

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

**A report on the quality of education in**

**Willowtown Community Primary School  
Brynheulog , Ebbw Vale  
Gwent  
NP23 6NJ**

**School number: 6772278**

**Date of inspection: 23/11/09**

**by**

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## Introduction

Willowtown Community Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Willowtown Community Primary School took place between 23/11/09 and 26/11/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Phillip David Watcyn Edwards, 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.

Estyn's reports follow its guidance for the writing and editing of reports, which is available on the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)). The table below shows the terms that Estyn uses and a broad idea of their meaning. The table is for guidance only.

<b>Nearly all</b>	with very few exceptions	<b>Half/around half</b>	close to 50%
<b>Most</b>	90% or more	<b>A minority</b>	below 40%
<b>Many</b>	70% or more	<b>Few</b>	below 20%
<b>A majority</b>	over 60%	<b>Very few</b>	less than 10%

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

**Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection.**

**All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.**

This school received a **standard** inspection

## Year groups and key stages

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

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
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. Willowtown Community Primary School is situated in Ebbw Vale about half a mile from the town centre. Most of the area it serves is categorised as being in the 10% most deprived in Wales. The school is administered by Blaenau Gwent Local Authority (LA) and provides education for pupils between 3-11 years of age.
2. The attainment on entry to the nursery covers the full range of levels. The majority of pupils come from backgrounds which are socio-economically very deprived. Nearly all come from homes where English is the main or only language with none speaking Welsh as a first language. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and none receive additional support for English as an additional language (EAL). Three pupils are 'looked after' by the LA.
3. The school moved to a new building built on the old school playing field in January 2007 and has arrangements to use the nearby public fields. There are two outdoor playgrounds with netball and soccer facilities, one of which is a hard surface and the other artificial turf. Since the previous inspection numbers on roll have fallen by around 25% and are now relatively steady. They are currently 326 from reception age onwards with 17 full-time nursery children making a full-time equivalent (fte) of 343 pupils. Pupils are taught in single and mixed age year class. Six pupils are withdrawn from collective worship.
4. There are 15 full-time teachers including the headteacher and four part-time teachers with 12 classes including one nursery and a special needs unit (SNU) housed in two classrooms. There are 14 full-time and five part-time learning support assistants (LSA) and two full-time and one part-time school administrative assistants.
5. Around 33% of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is below the all-Wales national average of 19.7%. There are currently 129 pupils (41%) on the special educational needs (SEN) register. Of these, 90 are on school action and 39 on school action plus with 14 having a formal statement of SEN. There are 30 pupils in the special unit. There are no disapplications to the national curriculum (NC).
6. The school holds the Basic Skills Agency's Quality Mark 3 and received its second Healthy School Accreditation. It has achieved Silver Eco, Intermediate level International School and Certificate of Achievement Biodiversity Awards.
7. The school was last inspected in February 2004.

## The school's priorities and targets

8. The school's vision statement is, 'Willowtown Community Primary School strives to provide a welcoming, respectful, happy, caring and secure working environment for all; one in which pupils will be educated appropriately in terms of the changing demands of the world in which they live to the highest possible standard.'
9. Its overall aim is to value all and focus on achieving potential for all by creating a healthy, stimulating, caring and inclusive environment where learners are able to achieve their potential.
10. The school priorities in the school's improvement plan (SIP) for 2009 – 2010 are to:
  - improve standards of work;
  - refine content and levelling of samples of pupils' work in subject portfolios;
  - audit SEN;
  - develop electronic communications with parents;
  - review policies and documentation;
  - reorganise the library; and
  - develop the school grounds and sustainability.

## Summary

11. Willowtown Community Primary School is a welcoming, cheerful and inclusive community with high aspirations for its pupils. The commitment, dedication and effectiveness of its leaders and staff are significant factors in the overall good standards achieved.

### Table of grades awarded

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

12. The inspection team agreed with the school's judgements in its self-evaluation report in six out of the seven key questions. Where there was a difference in Key Question 7, the team awarded one grade lower as there were insufficient outstanding features to merit a grade 1.
13. Grades for standards in subjects inspected in key stage (KS) 1 and KS2.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information and communications technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 1	Grade 1

14. During the time of the inspection, standards of achievement in lessons were as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
9%	73 %	18%	0%	0%

15. These figures are better than those quoted in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) latest Annual Report for 2007-2008 where nationally they are Grade 2 or better in 84% of lessons and Grade 1 in 12%. This is an improvement on the last inspection.
16. Most learners, including the under-fives and those with SEN, achieve good standards overall in their knowledge, understanding and skills, and reach their agreed targets and goals. Many achieve very well in the foundation phase and as they progress through the school. Nearly all have positive attitudes to learning and succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds. The very few more able and talented pupils make good progress.
17. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the foundation phase outcomes.
18. In the 2009 KS1 teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils who attained at least level 2 or higher was lower than the national averages in English, and science. In mathematics they are significantly below. The proportion who attained the higher level 3 is a little below the national average in English and above in mathematics and science. When the 2009 CSI for pupils are compared with local and all-Wales figures they are significantly below the average in KS1.
19. In the 2009 KS2 teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils which attained at least level 4 or higher was a little lower than national averages in English, mathematics and science. The proportion which attained the higher level 6 is

below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When the 2009 CSI for pupils is compared with local and all-Wales figures it is a little below the average in KS2.

20. When the 2009 core subject indicator (CSI) for pupils in KS1 is compared with schools with a similar free school meal entitlement it is in the lowest 25%. The trend in the last three years is downwards, particularly in mathematics.
21. In 2009 when the CSI for pupils in KS2, who attain at least level four in English, mathematics and science is compared with schools with a similar free school meals entitlement, it is presently just in the lower 50%. The trend in the last three years is significantly upwards and close to the upper 25%.
22. The performance of boys compared with girls is variable. In summer 2009, girls outperformed boys in both key stages by around 5%.
23. The inspection team judged that pupils in both key stages achieve above the levels reflected in the 2008 national curriculum assessments. This is due to a number of factors which affected the results:
  - In particular, in the summer of 2009 in KS1, 49% of the pupils assessed were on the SEN register, three of whom entered the SNU the following term. Moreover, in KS2, 41% of the pupils assessed were on SEN register, with 10 in the SEN unit and seven having statements of SEN.
  - When the figures of mainstream pupils only are considered, they compare favourably with local and similar schools with the CSI in KS1 being 7% above the national averages and in KS2, 12% above.
  - Assessments of pupils' progress from baseline indicate they achieve the expected standards.
  - Standards in lessons observed during the inspection were judged to be mostly good or better in the foundation phase and both key stages.
24. When compared with their family member schools, 40% of which have a SEN unit, in KS1 the school's CSI, 72%, is below the family member average of 80%, the LA, 83% and the Wales average 82%. In KS2, the school's CSI of 78% is higher than the family average of 76%, the LA, 74% and just below the Wales average of 81%.
25. In the foundation phase and both key stages achievement levels in the key skills in speaking and listening for the majority of pupils are good with outstanding features. In reading and writing, numeracy and information communications technology (ICT) they are good. The majority develop their creative and problem solving skills well in a range of subjects. Bilingual competence is good overall in the foundation phase and in both key stages.
26. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in learning, particularly in the manner in which they acquire new knowledge or skills. They make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage in their

learning. Nearly all achieve the expected targets and occasionally exceed them. They acquire many of the good skills necessary to maintain lifelong learning.

27. Pupils begin to develop a good understanding of their abilities and many explain clearly what they are doing. A few review their own progress well to inform their learning through regular self-assessment, but many do not have an in-depth understanding of what they need to do to improve their performance.
28. Most pupils' cultural knowledge of Wales and other countries is good. The development of their personal, social, moral, spiritual and learning skills is outstanding. Standards of behaviour and levels of courtesy and respect demonstrated by most pupils are superb. Nearly all pupils are well motivated, sustain concentration and have positive attitudes to learning.
29. Attendance is below the national average, but at over 92% compares well with similar schools. Nearly all pupils arrive punctually at the beginning of the school day.

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

### **Grades for teaching**

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
27%	55%	18%	0%	0%

30. These figures compare favourably with those of HMCI's latest Annual Report for 2007-8 where nationally they are Grade 2 or better in 83% of lessons and Grade 1 in 16%. This is considerably better than the last inspection.
31. The quality of teaching is variable throughout the school, but mostly good or better. It is nearly always outstanding in the SNU and early-years.
32. Outstanding features in teaching include:
  - very positive and respectful relationships among teachers, support staff and pupils; and
  - open questioning and intervention techniques encourage thoughtful and extended responses from pupils.
33. Good features include:
  - activities are well-planned and relevant;
  - effective levels of pace and challenge uphold high expectations; and
  - effective reflection and evaluation by pupils on their progress;
34. Where teaching is less effective, shortcomings include:
  - slow pace to lessons and lack of challenge.
35. A notable feature in most of the teaching is the mutual respect which exists among teachers, teaching assistants (TA) and pupils. Outstandingly positive

relationships enable nearly all pupils to learn in a secure and purposeful environment where they are valued and treated equally, irrespective of gender, ability or background.

36. Where teachers' planning is effective, it ensures that pupils' experiences build on previous knowledge and understanding. Desired lesson outcomes are identified in their plans, so that pupils are motivated and focused on achieving planned objectives. However, in a minority of lessons, the desired learning outcomes are not clearly defined and pupils find it difficult to judge their progress accurately.
37. The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning is good and statutory requirements are met fully. Pupils' abilities are assessed, monitored and recorded carefully and their progress is tracked effectively through the school.
38. The teacher assessments are moderated well for accuracy and reliability there is overall effective standardisation and moderation to strengthen teacher assessment in KS2 and KS3.
39. Teachers mark pupils' work with them on a regular basis. Supportive comments concern the lesson objectives and, in the best examples, indicate how pupils can improve their work. The use of a 'two stars and a wish' system, begin to involve pupils more effectively in evaluating their own progress, but their understanding of the purpose of their own assessment is not fully developed. Although they are brief, annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements.
40. The broad and balanced curriculum fully meets legal and course requirements including those for religious education, collective worship and pupils' personal development. Nearly all pupils have equal access to every area of the curriculum. Overall, the school caters very effectively for the needs and interests of pupils of all abilities. There are outstanding features in the development of pupils' personal and social education (PSE) and in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The development of pupils' spiritual awareness is often an outstanding feature in many religious education lessons. The school celebrates a rich variety of Welsh and other countries' cultural experiences.
41. The care, support and guidance provided by the school have many outstanding features. Pupils in the SNU are drawn from the locality and LA and have outstanding access to the whole curriculum being particularly well staffed and resourced. There is a clear emphasis on pupils' well being and promoting healthy lifestyles. There are good arrangements for working in partnership with parents and carers. Outstanding induction procedures are in place for new and transferring pupils.
42. The school has clear procedures in place to monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils. A notable feature is that pupils' behaviour throughout the school is generally very good and reflects the school's clear values and expectations. Pupils' well-being is a high priority within the school and the provision has outstanding features.

43. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is outstanding. Very careful consideration is given to the individual requirements of pupils. The provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties in the junior SNU is of a particularly high quality and an outstanding feature.
44. Support for pupils whose behaviour might impede their progress and that of others is exemplary. Pupils of all social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds are supported equally well. There is good in-house provision for the very few pupils with EAL. A wide range of effective intervention strategies and initiatives support pupils' progress well, including challenging the very few more able and talented.

### **Leadership and management**

45. There are clearly understood aims, targets and shared values among staff, parents and pupils. These are reflected very well in the life and work of the school and provide clear direction, a sense of purpose and the promotion of equality for all. The headteacher's outstanding commitment and active interest in all aspects of school life create a positive, busy, educational environment for all pupils. He is ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and the school management team (SMT). Together, they engender an effective team spirit and common purpose which promotes equality for all.
46. A notable feature of the leadership is the welcoming, caring ethos which pervades the school where pupils are happy and self-confident. This contributes effectively to high expectations fulfilled in many facets of school life, but not always consistently in standards of attainment.
47. Well established procedures in leadership and management ensure that a range of constructive priorities are set in the annual school improvement plan (SIP). Many provide a focused strategic direction for school development, but a few are less so.
48. Performance management systems for teaching and support staff are effective in enabling the leadership to make appropriate decisions. Governors know the school and its community well and help set a clear strategic direction. It monitors the quality of provision well to ensure priorities for improvement set are resourced sufficiently.
49. The school's self-evaluation procedures gather a considerable amount of information on its life and work which provides a sound base and structure to the process of improvement. The school's self-evaluation report (SER) is a structured document which is very comprehensive in range, identifies many of the school's strengths and the areas for development. It does not always, however, identify clearly those few features of its work that it judges outstanding.
50. Mostly, the information obtained through self-evaluation is used effectively to inform strategic planning. For example, the downward trend in the CSI in KS1 has been identified and a range of initiatives put in place to improve standards. However, there is incoherence occasionally in the way the SER informs targets

for the SIP and associated continual professional development (CPD) of staff. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues arising from the last inspection.

51. Leaders and managers use resources efficiently. The school is well staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and skilled and their expertise is well matched to the demands of the curriculum. Support staff work effectively, under the guidance of teachers, to make a significant contribution to the overall quality of teaching and learning.
52. The quality and range of resources to support the curriculum are generally good and are readily accessible to pupils. The relatively new building accommodation is outstanding. The foundation phase accommodation and provision is fully integrated to provide a wide range of indoor and outdoor experiences for children.
53. The administrative officers are efficient and effective. The school budget is managed very effectively and resources are well matched to the school's priorities for development.
54. The school has adopted effective procedures for managing teachers' planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). Resources for workforce remodelling are being used appropriately to provide a good standard of education for all pupils. Overall the school provides good value for money.

## **Recommendations**

55. The school needs to:
  - R1 continue to monitor and review recent initiatives to improve standards in the core subjects, particularly in KS1;
  - R2 involve pupils more effectively in assessing their own performance so they know where they are in their learning and what they need to do to make progress; and
  - R3 improve coherence in its self-evaluation arrangements to identify effective strategies to bring out improvement.

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

56. The findings of the inspection team match the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.
57. During the time of the inspection, standards of achievement in lessons were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	73 %	18%	0%	0%

58. These figures are better than those quoted in HMCI's latest Annual Report for 2007-2008 where nationally they are Grade 2 or better in 84% of lessons and Grade 1 in 12%. This is an improvement on the last inspection.
59. Grades for standards in subjects inspected:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information and communications technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 1	Grade 1

60. Most learners, including the under-fives and those with SEN, achieve good standards overall in their knowledge, understanding and skills, and reach their agreed targets and goals. Many achieve very well in the foundation phase and as they progress through the school. Nearly all have positive attitudes to learning and succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds. The very few more able and talented pupils make good progress.
61. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the foundation phase outcomes.
62. In the 2009 KS1 teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils who attained at least level 2 or higher was lower than the national averages in English, and science. In mathematics they are significantly below. The proportion who attained the higher level 3 is a little below the national average in English and above in mathematics and science. When the 2009 CSI for pupils are compared with local and all-Wales figures they are significantly below the average in KS1.
63. In the 2009 KS2 teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils which attained at least level 4 or higher was a little lower than national averages in English,

mathematics and science. The proportion which attained the higher level 6 is below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When the 2009 CSI for pupils is compared with local and all-Wales figures it is a little below the average in KS2.

64. When the 2009 CSI for pupils in KS1 is compared with schools with a similar free school meal entitlement it is in the lowest 25%. The trend in the last three years is downwards, particularly in mathematics.
65. In 2009 when the CSI for pupils in KS2, who attain at least level four in English, mathematics and science is compared with schools with a similar free school meals entitlement, it is presently just in the lower 50%. The trend in the last three years is significantly upwards and close to the upper 25%.
66. In 2009, there is a difference in the performance of boys compared with girls in KS1 being 56% and 62% (6%) respectively in the CSI. In KS2 the performance of boys compared with girls is 72% and 77% respectively (5%). The majority of pupils in both key stages are boys.
67. The inspection team judged that pupils in both key stages achieve above the levels reflected in the 2008 national curriculum assessments. This is due to a number of factors which affected the results:
  - In particular, in the summer of 2009 in KS1, 49% of the pupils assessed were on the SEN register, three of whom entered the SNU the following term. Moreover in KS2, 41% of the pupils assessed were on SEN register, with 10 in the SEN unit and seven having statements of SEN.
  - When the figures of mainstream pupils only are considered, they compare favourably with local and similar schools with the CSI in KS1 being 7% above the national averages and in KS2, 12% above.
  - Assessments of pupils' progress from baseline indicate they achieve the expected standards.
  - Standards in lessons observed during the inspection were judged to be mostly good or better in the Foundation phase and both key stages.
68. When compared with their family member schools, 40% of which have a SEN unit, in KS1 the school's CSI, 72%, is below the family member average of 80%, the LEA, 83% and the Wales average 82%. In KS2, the school's CSI of 78% is higher than the family average of 76%, the LA, 74% and just below the Wales average of 81%.
69. The key skills of speaking and listening are outstanding in English in the foundation phase and both key stages. Nearly all pupils listen very carefully with a high regard for teachers and those in KS2 often they speak thoughtfully and clearly with a wide vocabulary. Nearly all children under-five make good efforts to acquire early reading and writing skills. Standards in reading and writing for many pupils in KS1 and KS2 are good. In both KS1 and KS2 pupils read well for

a range of purposes with improving reference skills and overall they write well across the curriculum.

70. Nearly all children in the under-fives and pupils in both key stages apply the key skills of numeracy well in a range of purposes across the curriculum. Information communications technology (ICT) skills of nearly all the under-fives, KS1 and KS2 develop well throughout the school and they are well aware of a wide range of applications. Throughout the school they also develop their creative and problem solving skills well in a range of subjects.
71. Learners' bilingual competence is good overall. Children under-five develop a good range of vocabulary which they use readily during conversations with teachers and with each other. They use a variety of sentence structures, particularly when singing songs confidently. Standards in bilingualism and attitudes are good in KS1 and KS2 where many pupils make steady progress in understanding the language. They use a range of statements, commands, questions and answers during the school day, both in class and in whole school sessions, sometimes spontaneously.
72. Pupils make good progress in learning, particularly in the manner in which they acquire new knowledge or skills and they increase their understanding effectively through skill based activities, particularly in the foundation phase. They make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage in their learning. Conversations with pupils and observing their progress in lessons confirm the school's assessment data that nearly all achieve the expected targets and occasionally exceed them.
73. Many of the good skills necessary to maintain lifelong learning are acquired by pupils through supporting each other effectively as part of an inclusive community.
74. Pupils begin to develop a good understanding of their abilities and many explain clearly what they are doing. A few review their own progress well to inform their learning through regular self-assessment, but many do not have an in-depth understanding of what they need to do to improve their performance.
75. The development of pupils' personal, social, moral and learning skills is outstanding. Nearly all pupils are well motivated, sustain concentration and have positive attitudes to learning. They work with enthusiasm, make good use of lesson time and maintain effort and concentration well. They have a very clear sense of right and wrong.
76. Standards of behaviour and levels of courtesy and respect demonstrated by most pupils are outstanding and reflected in every aspect of school life.
77. Attendance is below the national average, but at over 92% compares well with similar schools, particularly in view of the level of social deprivation within the school's catchment area. Attendance is well above the average for the LA. Nearly all pupils arrive punctually at the beginning of the school day.

78. Nearly all pupils have a clear understanding of equal opportunities issues. They have a good awareness and show respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions in society. They develop their own personal values well and respect those of others.
79. Pupils gain insight into the world of work through visitors to the school and through organised programmes. Most year 6 (Y6) pupils benefit from the activities organised by the multi-agency Crucial Crew. The school's food co-op provides some useful entrepreneurial experience for a few pupils.
80. Pupils are very effectively immersed in the local community as the school is very much at the heart of it as a meeting place for a wide range of agencies, societies and activities.

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

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

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

81. The findings of the inspection team match the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.
82. During the time of the inspection, the quality of teaching in lessons were as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
27%	55%	18%	0%	0%

83. These figures compare favourably with those of Her HMCI's latest Annual Report for 2007-8 where nationally they are Grade 2 or better in 83% of lessons and Grade 1 in 16%. This is considerably better than the last inspection.
84. The quality of teaching is variable throughout the school, but mostly good or better. It is nearly always outstanding in the SNU and early-years.
85. Outstanding features in teaching include:
  - very positive and respectful relationships among teachers, support staff and pupils;
  - a wide range of strategies ensure pupils are involved actively and purposefully in their learning; and
  - open questioning and intervention techniques encourage thoughtful and extended responses from pupils.
86. Good features include:
  - activities are well-planned and relevant;
  - effective levels of pace and challenge uphold high expectations;
  - effective reflection and evaluation by pupils on their progress;

- pupils' attention is drawn to the key skills they will develop during the lesson; and
  - effective strategies extend pupils' independent skills.
87. Where teaching is less effective, shortcomings include:
- slow pace to lessons and lack of challenge; and
  - over-direction restricts opportunities for pupils to work independently.
88. A notable feature in most of the teaching is the mutual respect which exists among teachers, TAs and pupils. Outstandingly positive relationships enable nearly all pupils to learn in a secure and purposeful environment where they are valued and treated equally, irrespective of gender, ability or background.
89. In most case, pupils' activities are often appropriately challenging to meet their needs, although the use of worksheets sometimes limits pupils' individuality. In a few classes there are occasions when the tasks are not sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of pupils with differing abilities.
90. The high quality of support provided by TAs ensures that pupils with additional learning needs are able to make good progress.
91. Many teachers display very good knowledge of the subjects they teach and are familiar with recent initiatives and developments in education. Teachers make good progress in establishing the foundation phase and in implementing the new KS2 curriculum.
92. Where teachers' planning is effective, it ensures that pupils' experiences build on previous knowledge and understanding. Desired lesson outcomes are identified in their plans, so that pupils are motivated and focused on achieving planned objectives. However, in a minority of lessons, the desired learning outcome is not clearly defined and pupils find it difficult to judge their progress accurately.
93. In the early years and KS1, teachers provide pupils with stimulating experiences which fully embody the principles of the foundation phase and in KS2 use a wide range of methods to engage their pupils effectively. Interactive whiteboards are often used creatively to engage pupils and to present information in a memorable way. Most teachers use good questioning techniques to promote pupils' thinking and reasoning.
94. Teachers promote Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig well. In most classes they use Welsh regularly to praise children and give simple instructions. In many classes, teachers provide a good platform on which pupils can build their bilingual skills.
95. The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning is good. Pupils' abilities are assessed appropriately using a good baseline assessment undertaken in the foundation phase classes which informs teachers' future planning effectively. Their achievement is monitored and recorded carefully and their progress is tracked effectively through the school. In common with other schools in the LA, regular informal assessments are complemented by a comprehensive programme of standardised testing. Pupils' performance data

are carefully analysed and used to set realistic targets for attainment and to inform longer-term planning.

96. The statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on the national curriculum are met fully. Teacher assessments are moderated well for accuracy and reliability, for example, levelled portfolios of work in English, mathematics and science are used to compare the quality of pupils' work with that of those in other schools. Overall there is effective standardisation and moderation to strengthen teacher assessment in KS2 and KS3.
97. Teachers follow a whole-school policy for marking pupils' work with them regularly. Supportive comments concern the lesson objectives and, in the best examples, indicate how pupils can improve their work. The use of a 'two stars and a wish' system, begin to involve pupils more effectively in evaluating their own progress, but their understanding of the purpose of their own assessment is not fully developed.
98. Although they are brief, annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements. They inform them of the work covered in each subject and of the standards attained in English, mathematics and science. The reports do not suggest ways that parents can assist their children's progress.

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

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

99. The findings of the inspection team match the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.
100. The broad and balanced curriculum fully meets legal and course requirements including those for religious education, PSE and health education. Nearly all pupils have equal access to every area of the curriculum. Overall, the school caters very effectively for the needs and interests of pupils of all abilities.
101. The quality of the curriculum for children in the foundation phase is particularly appropriate to their needs. The stimulating experiences provided ensure the very successful development of their skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. Purposeful learning takes place both indoors and outdoors.
102. Nearly all pupils' experiences are planned and structured carefully on a two-year programme to ensure in mixed-age classes do not repeat unnecessary work. Schemes of work, thoroughly revised to adapt to curricular requirements, show good progression of both subject content and skills to be acquired.
103. Overall, there are effective arrangements to ensure that all pupils make good overall progress in acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Arrangements for the development of key skills in all subjects are good, although sometimes opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum are missed. The planning for developing pupils' critical skills is a notable feature.

104. The extent to which pupils' experiences are enriched by a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities is an outstanding feature of the school. These activities, both sporting and cultural, allow pupils to gain credits towards Children's University awards. A wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities include rugby, football, netball and athletics, Welsh country dance, a Celtic Band, art club and knitting. Older pupils benefit well from French lessons and experiences with the 'Crucial Crew' initiative. Visits to places of educational interest, and residential experiences for older pupils at outdoor pursuit centres extend and enrich the curriculum effectively. Visitors to the school include theatre groups, artists, musicians, religious leaders, police and fire service personnel who share their expertise and experiences with pupils, further stimulate their learning particularly well.
105. The school offers an extended day, beginning with breakfast club and providing after-school care. The school also offers a holiday club to care for pupils when school is closed. This 'wrap-around' care is outstanding.
106. There are good with outstanding features in the development of pupils' PSE. They meet requirements fully and relevant aspects are promoted very well through regular opportunities to discuss issues in a supportive and caring environment. The sensitive and consistent manner in which pupils are encouraged to reflect on the values of honesty, trustworthiness and tolerance and respect for others is outstanding.
107. There are outstanding features in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision for collective worship fulfils statutory requirements and the local clergy make a valuable contribution. The development of pupils' spiritual awareness is often an outstanding feature in many religious education lessons. The school celebrates a rich variety of Welsh and other countries' cultural experiences.
108. There are many good as well as outstanding features pertaining to the school's partnership with parents, schools, colleges and the local community. Most parents are supportive of the school and express satisfaction with the aims and values that the school promotes. Overall communication with them is well-established and effective, and most appreciate the easy access they have to the headteacher and staff. A constructive home/school agreement is in place that has readily been accepted by most parents.
109. The school's partnerships with other associated schools are exemplary, particularly the transition arrangements with the local comprehensive which bring many benefits to the pupils and the staff of both schools. Close joint arrangements ensure that most Y6 pupils look forward to secondary school and approach it with confidence.
110. The school has established highly successful partnerships with several institutes of higher education and regularly provides training facilities for student teachers and students undertaking childcare, nursing and vocational qualifications. Students are well supported and make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

111. The many positive links with the local community contribute significantly to pupils' learning in a number of curriculum areas. The school and its various activities are well supported and valued by the local community.
112. The school council, the food co-op and the school fayre are used effectively to encourage responsibility in pupils. 'People Week' and a regular stream of organised visits to the school, ensure regular contact with and awareness of the world of work.
113. Welsh is used prominently in signs and displays, and encouraged well in registration and a weekly Welsh Assembly. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is promoted through a thematic approach, such as 'Dic Penderyn'. There is an appropriate Welsh section in the library, and most lessons include the use of incidental Welsh by staff and pupils alike. Where the use of incidental Welsh takes place on a regular basis, it makes a positive contribution towards pupils' bilingual competence. For example, this is particularly so in the early-years where it is outstanding.
114. The school is highly successful and proactive in combating social disadvantage and stereotyping and presents pupils with outstanding equality of access and opportunity across the full range of its provision. Owing to the diverse nature of the catchment area close links are maintained with social services. Underachievement by the socially disadvantaged is tackled particularly well.
115. The school has a policy for education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC) and this is well covered in information boards and displays. There is a school grounds project, an effective Eco-committee, and a good awareness of recycling needs through the 'Tidy Trev' initiative. Classes, including the SEN unit, work together on weather and environmental themes. Global Citizenship is promoted effectively through a teacher exchange project with Grenada, now in its fourth year.
116. A few enterprise awareness opportunities exist to increase pupils' entrepreneurial skills. For example, they help run an annual school fayre and have won a reward for their 'Food-Co-op' enterprise. Pupils' understanding is promoted further through a range of learning experiences for problem solving and decision making.
117. Lifelong learning and community regeneration activities receive appropriate attention. The school itself is a hub for community activity and regular meetings are held involving governors, parents and representatives of the after-school club, parents, teachers and friends association (PTFA) and the 'Young People's Partnership'. A new daytime parents' meeting has been introduced recently and is proving increasingly popular.

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

##### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

118. The findings of the inspection team match the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. The care, support and guidance provided by the school have many outstanding features.
119. The school places and manages its care arrangements very effectively and makes optimum use of support services. Pupils feel that the school and staff work hard at helping them to raise their levels of achievement. This is a consistent and often outstanding feature of the school.
120. Pupils in the SNU are drawn from the locality and LA and have outstanding access to the whole curriculum being particularly well staffed and resourced. In the mainstream effective 'booster classes' support under achieving pupils.
121. There are good arrangements for working in partnership with parents and carers. The school welcomes them at any time and they are formally invited to attend two meetings per year to discuss their child's progress and any other matter related to their education. Most parents feel they are well informed about events in the school. Occasional newsletters issued to inform them mainly about the dates for school events and the school's achievements. The majority filled in a recent questionnaire compiled by the school to seek their views. There are mutually advantageous partnerships between the school and LA through sharing expertise.
122. Outstanding induction procedures are in place for new and transferring pupils. The highly personalised and individual approach adopted by the school ensures new pupils and parents are welcomed into the school community and learners settle in quickly and understand their responsibilities.
123. The school provides outstanding personal support for pupils, and this is clearly reflected in their attitudes and behaviour. There is a clear emphasis on pupils' well being and promoting healthy lifestyles. The school has very effective links with the police, health, social services and other agencies. The police liaison officer attends regularly as part of the PSE programme.
124. The school council is a very effective forum which promotes a strong sense of community and develops the citizenship skills of its members very well. Members demonstrate real concern for their fellow pupils and will individually or collectively voice their concerns to teachers.
125. The school has clear procedures in place to monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils and a well-established follow-up system with parents. A well understood first day response system is in place and follow up calls on the first morning are followed by a letter and a referral to the educational welfare officer (EWO) where necessary. A breakfast club and 100% Attendance Certificates represent significant attempts to improve punctuality.

126. Effective procedures consistently applied, ensure most pupils are very well behaved. Their behaviour outside school grounds and hours is very highly praised by the police liaison officer. Badges of behaviour and badges of hope, presented at a weekly assembly, reinforce the school's clear values and expectations.
127. Pupils' well-being is a high priority within the school and the provision has outstanding features. Vulnerable children have the effective support of trained members of staff. Any reports of bullying are investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken. Circle-time sessions promote safe and harmonious relationships particularly well. Healthy eating is promoted very well through fruit snacks at break times, promotion of healthy lunches and the availability of drinking water in classrooms. Pupils are appointed as junior road safety officers and monitor the safety of others in relation to traffic on site. They also support the eco-committee's 'walk to school' initiative.
128. Child protection arrangements are good and follow local guidance. Nearly all members of staff have received recent and relevant training in its principles and procedures.
129. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is outstanding. Very careful consideration is given to the individual requirements of pupils. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and staff implement procedures very effectively for early identification and subsequent monitoring of pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning. Pupils who have particular needs, for example behavioural, physical or medical, are supported exceedingly well by specific programmes. The provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties in the SNU is of a particularly high quality and an outstanding feature.
130. High quality individual education plans (IEP) inform learning and teaching very appropriately and good communication ensures that pupils and parents are involved fully in the process. Identified targets are specific and realistic to enable pupils to succeed and progress well. The school is suitably sensitive to issues of inclusion and this enables learning support assistants and adult helpers to assist staff in providing very good quality support for pupils in mainstream classes and in the SNU in KS2. This allows pupils with SEN to access the curriculum fully.
131. Support for pupils whose behaviour might impede their progress and that of others is exemplary. For example, pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) are supported very well through the implementation of a wide range of effective intervention strategies and initiatives including formal behaviour plans when necessary.
132. Pupils of all social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds are supported equally well. In an area of very high social deprivation the school works very closely with social services and other professional agencies to provide support for pupils and their families. A wide range of effective intervention strategies and initiatives support pupils' progress well, including challenging the very few more able and talented.

133. The school promotes gender equality well through providing equal access to all activities and by addressing underachievement by any individual boys or girls. The school has a clear gender equality policy, and sporting activities are geared to involve nearly all pupils.
134. The school has a comparatively small ethnic minority (3%), but has clear equal opportunities, racial harassment and cultural diversity policies. Partnership with Grenada, and the exchange of staff this entails, contributes very effectively to racial harmony and understanding.
135. There is outstanding provision to eliminate anti-social behaviour, including racial discrimination and all forms of harassment. The school promotes good race relations across the curriculum and in all its activities. It has an effective anti-bullying policy in place. Pupils are encouraged to explore and discuss any form of oppressive behaviour, bullying and harassment. Any incidents are investigated and discussed appropriately with the parents and recorded.
136. There are outstanding arrangements for pupils with disabilities to ensure that they are not being treated less favourably than other pupils. The school's Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan are clear on disability issues and there is an access and disability policy in place. The school complies fully with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. All areas in the school are accessible to disabled learners with wide corridors and a lift to the upper floor.
137. An outstanding range of activities and experiences enable pupils to develop a very clear understanding of diversity within today's society. They reflect the unrelenting way in which the school pursues a successful policy of inclusivity in the curriculum, displays of work and in particular, class discussions.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

138. The findings of the inspection team match the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.
139. There are clearly understood aims, targets and shared values among staff, parents and pupils. These are reflected very well in the life and work of the school and provide clear direction, a sense of purpose and the promotion of equality for all. The headteacher's outstanding commitment and active interest in all aspects of school life create a positive, busy, educational environment for all pupils. He is ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and the SMT. Together, they engender an effective team spirit and common purpose which promotes equality for all.

140. A notable feature of the leadership is the welcoming, caring ethos which pervades the school where pupils are happy and self-confident. This contributes effectively to high expectations fulfilled in many facets of school life, but not always consistently in standards of attainment.
141. Team and subject leaders oversee learning areas efficiently. These are focused appropriately on the well-being of pupils and understood clearly by all staff and the governing body (GB).
142. Well established procedures in leadership and management ensure that a range of constructive priorities are set in the annual SIP. Many provide a focused strategic direction for school development, but a few are less so.
143. There are good arrangements that take account of national priorities and local partnerships and consortia agreements. The work of the school reflects national priorities in practice. They are well thought through and acted upon efficiently. Very good consideration has been given to organising the foundation phase and transition from KS2 to KS3.
144. Performance management systems for teaching and support staff are effective in enabling the leadership to make appropriate decisions. They identify strengths and meet developmental needs through setting relevant targets for improvement. Training objectives for all staff reflect an effective balance between the school's priorities and the needs of individuals.
145. Governors know the school and its community well and have a close involvement in the life of the school. They are well informed and have a good understanding of their roles and what the school should provide for its pupils. They are very supportive and meet regularly to monitor the school's progress and help set a clear strategic direction.
146. The GB is very aware of the importance of its role in supporting the well-being and needs of pupils. It monitors the quality of provision well to ensure priorities for improvement set are resourced sufficiently.
147. The school has a wide range of good quality managerial and curricular policies to meet all statutory legal requirements. These are reviewed on a regular basis by the GB.

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

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

148. The findings of the inspection team match the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team's judgements agree with those of the school in six of the seven key questions.
149. The school's self-evaluation procedures gather a considerable amount of information on its life and work which provides a sound base and structure to the process of improvement. The headteacher and SMT regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning in all classes and produce detailed reports, which are

shared with individual teachers. Curriculum teams consult regularly with colleagues on pupils' progress and together they identify strengths and shortcomings in subjects. They also collect and scrutinise pupils' work although this is not recorded formally.

150. The headteacher leads the school's self-evaluation process well overall. All staff are involved appropriately in analysing pupil data and the headteacher meets with individual members of staff to discuss in detail pupils' performance. Teachers and TAs discuss each of the seven questions in staff meetings, come to a judgement on them and set targets for improvement. The school has sought the opinions of parents, pupils and governors through questionnaires which have been carefully analysed, but not yet incorporated into actions. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to express their opinions and suggest improvements through the school council.
151. The school has good relationships with its LA development officers who visit the head teacher regularly to discuss the school's progress and contribute positively to the self-evaluation process.
152. The school's SER is a structured document which is very comprehensive in range, identifies many of the school's strengths and the areas for development. It does not always, however, identify clearly those few features of its work that it judges outstanding.
153. Mostly, the information obtained through self-evaluation is used effectively to inform strategic planning. For example, the downward trend in the CSI in KS1 has been identified and a range of initiatives put in place to improve standards. However, there is incoherence occasionally in the way the SER informs targets for the SIP and associated CPD of staff.
154. The head teacher monitors progress against the targets closely in the SIP and reports back to the governors.
155. The governors work well with the head teacher in the self-evaluation process. They adopt the role of critical friend effectively, for example, they scrutinise a draft copy of the SER and consider carefully whether it reflects the school as they see it.
156. The school supports its priorities well through its allocation of resources. For example, the school has invested a substantial sum in the purchase of ICT equipment in recent years and, as a result, standards have risen. A considerable investment has also been made in a number of curriculum areas, which staff feel promote pupils' acquisition and application of skills and knowledge effectively.
157. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues arising from the last inspection. For example, standards have risen in the key skills, the quality of resources is now good, the accommodation is now very good and CPD linked to school priorities is an integral feature in the school. Standards of achievement in mathematics, ICT and geography, judged to be grade 3 in the last inspection, are now judged to have good features and no important shortcomings, while religious education has many outstanding features.

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

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

158. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement of grade 1 made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team did not consider there to be sufficient outstanding features.
159. The school is well staffed for the number of pupils on roll. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and skilled and their expertise is well matched to the demands of the curriculum. Support staff work effectively, under the guidance of teachers, to make a significant contribution to the overall quality of teaching and learning.
160. The quality and range of resources to support the curriculum are generally good and are readily accessible to pupils.
161. The building accommodation is outstanding, for example, in the modern and spacious facilities it offers pupils and staff. Displays of very good quality enhance the school's environment and teachers make good use of the space available. The building is secure, yet easily accessible to disabled learners and visitors. The foundation phase accommodation and provision is fully integrated to provide a wide range of indoor and outdoor experiences for children.
162. The staff makes effective use of the resources available including the immediate and wider environment, and good use is made of the outdoors by the under-fives.
163. Staff are appropriately deployed. The school has adopted effective procedures for managing teachers' PPA time in accordance with statutory requirements to improve teachers' work/ life balance. Resources for workforce remodelling are being used appropriately to ensure the headteacher, teachers and qualified school support staff work together effectively as a whole school team to provide a good standard of education for all pupils.
164. The administrative officers are efficient and effective in operating the considerable day-to-day administration of the school. Ancillary staff carry out their daily routines and a range of responsibilities efficiently and effectively. There is a good standard of cleanliness within the school and the outside areas are free from litter and graffiti.
165. Resources are well matched to the school's priorities for development; for example, the purchase of hardware and software to raise standards in ICT.
166. Key stage co-ordinators ensure that there are adequate resources for their areas although they do not compile inventories of resources or review them regularly.
167. The school budget is managed effectively and a recent internal audit found that appropriate systems of control exist. The very few minor recommendations have been addressed.
168. Overall the school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Mathematics

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

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

#### Good features

169. The majority of pupils in KS1 use and apply mathematics well using a range of games and explorative activities. They use their knowledge of shape, pattern, time and data handling to solve problems with increasing confidence and accuracy.
170. Many younger pupils sort objects into groups, count to 20 confidently in a variety of ways and a few count to 30. They compare two quantities and recognise which has the most or least.
171. Most older pupils recognise odd and even numbers and count on and back within 100 and count in twos and 10s and use doubles and number bonds for mental calculations.
172. The majority of older pupils in KS1 recognise coins, know their value and are aware of alternative combinations to make an amount. For example, they use a range of strategies calculate how much change to give when role playing shopping games up to two pounds.
173. Many pupils in KS1 solve problems, puzzles, recognise shape patterns or relationships confidently; they generalise and predict well. They tell the time, identifying o' clock and half past confidently.
174. Nearly all younger pupils in KS1 sort data into sets and older ones collect and handle and interpret data in simple tables and graphs on the computer to find information, including pupils' favourite colour and how much material can be recycled.
175. Nearly all pupils in KS1 carry out simple investigations using non-standard units including capacity, and many predict accurately which containers hold more or less.
176. In KS2 nearly all pupils with SEN make good progress according to their ability in using addition for problem solving.
177. Nearly all pupils in KS2 make and investigate mathematical hypotheses and predictions in a variety of ways. For example they work out the least number of handshakes needed for a number of people to greet each other.
178. Most younger KS2 pupils are confident in adding and subtracting from one and two digit numbers. They display sound knowledge of place value to 30 and have a good understanding of multiplication facts for twos, threes and tens.

179. Younger pupils in KS2 work effectively in problem solving activities such as producing a magic square. Most use a database effectively to extract information.
180. The majority of older pupils in KS2 explain a range of strategies confidently to find equivalent fractions.
181. Most older pupils in KS2 use a range of standard measures confidently for quantities such as length, weight and time well and have a good grasp of capacity. They develop a good understanding of co-ordinates and negative numbers.

### **Shortcomings**

182. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Science**

### **Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

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

#### **Good features**

183. Most pupils in KS1 can describe the life-cycles of frogs and butterflies. They explain correctly how creatures found in the school environment and in hot and cold countries, are adapted to their habitats.
184. Most younger pupils in KS1 use correct vocabulary when describing a test to find the toughest of a range of fabrics. Around half know that the manner in which sandpaper is applied to the fabric must be controlled to make the test fair.
185. Most pupils in upper KS2 understand the importance of controlling variables in fair testing. Most know that tests should be repeated to ensure their reliability. In discussion a minority of pupils can explain how they react to unexpected measurements.
186. Most younger pupils in KS2 know that sawing involves push and pull forces and that gravitational force is a pull. Many know that the different poles of a bar magnet can push as well as pull.
187. Nearly all older pupils in KS2 have a good understanding that friction is created by contact between two moving surfaces.
188. Many of the oldest pupils in KS2 label the parts of a flower, such as stigma, filament, ovule and petal, carefully and neatly. Most know which are the male and female parts of the flower and can explain pollination in simple terms.

### **Shortcomings**

189. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Information and communications technology**

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

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

### **Good features**

190. Pupils in both key stages make good progress in all aspects of ICT, and good standards are achieved as pupils develop and utilise these skills in a relevant way in subjects across the curriculum.
191. Many pupils use word-processing and numeracy skills successfully at KS1. Younger pupils in KS1 highlight words and change the colour of the font. They locate icons and load programs confidently. Many pupils work independently on computers, logging on to the school network and locating files, successfully using simulations to produce a timeline.
192. Many in KS1 use a graphics program confidently to produce good jungle pictures, adding and editing text. Many import pictures and images from lists provided in the program they are using, dropping and dragging them into their work. Many pupils collect and organize data, enter it into a simple database, make simple interrogations and generate and interpret simple graphs well.
193. A good feature of most KS1 pupils is their confident and effective use of digital cameras to support their learning.
194. Younger pupils in KS2 show good progression in their ICT skills. They build on earlier experiences and produce outcomes and demonstrate skills of increasing complexity. Many edit and refine efforts confidently, displaying sound knowledge of keyboard shortcuts and editing skills.
195. Most KS2 pupils are confident in their use of ICT and use the digital camera to record and evaluate their own and the performances of others during their physical education lessons.
196. Older pupils in KS2 continue to develop their ICT skills well and there is continuity and progression from their earlier experiences.
197. Many pupils are beginning to evaluate a range of appropriate websites and use them to good effect as they research a range of projects and subject areas. They create and complete tables in word processing files, research content using a search engine, cut and paste graphics from websites and add headers and footers to their documents. The majority of pupils produce presentations of increasing complexity, incorporating text and graphics and refining their efforts confidently.
198. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in ICT and older pupils discuss the subject with confidence, demonstrating a good awareness of a wide range of issues linked to its use in society.

### **Shortcomings**

199. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Geography**

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

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

### **Good features**

200. Nearly all pupils in both key stages study the local area with appropriate attention detail. As they progress through the school most make good use of historical maps and photographs and census data to show how land use has changed over time. They study several locations which contrast with Ebbw Vale. In depth links with a school in Grenada allow pupils to develop their geographical skills and knowledge well.
201. Many younger pupils in KS1 are able determine features which are unique to Wales, to jungle areas and which are common to both. When asked, the majority understand that tropical jungles are hot and humid.
202. Most pupils in KS1 take digital photographs of areas of the school and use them to compile an accurate plan. Most describe routes to school using correct directional vocabulary.
203. In KS2 most pupils make very good progress in studying rainforests. Older pupils make very good use of maps, tables and graphs to consolidate their understanding of world geography. The mapping skills of the majority develop well as they progress through the school.
204. Many pupils in lower KS2 list the advantages and disadvantages of holidaying in Wales and abroad confidently. They give appropriate consideration to weather and attractions in addition to economic and environmental factors.
205. Nearly all pupils in upper KS2 show good understanding of global warming. They have a good awareness of the likely causes and possible effects of climate change. When discussing deforestation, around half understand the link between the science of photosynthesis and the carbon-based greenhouse effect particularly well.

### **Shortcomings**

206. There are no important shortcomings

## **Physical education**

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

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

### **Good features**

207. Nearly all pupils in both key stages respond well to the range of activities provided and standards of physical education are good.

208. In KS1 most pupils achieve good standards in their creative activities. They practise and refine their gymnastic and dance sequences well. Nearly all develop an effective understanding of health and fitness issues. They know the importance of warm up activities and carry them out, along with the safe setting up of equipment, as an established procedure of their lessons.
209. Many pupils in KS1 identify and perform to a good standard a range of shapes and activities. They know their start and end position and nearly all perform sequences with a range of movements confidently. Most have a clear awareness of others around them. They show good body control and overall have good standards of performance. Most decide their own sequences and work well together. Many show a good transfer of skills from floor activities to large equipment during body schooling activities. Most pupils make a good start at evaluating the performance of others and are aware of the need for safety during their performance.
210. The majority of pupils in KS1 demonstrate good skills in throwing, catching and bouncing large balls, improving their performance steadily with practice.
211. Many pupils in KS2 recognise the principles of simple choreography and use them successfully to plan sequences and a range of movements. They perform shapes and body actions confidently for a dance with a good recall of those taught previously. Many have a good knowledge of high, medium and low levels and incorporate them well into their performances. Most respond well to the musical beat as they work out their sequences for dance. Nearly all show very good achievement in dance sequences, with stimulating movement and body control.
212. Most pupils in KS2 make good evaluations of the performances of others during the lesson with a few using digital cameras for class evaluation later.
213. Pupils at upper KS2 practise ball skills confidently with most throwing and catching with increasing accuracy in conditioned games and activities.
214. All pupils are aware of the advantages of dressing appropriately for lessons. The awareness of nearly all older pupils of health, fitness and well-being activities shows good progression. They have a good awareness of safety in the hall and perform effective warm up activities; they are aware of the reasons why. Most have a good awareness of shape and movement and use them well in their sequences. Most pupils have good starting and ending positions. Nearly all stretch and balance well and they show good body tension.
215. Most older pupils in KS2 have good knowledge of shapes learnt previously and incorporate those and the recently introduced ones appropriately into their sequences.
216. Most pupils as they progress through KS2 develop a confident appreciation of physical education vocabulary. Their ability to evaluate develops well in paired and group assessment to explore, evaluate and improve sequences.

### **Shortcomings**

217. There are no important shortcomings.

## Religious education

### Key stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

### Key stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

### Outstanding features

218. Most pupils in KS1 have a comprehensive understanding of a range of different religions. They explore rites and beliefs and discuss familiar religions, stories and events with lively detail and good recall, often asking probing questions that are puzzling or difficult to answer.
219. Nearly all younger pupils in KS1 explore the idea of God as creator and contrast this with the gradual evolution of life. Inspired by the song 'What a wonderful world', many develop a deep appreciation and gratitude for many of the wonders of the world, such as the sun, sea, wildlife and rainbows. They investigate ideas of God as a provider and consider carefully ways to look after the world. They appreciate well that religious leaders, such as St Francis of Assisi cared for animals and the environment.
220. Most pupils in KS1 have an exceptionally good knowledge of ways to celebrate special occasions and festivals. They recall and demonstrate well through discussion a growing knowledge and understanding of people in the past linked to religious stories and events such as St David the patron saint of Wales.
221. The understanding of the traditions and the role of various people in carrying out Christian and Sikh wedding ceremonies is outstanding among nearly all pupils in KS1. They experience and compare Christian and Sikh weddings through visits and role play. They discuss different religions using appropriate vocabulary of diversity with society.
222. Nearly all pupils in KS1 have an outstanding appreciation of the cultural differences associated with Hinduism through discussions and interviews. They consider very well the importance of a place for worship such as a shrine in a Hindu home. They understand particularly well some of the beliefs, teachings and practices of Hinduism, such as the festival of Divali being a special time for Hindus. Nearly all show appropriate respect and sensitivity towards a range of associated religious artefacts. They use the internet and reference books very effectively to discover countries where Hinduism is practised by the majority of the population.
223. Many younger pupils in KS2, pupils ask searching and well considered questions. They understand and appreciate different types of prayers. They show excellent understanding of the way Buddhist's prayers are written and used. They have a very good sense of right and wrong and voice their opinions well using appropriate religious vocabulary. They write prayers of outstanding quality.
224. The response by nearly all KS2 pupils to fundamental questions raised from their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion is an outstanding feature. Through discussion, often of high quality, many consider,

particularly well, the beliefs of different religions and their sacred writings. They reflect very deeply on their own experiences and ideas they gain from poems and psalms to express their own valid views about human relationships and life's meaning and purpose.

225. Nearly all older KS2 pupils debate moral issues such as animal rights and consider injustices they see in the world in outstanding ways. They consider both sides of an argument and back up their ideas in written and oral forms to reach an open minded and balanced viewpoint in a very reasoned and mature manner.
226. The majority of pupils in the SEN unit share their thoughts and ideas very well. They consider very thoughtfully, record and share their views on what message God would give to the people of today.

### **Good features**

227. Nearly all KS1 pupils care for those less fortunate than themselves and raise money for various charities.
228. KS1 pupils appreciate the importance of rules and begin to understand their own actions and beliefs by exploring the idea of care and concern for the world and their contribution to improving it. They make graphs to find out what can and cannot be recycled from rubbish.
229. KS1 pupils realise that many people like to gather to worship at special times and places. They visit a local church and chapel and appreciate the significance of school assemblies. Most have a good knowledge of the various artefacts found in a church and chapel, including the lectern, cross and pulpit.
230. Many older pupils in KS2 consider carefully the influence of courage and inspiration in the face of what seem insurmountable odds, such as the plight of Jews during the Second World War. For example, they record their thoughts candidly about the plight of Ann Frank and her family and the risk taken by those who helped them.
231. Pupils in KS2 are very much aware of the influence of religious belief in encouraging and enforcing the convictions of moral crusaders and leaders such as Martin Luther King in their fight for justice.
232. The majority of pupils in KS2 identify the good qualities of leadership and identify valid ways in which humankind can be responsible for our natural world, for example to alleviate poverty and famine. A few think very profoundly.

### **Shortcomings**

233. There are no shortcomings.

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

Following inspection in November 2009, the headteacher, staff and governing body of Willowtown Community Primary School welcome the findings of this report.

The inspection report supports nearly all the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation document. The report endorses the opinion of the governing body, staff and parents that this school is very well led, has a clear vision and promotes equality for all. It states 'Willowtown Community Primary School is a welcoming, cheerful and inclusive community with high aspirations of its pupils. The commitment, dedication and effectiveness of its leaders and staff are significant' In addition, the report highlights the good progress made in key issues since the last inspection and notes that in many areas there are outstanding features.

As a school we are especially pleased that the pupils of Willowtown Community Primary School are recognised as having outstanding qualities and that they are valued and supported by hardworking, skilled and caring teaching and support staff.

The headteacher, staff and governing body will continue to build on the good and outstanding features recognised in this report and also strive to address the recommendations made in order to improve further the quality of education provided at Willowtown.

The headteacher, staff and governing body wish to take this opportunity to thank the inspection team for their courtesy, honesty and professionalism during the inspection. Their views and rigorous approach were valued and respected.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Willowtown Community Primary School
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Brynheulog Ebbw Vale Gwent
Postcode	NP23 6NJ
Telephone number	01495 302436

Headteacher	Mr Robert F. Gardner
Date of appointment	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2004
Chair of governors / Appropriate authority	Councillor Mrs Jen Morgan JP
Registered inspector	Phillip David Watcyn Edwards
Dates of inspection	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2009

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	17	36	54	45	43	44	50	54	343

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	15	4	17.4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	4.5:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection		
Term	R	Rest of school
Autumn 2008	93.8%	91.99%
Spring 2009	91.4%	93.03%
Summer 2009	91. %	92.81%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	33%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1

## Appendix 3

This report uses data for 2009 for LEA and Wales comparative information

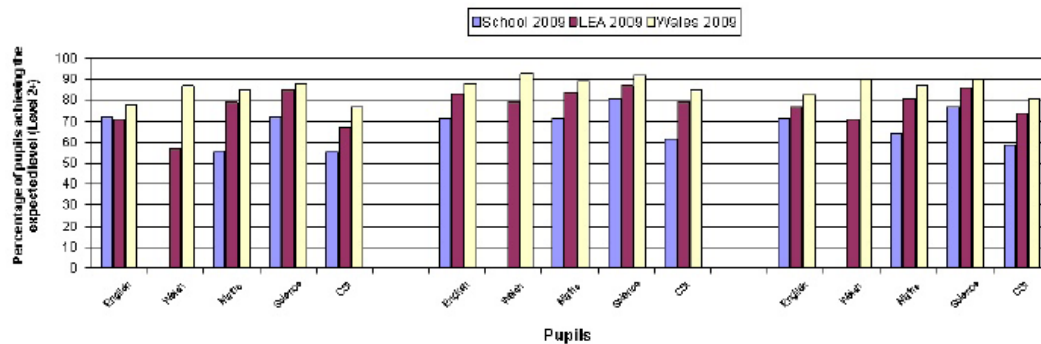
Willowtown Primary School  
Blaenau Gwent

LEA/School no: 677/2278

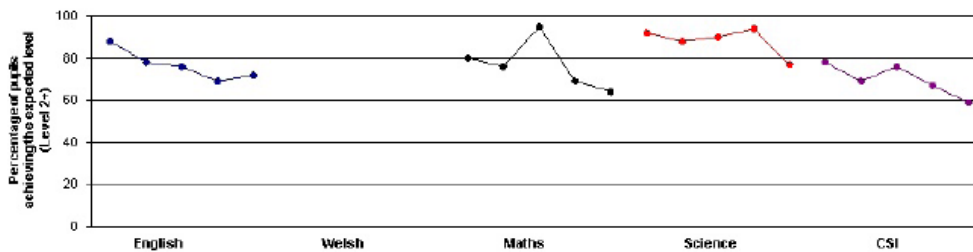
### School comparative information: National Curriculum Assessments 2009 with benchmarking Key Stage 1

Percentage of boys, girls, and pupils achieving at least the expected level (Level 2+):

	Boys			Girls			Pupils		
	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009
English	72	71	78	71	83	88	72	77	83
Welsh	.	57	87	.	79	93	.	71	90
Maths	56	79	85	71	84	89	64	81	87
Science	72	85	88	81	87	92	77	86	90
CSI	56	67	77	62	79	85	59	74	81



### School Performance over time (2005 - 2009)



### Contextual Information

Benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

School's results shown in greyed boxes. Column headings refer to...

Quartile 1 School is in the top 25 per cent.

Quartile 2 School is in the top 50 per cent but not the top 25 per cent.

Quartile 3 School is in the bottom 50 per cent but not the bottom 25 per cent.

Quartile 4 School is in the bottom 25 per cent.

Free School Meal Group

More than or equal to 24 per cent and up to 32 per cent eligible for FSM

	Quartile 4	Lower Quartile Boundary	Quartile 3	Median Boundary	Quartile 2	Upper Quartile Boundary	Quartile 1
English		72		80		87	
Welsh		67		90		100	
Maths	64	78		86		92	
Science	77	84		91		99	
CSI	59	70		78		86	

#### Notes:

1. Figures for Welsh refer to attainment in Welsh first language only.  
2. CSI = Core Subject Indicator. To achieve the CSI a pupil must achieve at least the expected level 2 in both Mathematics and Science and either English or Welsh first language.

3. If there were no pupils eligible for assessment in a subject for a particular year the graph will discontinue and show a gap for that year.

This report uses data for 2009 for LEA and Wales comparative information

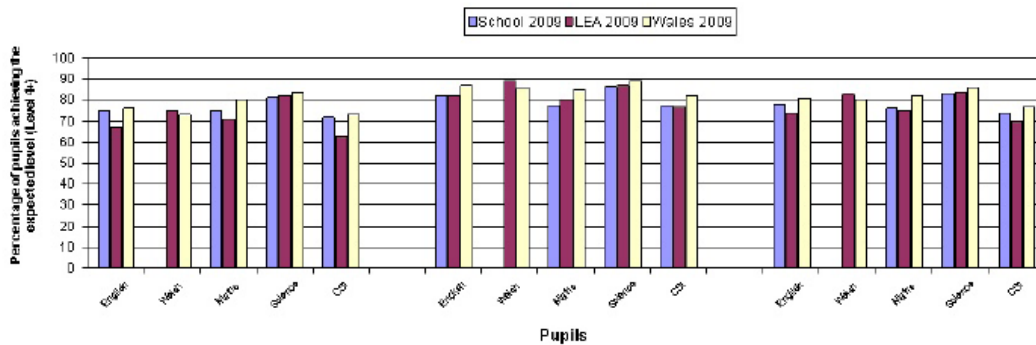
Willowtown Primary School  
Blaenau Gwent

LEA/School no: 677/2278

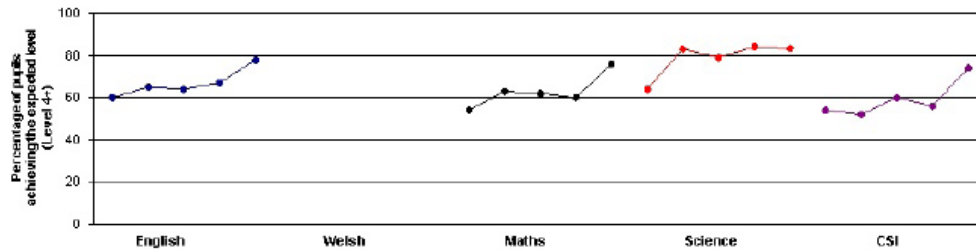
**School comparative information: National Curriculum Assessments 2009 with benchmarking**  
**Key Stage 2**

Percentage of boys, girls, and pupils achieving at least the expected level (Level 4+):

	Boys			Girls			Pupils		
	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009	School 2009	LEA 2009	Wales 2009
English	75	67	76	82	82	87	78	74	81
Welsh	.	75	73	.	89	86	.	83	80
Maths	75	71	80	77	80	85	76	75	82
Science	81	82	84	86	87	89	83	84	86
CSI	72	63	73	77	77	82	74	70	77



**School Performance over time (2005 - 2009)**



**Contextual Information**

Benchmarked against schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.

School's results shown in greyed boxes. Column headings refer to...

Quartile 1 School is in the top 25 per cent.

Free School Meal Group

Quartile 2 School is in the top 50 per cent but not the top 25 per cent.

More than or equal to 24 per cent and up to 32 per cent eligible for FSM

Quartile 3 School is in the bottom 50 per cent but not the bottom 25 per cent.

Quartile 4 School is in the bottom 25 per cent.

	Quartile 4	Lower Quartile Boundary	Quartile 3	Median Boundary	Quartile 2	Upper Quartile Boundary	Quartile 1
English		71	78	80		87	
Welsh		50		71		89	
Maths		75	76	82		88	
Science		79	83	88		94	
CSI		67	74	75		83	

**Notes:**

1. Figures for Welsh refer to attainment in Welsh first language only.

2. CSI = Core Subject Indicator. To achieve the CSI a pupil must achieve at least the expected level 4 in both Mathematics and Science and either English or Welsh first language.

3. If there were no pupils eligible for assessment in a subject for a particular year the graph will discontinue and show a gap for that year.

## Appendix 4

### **Evidence base of the inspection**

Three inspectors, a peer assessor as well as the school's nominee, spent the equivalent of 13 inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- Fifty-six lessons or part lessons. Of these, only the teaching grades of five early-years, one Welsh and two English lessons were recorded as these were not subjects being graded;
- registrations, assemblies and acts of collective worship; and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils representing each year group;
- the school council; and
- representatives of organisations associated with the school.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- forty-four responses to a parents' questionnaire, of which 91% were positive;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work; and
- samples of pupils' reports.

After the inspection, the team held meetings with teaching staff, senior managers and governors.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Phillip Edwards Registered Inspector	Context, Summary, Recommendations and Appendices Key Questions 1 and 5
Mr Christopher Dolby Team Inspector	Key Questions 2, 3 and 4
Mr Neil Watkins Team inspector	Key Questions 6 and 7
Mr David Michael Francis Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3 and 4
Mrs Claire Lloyd Peer Assessor	Contribution to team meetings and collating evidence
Mrs Hilary Winstanley Nominee	Nominee

### Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils of Willowtown Community Primary School for their co-operation, courtesy and hospitality throughout the inspection.

### Contractor:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd., Oaks Lea, Higher Knolton, Overton, Wrexham, LL13 0LF.