive and productive working environment supports pupils' learning. Systems for induction to new classes are effective. Teachers establish class rules and routines and pupils settle quickly at the start of the new school year.

57. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and plan thoroughly. Medium and short term planning are well constructed and, overall, give due attention to strategies for differentiation. Inclusion of enquiry based work in planning is improving but has not yet impacted on standards of achievement by pupils.

58. Liaison between class teachers, the SENCO and support staff is very good. Support staff contribute well to class lessons, working unobtrusively and sensitively within the class setting to assist pupils with SEN.

59. In all classes, teachers identify learning objectives for pupils at the start of each lesson, either orally or in writing. In the best practice, there is further clarification for pupils about the precise meaning of these objectives and what constitutes good quality responses.

60. Lessons are well structured with clear and often stimulating introductions, a good range of tasks for pupils and plenary sessions where the learning is summarised. Most teachers use time effectively and some set timed targets for pupils to aid their concentration and application.

61. Teachers use available resources effectively. Very good examples include the provision and management of resources in science where pupils' involvement in practical activity promotes their interest in the subject.

62. Teachers manage classes well. They establish clear parameters for acceptable behaviour and remind pupils about these when the need arises. Most teachers employ a good range of systems for organising pupils as they work. Paired activities, where pupils need to collaborate on a set task, were particularly effective during the inspection.

63. There are some very good examples of questioning of pupils, particularly in the early years classes and in upper KS2. Here, teachers maximise pupils' attention and involvement through regular use of thought-provoking questions, which require pupils to recall or apply knowledge.
64. Teachers' questioning is used well to assess pupils' understanding of lesson content and, overall, teachers interact well with pupils to gauge progress and set targets for improvement.
65. A clear and well explained marking policy is implemented consistently by teachers. Feedback to pupils through written or oral dialogue is helpful and informative.
66. Record-keeping systems are well focused and helpful. Evaluation of short-term planning is used well by teachers to focus on successes and areas of need for future learning.
67. Older pupils in KS2 are required to identify targets for the term in core subjects. There is less evidence of involvement of pupils in setting targets on a day to day, lesson by lesson basis.
68. Reports to parents comply with statutory requirements and follow a consistent format through the school. They provide good detail about progress generally and in national curriculum subjects and indicate awareness of pupils' personalities and attitudes to work. Each report receives individual comment by the head teacher, which endorses or emphasises points made by the class teacher.

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

69. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
70. The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
71. Schemes of work are of a good standard and provide clear guidance for staff. Skills ladders are useful in identifying continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Planning for the key skills is well embedded in subject planning with a clear policy to ensure a consistent approach.
72. Withdrawal sessions provided effectively meet the learning needs of pupils with special needs. Very good support is provided to pupils by teachers and support staff.
73. Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities including French, art, computers, hockey, netball, country dancing, gardening, choir and orchestra.
74. Pupils undertake a range of educational visits to support their learning across the curriculum.
75. Learning experiences effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a clear sense of ownership and responsibility to the school and its environment. Collective worship makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of moral issues. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is a strong feature of the school and is planned as an integral part of the curriculum. A range of opportunities are in place to promote pupils' bilingual skills through regular speaking and listening activities in all classes.
76. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal and social education through a clearly planned scheme of work. The programme deals with a range of personal, social and health related issues and offers a wide range of experiences for pupils. Circle time is an integral part of the weekly timetable which caters well for a range of learning needs and issues.
77. There are very good links with parents. A substantial number of adults are involved in supporting teachers in both key stages through a variety of reading initiatives and other activities. A very active Parent Teacher Association raises funds and supports the school. The majority of parents are very supportive and have good relationships with the school. In their responses to questionnaires and in the pre- inspection meeting parents expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children and the values promoted by the school. There are effective links with surrounding schools and colleges of further education. The

school is in partnership with an initial teacher training university and provides very good quality training and work experience for student teachers.

78. Communication with parents is very effective. Their views are sought through questionnaires. The school responds positively to their views and initiatives, such as the parent association sessions, are introduced. Parents are informed about the work to be covered at the start of the term to enable them to better support their children's learning. The prospectus and annual governors' report fully meet statutory requirements and regular newsletters keep parents well informed about school life.
79. Many teachers have undertaken industrial placements and the school is a member of a curriculum development centre. Pupils' awareness of the world of work is raised through the school's involvement in a significant number of associations and local events. For example pupils harvest the produce from the organic garden to sell at the annual Usk Fair.
80. The school has a range of clear, pertinent policies to support pupils' learning needs including a policy for the promotion of race equality.
81. The grounds development has been a priority in promoting sustainable development and environmental awareness and much work has been done in this area to support and extend pupils' learning experiences through the well-designed conservation area and woodland walk.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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82. The findings of the inspection team exceed the judgement of Grade 2 made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
83. Support systems are firmly in place and ensure equality of opportunity and respect for diversity. Teachers know pupils well, are approachable and respond positively to pupils' requests for help. Staff operate effectively as a team and implement support systems consistently and efficiently.
84. Induction programmes for early years pupils provide effective support for their introduction to school life. As a consequence, pupils in the reception classes very quickly become familiar with school routines, facilities and personnel.
85. Induction arrangements operate well in all other classes through the school. Through a planned programme of events in the first week of term, pupils are reminded about school and class routines, teachers' expectations and most pupils settle quickly.
86. There is due care and attention paid to pupils' safety while on the school site. Procedures for the safe entry and exit of pupils who arrive by bus are thorough. Sound systems are in place for the logging and monitoring of attendance.
87. Consideration is given to pupils' different needs and interests while at play through provision of different areas in the school grounds, some designated for active play and others for quiet reflection or seating in small groups.
88. Systems for child protection are well established. Teachers are aware of pupils with particular needs and knowledgeable about procedures in the event of accidents or emergencies, such as how to help pupils with identified allergic reactions. Risk assessment arrangements are extensive and teachers are well aware of health and safety issues.
89. Arrangements for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs are effective and their progress is logged carefully. The quality of individual educational plans is very good: targets and success criteria are identified clearly and there is involvement of outside agencies where appropriate.
90. Pupils with SEN are supported effectively through a range of provisions. Support staff provide good specific support for individual pupils and forge positive relationships where they raise pupils' self-esteem as well as addressing identified needs. Operating mostly alongside class teachers, they provide invaluable support and pupils make good progress.
91. Teachers apply policies for behavioural management well. They are good role models for pupils and remind pupils regularly to show courtesy and consideration for others.

92. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. Involvement in the school gardening club is particularly popular and has helped to engage pupils' interest in the school grounds and sustainable development.
93. Through a range of careful documentation, well implemented by staff, pupils receive careful guidance and support, both pastoral and academic.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

94. Overall, the findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 2 made by the school in the self-evaluation report. The school has underestimated the effectiveness of the leadership of the school.
95. The quality of leadership shown by the headteacher, a relatively recent appointment, is very good. His management is very positive and gives a clear direction to the work of the school. There is a clear sense of purpose that promotes and sustains improvement with a clear sense of high expectations. A particularly strong feature is the headteacher's capacity to build and co-ordinate a team of staff, who all have a common purpose and the encouragement of staff towards that common goal. The school operates in an environment based on mutual trust and understanding.
96. Shared aims and values, which promote equality for all, are well reflected in the work of the school. The headteacher and senior management have ensured that the school has developed a capacity to reflect critically on what is being done and how it can be improved.
97. The school takes good account of national priorities and these are integrated into the strategic development of the school. The development of a school council is helping pupils to contribute to and influence directly the decisions that affect them. The school has developed a variety of approaches to help pupils have more involvement in the wider aspects of the school as well as contributing to their understanding of citizenship.
98. The use of assessment data and the setting of challenging and realistic targets is identified as a major priority of the school in the current academic year. Self-evaluation is well developed in the management structures of the school and senior management monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of learning in the school. Subject co-ordinators are following a 5 stage model of monitoring which is contributing to greater co-ordinator effectiveness but is currently incomplete and there is a need to swiftly ensure that all co-ordinators are fully involved in the monitoring of standards and the setting of targets.
99. The effective performance management initiative promotes teachers' professional development and helps to improve the quality of the school's provision. Individual staff are set clear objectives towards improved performance, are supported, provided with appropriate training and receive feedback on their performance. Personal development discussions have been introduced for support members of staff to ensure an integrated approach to staff development. This has ensured the development of a very good team spirit in all staff at the school. The

school having received a very positive diagnostic report is currently involved in applying for an 'Investors in People' award.

100. There have been major changes in the senior management of the school. The current headteacher has been in post for less than two years and the deputy headteacher is a very recent appointment. During this relatively short period considerable improvements in the strategic management of the school have taken place. The clear focus has been one of raising standards and improving provision, the establishment of effective procedures for identifying staff development needs and evaluating the impact of staff development on improving standards and quality. For example, staff have been reallocated to different year groups to maximise their effectiveness. Supply teachers have been well supported by the school's management structured that have enabled them to act effectively.
101. The governing body is very supportive, well informed and fully involved in the life of the school. They have a clear understanding of their role and make a substantial contribution to strategic planning. Governors are fully involved in an evaluation of the quality of the school's work and with the management of the school and have been involved in taking appropriate and effective decisions. The governing body fully meet all regulatory and legal requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

102. Overall, the findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
103. The headteacher, governors and staff are committed to improving standards and the quality of the learning experience pupils receive. All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process and the views of parents and pupils have also been taken into account.
104. Senior managers in the school have been able to use the information gained from the self-evaluation arrangements to implement effective strategies for the improvement of standards. Subject co-ordinators have been involved in ensuring progression and continuity in the subjects for which they have responsibility, for example the devising of skills ladders and the review of pupils' work, but have yet to be fully engaged in the use of comparative and historic data or obtaining first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning and the evaluation of standards pupils' achieve. The school has yet to complete the 5 stage model of monitoring and while great strides have been made there is a need to swiftly complete the model to ensure all co-ordinators are fully engaged and informed about pupils' performance.
105. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive planning document clearly setting out the school's priorities. The plan is carefully costed and includes time schedules and success criteria. The school has made a valid assessment, on the basis of analysis, of its needs, has set appropriate targets and has initiated strategies that are operating effectively. Resources, especially the training and development of staff, have been provided to meet the priorities. The school has worked extremely hard over the relatively short time span since the appointment of the current headteacher to ensure the school has the capacity and skills to meet the objectives that have been set.
106. Performance management is beginning to have a good impact on the school. The headteacher is purposefully leading a self-critical culture that is contributing to the identification of the professional needs of all staff.
107. Actions taken over the last year, as a consequence of the identification of shortcomings and planning for improvement, have led to a measurable improvement in standards, for example KS2 core indicator results and the award of the Basic Skills 'Quality Mark' following the targeting of improvement in literacy and numeracy.
108. The self-evaluation report, produced by the school before the inspection, is extensive, honest and clear. It identifies strengths and areas where improvements are needed. The inspection team agreed with the school's identification of its strengths and areas for improvement. Overall, the inspection team agreed with the

judgements made by the school in four of the seven key questions. The discrepancy is due to the school's underestimation of the impact of its current strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the ethos of the school.

109. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed well.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

110. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
111. Pupils are very well supported by an effective team of qualified teachers and support staff. There is a clear planned management of staff who are effectively deployed to enhance teaching and learning. Teachers work very closely with support staff with shared objectives to aid pupils' development. During the inspection, there were three supply teachers for part of the week which included one newly qualified teacher (NQT) and an additional two members of staff who were newly qualified. Induction for staff is very good.
112. Staff development is given a high priority. In-service training (INSET) needs are linked to the school development plan and form part of a process of performance management. Staff training is regularly evaluated and effectively communicated to others. The school administrator carries out the daily routines and a range of other responsibilities effectively and efficiently.
113. Accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. The majority of classes are housed in the very well-maintained building and one Y6 class uses a demountable classroom. The area for the reception class is an appropriate size and children play in a safe enclosed area. However, the environment lacks stimulation for the under-fives, particularly in regard to the outside play area.
114. The school have created a positive learning environment for pupils through the use of the libraries, shared working areas and newly created ICT room with an interactive whiteboard to enhance teaching and learning. Throughout the school, appropriate displays in classrooms and shared areas celebrate pupils' achievements.
115. The attractive, spacious grounds provide very good facilities to develop pupils' physical development and a well-developed conservation area to promote sustainable development. There is a well-kept range of grassed and hard surface areas and a large field for sports and games which is regularly used by the local community. There is good access for disabled persons.
116. The quality and quantity of resources for the subjects are good overall. There are seventeen laptops computers which are regularly used by all classes which successfully supports pupils' skills and contributes to the raising of standards in information technology. Recent resources have been purchased for the under-fives which supports their development but there are limited stimulating resources particularly in relation to equipment for outdoor play.
117. Spending decisions are closely matched to the school's priorities and overall, the school achieves good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Mathematics

Key Stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh some shortcomings

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh some shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

118. Pupils in both key stages are attentive in lessons. They respond well to questions and show an interest in their work, which promotes their learning.
119. Pupils in KS1 are developing a good understanding of number and place value and can use this to order numbers. Pupils are able to use a variety of methods for adding and subtracting one and two digit numbers, which they apply in the context of money.
120. In KS2 pupils extend their understanding of the number system to negative numbers and decimals. Younger pupils can sequence numbers accurately counting on and back in steps of constant size. They carry out calculations using three digit numbers and understand that the position of a digit signifies its value. Older and more able pupils are able to understand and use in context, fractions and percentages to describe proportions of a whole; and to recognise the equivalence between decimal, fractional and percentage forms.
121. Pupils in both key stages have a good understanding of shape, space and measures. In KS1 pupils use appropriate mathematical language to describe shape and are able to describe the properties of two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) shapes. In KS2 pupils can indicate accurately lines of symmetry, use co-ordinates to specify location, transform 2D shapes by translation and have a good understanding of angle as a measure of rotation.
122. In KS1 pupils can compare and order objects using appropriate language and use common non-standard and standard units of length, mass and capacity. Pupils in KS2 use appropriate measuring instruments and interpret numbers and read scales to an increasing degree of accuracy. Older pupils are able to find the perimeter of shapes and can find the circumference of a circle.
123. In both key stages pupils interpret mathematical data and present their results using diagrams, tables and graphs appropriate to their age and ability. Pupils in KS1 are able to sort and classify a set of objects using criteria related to their properties. In KS2 pupils are able to create and interpret frequency tables and interpret a wide range of graphs. Older pupils understand measures of average and show a growing understanding of probability.

Shortcomings

124. A significant number of pupils in both key stages lack confidence and quick recall in mental calculations. The systematic development of mental strategies is at an early stage of development.
125. Many pupils in KS2 are unable to check their solutions by applying inverse operations, estimations and approximations.
126. Further emphasis could be placed upon fostering independent learning skills by challenging pupils to deal with open-ended problems to extend their mathematical reasoning skills.

Science

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

127. Pupils are well able to recall their previous studies of living things, materials and physical processes. Oral explanations include regular and appropriate use of scientific vocabulary in both key stages. Good examples include Y1 pupils' description of shiny materials where they comment on the reflection of light, and Y6 pupils' comments on properties of solids, liquids and gases.
128. Pupils' observational skills develop well through the school. For example, in KS1, pupils make careful observations of melting chocolate buttons or of changes to humans when growing up. In Y3, pupils make detailed observations of the appearance of oak leaves from different trees in the school grounds and make suggestions for the observed differences.
129. Pupils draw on their observations and previous experiences to make explanations for scientific phenomena. Y1 pupils, for example, can explain why some materials are shinier than others by referring to the nature of the surface. Y4 pupils make valid arguments in favour of soap powder's solid, as opposed to liquid, state when challenged to explain the fact that powder can be poured.
130. Progression in fair testing progresses well, particularly in KS2. Pupils can identify key variables and know how to construct simple fair tests. When investigating the effect of changing the amount of vinegar in a mix with bicarbonate of soda, Y5 pupils recognise what they must keep the same in order for the test to be fair, and identify patterns in the data collected.
131. Classification skills develop well in KS1 and KS2. From the use of simple sorting in KS1 linked with material texture, living things and forces and by the end of KS2, pupils classify plants found in different parts of the school grounds and use keys to help with identification.

132. Some good inclusion of research activities is evident in pupils' use of the internet to discover information about famous scientists in Y3 or the structure of snow flakes in Y5.

133. Recording is suitably varied with good inclusion of illustration, lists, labelling, tables with numerical data, formal report writing and poetry. An interesting example is Y4 pupils' humorous poems where they suggest silly uses of materials thus reinforcing their awareness of material properties linked with use in real life.

Shortcomings

135 There are no important shortcomings but there would be benefit in continued development of pupils' independent enquiry skills to further enhance standards in investigative science.

Welsh Second language

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

Good and outstanding features

134. Pronunciation skills are good throughout the school. Pupils' recall of previous patterns and topics studied is generally good. An effective range of strategies, including 'Y Gadair Boeth' which is regularly employed in most classes is having a positive impact on pupils' standards of achievement. Pupils undertake role play activities with confidence and developing fluency.

135. In KS2, pupils discuss currently studied topics with developing confidence and fluency such as simple descriptions and events in the past. In Y6, pupils' recall of previous language is good and most pupils show a good understanding of a range of language patterns in both the present and past tense.

136. In both key stages, pupils can read the target language on flashcards and simple texts related to the current topic of study.

137. In KS1, writing skills are developing appropriately through tasks that include labelling, matching exercises and simple sentences to reinforce oral work based on a given pattern. In KS2, pupils are able to construct sentences, based on a pattern provided by the teacher, with appropriate attention to spelling.

138. Incidental language is used effectively in classes and in assembly to reinforce and develop pupils' language skills, and bilingual signs around the school further supports pupils' knowledge and understanding.

139. ICT is used appropriately in both key stages to support language development. Good use is made in Y6 of the interactive whiteboard in supporting and extending pupils' skills.

Shortcomings

140. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to read Welsh texts to enhance reading skills, particularly in KS2; there is limited progression in pupils' reading skills as they move through the key stage.

141. Limited progression is evident in pupils' writing skills by the end of KS2; there is little evidence of independent writing.

Information technology

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

Good and outstanding features

142. Throughout the school pupils use IT equipment confidently and competently and in a range of curriculum contexts. Pupils are able to work independently or in pairs, using desktop and notebook computers, and exercise a degree of autonomy appropriate to their age and ability.

143. Throughout the school, pupils use the equipment and software to process and present information and enhance its quality. In both key stages pupils are able to generate and communicate their ideas in different forms, for example creating pictures. Older pupils are able to exchange ideas and information, incorporating text and pictures through multi-media presentations.

144. Pupils in KS1 are able to enter and store information, with older pupils processing and displaying information previously stored. Pupils in KS2 are able to select information and prepare information for processing, for example when using a simple database. In their use of the internet to search for information, pupils in KS2 show good skills in their ability to use search engines and pose appropriate questions when undertaking an investigation.

145. Pupils in KS2 are able to use a programmable vehicle to see the consequences of their decisions and programme a sequence of commands. Through their use of spreadsheets, older pupils in KS2 are able to recognise patterns and relationships and predict the outcomes of different decisions that could be made.

Shortcomings

146. There are no discernable shortcomings though further development in pupils' skills in the use of simulations, to ask and answer questions of the 'what would happen if...' type would be beneficial.

Design technology

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

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

Good and outstanding features

147. Pupils' research skills are well developed in both key stages and enable pupils to gain a good awareness of design applications in real life. Y2 pupils, for example, recognise uses of hinges in everyday appliances, Y3 pupils can comment on different types of picture frames, Y5 pupils undertake taste surveys to discover the most popular pizzas and Y6 pupils show good awareness of different types of board games. These research activities are a strength of the work in the subject.
148. Pupils in KS2 can suggest the target group for a product, based on observations of features. Y3 pupils are able to suggest a user for different frames and Y6 pupils link use of board games with size, facilities and durability.
149. Awareness of the properties of different materials, including fabrics, food, resistant and junk materials, develops appropriately through the school. Pupils also become aware of different fastening techniques. For example, Y2 pupils use a range of fastenings when making a simple hinged door out of card.
150. There is good progression in planning of designs from simple pictorial designs of biscuits in Y1 to Y4 pupils' plans for beach bags, which show dimensions, material and features.
151. Y5 pupils produce prototype Tudor house models where they indicate an awareness of the size of the first and second floor and how this might be incorporated into a finished model.
152. Pupils make good use of focused tasks where they practise a particular skill. In Y3, for example, pupils practise border patterns before decorating their Druid coats and Y4 pupils try alternative ways of joining the fabric of their beach bags before deciding on the most effective.
153. Pupils' evaluations of finished products show appropriate progression from KS1 to KS2. Pupils in KS1 note likes and dislikes in simple terms and in KS2, this extends to consideration of areas of difficulty and possible modifications.

Shortcomings

154. There are no important shortcomings.

History

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

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

Good and outstanding features

155. In both key stages, pupils are developing a widening historical vocabulary and use this well to explain and describe historical events and investigate evidence. They can identify characteristics of particular periods of history and can make comparisons with today. They are aware of local history and historic influences on the local area. A strong feature of the school is the development and application of pupils' literacy skills through a study of history. Pupils' skills in language and information and communications technology are considerably enhanced.

156. In KS1 pupils are developing good skills in historical enquiry. They are able to find out about the past, for example schools, from a range of historical sources, including photographs and books. They are able to choose questions to ask about sources and are able to ask and answer questions about the past.

157. Pupils in KS2 have a very good understanding of the nature of evidence and can separate fact from opinion. They are able to use a range of artefacts to 'gather a picture' about the history, achievements and interests of a person and able to use information technology to research information on historical periods.

158. In KS2 pupils are developing a good historical knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of the period under study. They are able to identify and describe the main events and have a good understanding of the causes and consequences of events and changes, for example the conclusion of the War of the Roses and the rise of the Tudors.

159. Older pupils In KS2 make good use of a range of information sources to research information on crime and punishment in Tudor times. Through their studies pupils are able to gain a good understanding of social and economic aspects of the period.

Shortcomings

160. There are no discernable shortcomings although pupils would benefit from more in-depth, independent studies which would enable them to select, recall and organise historical information in a variety of ways.

School's response to the inspection

The staff and Governors of Usk CIW Primary School have carefully considered the outcomes of the recent Estyn inspection. We conclude that they very fairly and accurately reflect the work and daily life of the school. Observations and judgements made by the inspection team were mainly in accordance with those made by the school. As a result of the inspection the areas identified by the school for further development, through self evaluation, have been confirmed. Realistic and manageable recommendations have been made by the inspection team which will be acted upon in order to further raise standards throughout the school.

Throughout, the inspection was thorough, rigorous and fair. At all times the inspection team were totally professional in their approach and fully involved the school "nominee" in all aspects of the process as agreed in the nominee 's contract. Judgements were balanced and arrived at after careful observation of the teaching and learning process, discussions with all staff(teaching and non-teaching), pupils, governors and other stakeholders. Pupils' books were carefully scrutinised along with school documentation. Great care was taken to corroborate judgements by seeking additional views and evidence where appropriate.

We acknowledge and greatly appreciate the inspectors' identification of the strong team approach of all our school staff and the skill, commitment and dedication they apply to ensure the all round development of the 'whole' child. We are proud of our pupils' attitude, behaviour and involvement in their own learning, the inspection team has duly noted this. Importantly the difficulties experienced by the school over the last three years with a number of senior management changes (including headship) were considerable and reflected in the report.

Areas for improvement relating to standards have been identified (also with acknowledge to areas of strength). Recommendations have been made for those areas which will clearly benefit from further development. There is

direct correlation between the school's self-evaluation process, its impact on the School Improvement Plan and the recommendations of the inspection team. We are confident that we can effectively address these important areas that have been identified. Shortcomings identified in the report will be subsumed into the current School Improvement Plan and prioritised for action. Because many of the recommendations and shortcomings identified by the inspectors had already been identified by the school through its own rigorous self evaluation processes we will be able to address them during this current academic year.

We pride ourselves on a whole school approach. Governors, senior managers, teaching and ancillary staff, pupils and parents will, I am sure, rise to the challenges ahead and strive to continue moving the school forward. The new inspection framework, with self-evaluation at its heart, is to be applauded and will be instrumental in the raising of standards in our school. Through self-evaluation we have been able to gain a clear indication of the school's immediate position and how it can be further

developed. The inspection has made a tremendous contribution in our continuing efforts to do the best for all our pupils.

Governors and staff at Usk Church in Wales Primary School would like to thank the inspection team for their professionalism and for the sensitive yet thorough and rigorous way in which they conducted the inspection.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of School	Usk Church in Wales Primary
School type	Voluntary
Age -range of pupils	4 - 11
Address of school	Monmouth Road, Usk, Monmouthshire
Post-Code	NP15 1SE
Telephone Number	01291 673818

Headteacher	Mr. Jonathan Murphy
Date of appointment	April 2003
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mr. Peter Clark
Registered Inspector	Mr. Allan Fear
Dates of inspection	13 September -16 September 2004

Appendix B

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	na	34	39	50	43	61	44	54	325

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	12	4	14

Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	27:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	na:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in special classes	na:1
Average class size, (excluding nursery and special classes)	27
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1 :1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection			
	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2004	na	95	93
Spring 2004	na	95	95
Autumn 2003	na	96	94

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	1.23
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection.	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results 2004

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2003			Number of pupils in Y2: 52						
Percentage of pupils at each level			D	A	W	1	2	3	4
English	Teacher Assessment	School			4	8	48	40	0
		National			4	14	63	20	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School			2	16	40	42	0
		National			2	11	63	24	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School			2	10	66	22	0
		National			2	10	67	21	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment

In the school:	78	In Wales:	81
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National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results: 2004			Number of pupils in Y6: 53										
Percentage of pupils at each level			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School								13	34	53	
		National						1	7	20	46	24	
	Test/Task	School							1	10	37	52	
		National		2	1	2				6	14	43	32
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School							0	15	51	34	
		National						1	5	20	45	28	
	Test/Task	School							0	11	62	27	
		National		2	1	1				4	20	42	30
Science	Teacher assessment	School							0	4	45	51	
		National	1						3	14	49	33	
	Test/Task	School							0	0	63	37	
		National		2		1				2	11	47	38

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:	79	In the school:	81
In Wales:	70	In Wales:	68

- D Pupils who are exempted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
 A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
 N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
 B pupils not entered for tests because they are working outside the level of the test
 W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- A team of four inspectors who were present at the school for 13 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.
- 69 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.
- 54 lessons 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 extra-curricular 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
Mr. Allan Fear Registered inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key questions 1, 5 and 6 Mathematics History Information technology
Mrs. Karen Morris	Key questions 2 and 4 Science Design and technology
Mrs Sue George	Key questions 3 and 7 Welsh (second language)
Mrs Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1,3, 4 and 7

Acknowledgement

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

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

Usk Church in Wales Primary School

A Summary Report for Parents

Date of Inspection: 13 – 16 September 2004

BY

Allan Fear

Registered Inspector No: WO/15698

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Usk Church in Wales Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Usk Church in Wales Primary School took place between 13 – 16 September 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Allan Fear 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. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

Summary and recommendations

Usk Church in Wales Primary School is a good school, which has improved standards since the last inspection. The inspection team agreed with the judgements made by the school about the standards pupils achieve and with some of the school's judgements about other areas of its work. Where there were disagreements the inspection considered that the school had underestimated the impact of its current strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning and ethos of the school.

Table of grades awarded

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?	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?	2
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Standards

During the inspection, children were attending the reception class on a part-time basis with the exception of the last day which was the children's first full day in school. On the basis of this evidence and scrutiny of last year's work, 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.

In 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
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 3
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 3
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2

Children in the reception classes make good progress in their development of key, personal, social and learning skills.

Pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT), across the curriculum are good. While pupils speak clearly with increasing confidence and using an extensive vocabulary with good accuracy, there are shortcomings in pupils' ability to listen, in particular giving due attention to the views of their peers. Pupils make good use of their key skills in all subjects of the curriculum and teaching is structured effectively to achieve this goal. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills to measure and calculate accurately, for example, in science. Pupils use ICT confidently to support their learning, such as to research information in history and to present ideas.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.

At the end of key stage 1, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were, with the exception of English, below the local and national averages. Results in the core subjects were lower than the average when compared to similar schools across Wales. Historical assessment data shows attainment was significantly higher in 2003. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls, although, overall boys tend to achieve the higher levels in the latest results in science and English.

In key stage 2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science were well above the local and national averages. Results in the core subjects were above the average when compared to similar schools across Wales. Historical assessment data show attainment has risen significantly from 2003. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls, although, overall, girls tend to do better than boys.

Overall trends in performance over the last few years have been variable but show a broad pattern of continuous improvement.

Pupils show clear progress in acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills and make good progress towards fulfilling their potential. While the school has introduced a programme, and a series of measures, to increase pupils' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and what they need to do to improve, this is still an area for further development to reduce variability across the school.

Pupils' attitude to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are good features. Pupils work hard in lessons and apply themselves conscientiously; they readily join in the range of activities provided, and show enthusiasm for their work.

Pupils are well behaved, understand what is expected of them and are considerate, courteous to each other and adults and visitors. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and exercise a high degree of self-discipline.

Pupils take an active part in the life and work of the school, for example the School Council, various events and the organic garden and show by their attitudes that they see themselves as part of a community in which they support each other. While pupils are able to plan and organise their work without constant supervision very often they are on tasks exclusively structured by the teacher. Pupils need to improve their own decision-making and problem-solving skills through the development of independent tasks.

The quality of education and training

The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	39%	37%	0%	0%

The percentage of lessons judged at least good is above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of 95% satisfactory or better and the percentage of very good lessons is well above the WAG target of 50% good or better. The quality of relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils is very good. A positive and productive working environment supports pupils' learning.

The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. There is good provision for pupils' personal and social education. Pupils also benefit from opportunities to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and plan thoroughly. Medium and short term planning are well constructed and, overall, give due attention to strategies for differentiation. Inclusion of enquiry based work in planning is improving but has not yet impacted on standards of achievement by pupils.

Teachers' questioning is used well to assess pupils' understanding of lesson content and, overall, teachers interact well with pupils to gauge progress and set targets for improvement.

Record-keeping systems are well focused and helpful. Evaluation of short-term planning is used well by teachers to focus on successes and areas of need for future learning. Older pupils in KS2 are required to identify targets

for the term in core subjects. There is less evidence of involvement of pupils in setting targets on a day to day, lesson by lesson basis.

Learning experiences effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a clear sense of ownership and responsibility to the school and its environment. Collective worship makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of moral issues. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is a strong feature of the school and is planned as an integral part of the curriculum. A range of opportunities are in place to promote pupils' bilingual skills through regular speaking and listening activities in all classes.

Support systems are firmly in place and ensure equality of opportunity and respect for diversity. Teachers know pupils well, are approachable and respond positively to pupils' requests for help. Staff operate effectively as a team and implement support systems consistently and efficiently.

Arrangements for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs are effective and their progress is logged carefully. The quality of individual educational plans is very good; targets and success criteria are identified clearly and there is involvement of outside agencies where appropriate.

Pupils with SEN are supported effectively through a range of provisions. Support staff provide good specific support for individual pupils and forge positive relationships where they raise pupils' self-esteem as well as addressing identified needs. Operating mostly alongside class teachers, they provide invaluable support and pupils make good progress.

There are very good links with parents. A substantial number of adults are involved in supporting teachers in both key stages through a variety of reading initiatives and other activities. In their responses to questionnaires and the pre-inspection meeting, parents expressed satisfaction with the standards achieved by their children and the values promoted by the school. Links with the community are effective and extend the range of experiences for pupils at the school.

Systems for child protection are well established. Teachers are aware of pupils with particular needs and are knowledgeable about procedures in the event of accidents or emergencies, such as how to help pupils with identified allergic reactions. Risk assessment arrangements are extensive and teachers are well aware of health and safety issues.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership shown by the headteacher, a relatively recent appointment, is very good. His management is very positive and gives a clear direction to the work of the school. There is a clear sense of purpose that promotes and sustains improvement with a clear sense of high expectations. A particularly strong feature is the headteacher's capacity to build and co-

ordinate a team of staff, who all have a common purpose and the encouragement of staff towards that common goal. The school operates in an environment based on mutual trust and understanding.

There have been major changes in the senior management of the school. The current headteacher has been in post for less than two years and the deputy headteacher is a very recent appointment. During this relatively short period considerable improvements in the strategic management of the school have taken place. The clear focus has been one of raising standards and improving provision, the establishment of effective procedures for identifying staff development needs and evaluating the impact of staff development on improving standards and quality.

The governing body is very supportive, well informed and fully involved in the life of the school. They have a clear understanding of their role and make a substantial contribution to strategic planning. Governors are fully involved in an evaluation of the quality of the school's work and with the management of the school, have been involved in taking appropriate and effective decisions. The governing body fully meets all regulatory and legal requirements.

The headteacher, governors and staff are committed to improving standards and the quality of the learning experience pupils receive. All staff are involved in the self-evaluation process and the views of parents and pupils have also been taken into account.

Senior managers in the school have been able to use the information gained from the self-evaluation arrangements to implement effective strategies for the improvement of standards. Subject co-ordinators have been involved in ensuring progression and continuity in the subjects for which they have responsibility but have yet to be fully engaged in the use of comparative and historic data or obtaining first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning and the evaluation of standards pupils achieve. The school has yet to complete the 5 stage model of monitoring and while great strides have been made there is a need to swiftly complete the model to ensure all co-ordinators are fully engaged and informed about pupils' performance.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed well.

The quality and quantity of resources for the subjects is good overall. There are seventeen laptops computers which are regularly used by all classes which successfully supports pupils' skills and contributes to the raising of standards in information technology. Recent resources have been purchased for the under-fives which supports their development but there are limited stimulating resources particularly in relation to equipment for outdoor play.

Recommendations

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

- . raise standards in pupils' mental mathematical reasoning;
- . raise standards in pupils' reading and writing in Welsh as a second language in key stage 2;
- . raise standards in pupils' listening skills in both key stages;

- . further develop the role of the subject co-ordinator in the evaluation of standards;

- . further develop pupils' enquiry-based learning skills;

- . provide additional resources in the early years areas to provide a more varied and stimulating environment.

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

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.

