

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF THE  
SCHOOL INSPECTIONS ACT 1996**

***YSGOL Y TRAETH  
PRINCES AVENUE  
BARMOUTH***

***School Number : 661-2181***

***Date of Inspection: 19-22 May 2003***

***By***

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***Registered Inspector***

***Date: 22 July 2003***

**Under Estyn Contract Number: CT237/02P**

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to age 18 is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "Reception" (R) is applied to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13, the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key Stage (KS) 1 of the National Curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

The five-point grading scale used to represent the main judgements in this report is as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some of them outstanding.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features outweigh some shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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## 1. CONTEXT

### **The school and its priorities**

Ysgol y Traeth is situated not far from the sea in the town of Barmouth, Gwynedd. It was a secondary school when it was established just over a century ago, but in 1959 it became a primary school and since then has been increasingly adapted to meet the needs of children under five, infants and junior pupils.

There were 177 pupils on roll at the time of the inspection, including 24 nursery children who attend school in the mornings only. Nearly all pupils come from Barmouth itself, and the school describes the residential area as one that is economically disadvantaged. Thirty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and 43 (24 per cent) are identified as having special educational needs (SEN), including six who have a statement of SEN. Only one or two pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken as the first language.

Among the school's aims is fostering a civilised society which places emphasis on moral and humanitarian values, maintaining and raising pupils' standards of achievement in all curricular areas and developing pupils' ability to be confidently bilingual in Welsh and English.

The school development plan (SDP) includes a review of the targets set for 2001-2002 and a list of plans and targets for the current year and forward to 2005. Among the priorities listed for the current year are raising standards in Welsh, developing the use of information technology as a cross-curricular tool and evaluating teaching across the school. Also included in the SDP are quantitative targets in the core subjects with the purpose of raising pupils' standards of attainment in the national tests.

The school was last inspected in the autumn term of 1997. The headteacher was appointed to his post in June 2002, following a period of approximately two and a half years when he was acting head.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### **The main findings of the report**

Pupils' standards of achievement were good or better in about 65 per cent of sessions observed and satisfactory in all of the remainder with the exception of about six per cent.

- The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. The standards in the six areas of learning are as follows:

Language, literacy and communication skills	Good
Personal and social development	Very good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Good

- In Key Stage (KS) 1 and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the different subjects of the National Curriculum (NC) and religious education are as follows:

	<b>KS1</b>	<b>KS2</b>
Welsh	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
English	-	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Very good
Design and technology	Good	Very good
Information technology	Good	Good
History	Good	Good
Geography	Good	Good
Art	Good	Good
Music	Satisfactory	Good
Physical education	Satisfactory	Good
Religious education	Good	Good

- Since the last inspection, obvious progress has been seen in pupils' standards of achievement in all subjects in both key stages with the exception of Welsh in KS2 and physical education in KS1. There has been significant progress, from satisfactory to very good, in science and design and technology in KS2.
- In the 2002 NC assessments, the school's results in KS1, based on teacher assessment, compared well with the national figures in mathematics and science, and were slightly lower in Welsh. In KS2, test results compared very favourably with the national averages in English and science and matched in mathematics. The results in Welsh were significantly lower than the national average and in the lower quartile in comparison with those in similar schools in Wales.
- In key skills across the curriculum, children under five achieve good standards in literacy and numeracy and in their use of information and communications technology (ICT). Key Stage 1 pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Welsh and good in numeracy and ICT. In KS2, standards in English across the curriculum are good but are unsatisfactory in Welsh. Standards in numeracy and ICT are good.
- The quality of teaching was good or better in 70 per cent of sessions observed, satisfactory in 25 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent. The teachers are diligent and conscientious and plan their lessons carefully to ensure a balance of knowledge, concepts and skills to be developed. In one or two classes, the pace of lessons is occasionally too slow and in some subjects, especially Welsh or subjects taught through the medium of Welsh, teachers make do with short responses from pupils and worksheets are overused.
- Pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good and their moral development very good. The daily acts of collective worship successfully stimulate pupils' spiritual development. Pupils can differentiate clearly between good and bad and what is acceptable and unacceptable and they know how and why they should behave politely and correctly in the presence of children and adults of a different race, whatever their belief and lifestyle.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good and levels of attendance over the last three terms are satisfactory.

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- The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good. Assessment is accurate and consistent and good use is made of it to plan the learning and to promote higher standards.
  - The quality and organisation of the curriculum are good overall. The curriculum for the under-fives is appropriate and the curriculum in KS1 and KS2 is broad, balanced and motivating. However, there is a lack of balance in planning the key skills across the curriculum, as pupils do not study any aspect of mathematics or science through the medium of Welsh in KS2.
  - The plans and provision for the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* are good and the ethos of the school and teachers' attitude contribute to pupils' understanding of Welsh which promotes their bilingualism.
  - Pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular activities, including team games, and make use of educational visits to support their learning.
  - The provision for pupils with SEN is good and they achieve good standards overall in language.
  - The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory. There are procedures in place to look at aspects of school organisation and curricular work as part of the self-evaluation process. In some cases, these have already had an influence for the better on provision and have led to higher standards. Despite this, whole-school strategies and evaluation systems that would ensure clear direction to the work of the school are insufficiently developed.
  - School leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher, mainly because he was acting headteacher for two and a half years before being appointed last year, knows the school well and manages it effectively from day to day. Subject co-ordinators fulfil aspects of their work well but, with one exception, they do not visit classes as part of their monitoring duties. The governors are very supportive of the school and have a satisfactory understanding of its life and work.
  - The school has responded to the key issues listed in the 1997 inspection report, and there has been obvious improvement or some improvement in the majority of them.

### **3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning**

Pupils' standards of achievement were judged to be good in 57 per cent of the work observed, very good in 10 per cent, satisfactory in 27 per cent and unsatisfactory in six per cent.

- The under-fives achieve very good standards in their personal and social development, and good standards in the other five areas of learning.
- In KS1, in the core subjects, pupils' standards of achievement in Welsh are good in listening, and satisfactory in speaking, reading and writing. They are good in mathematics and science. In KS2, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in reading Welsh and good in listening, but standards in speaking and writing are unsatisfactory. In English, standards in listening, speaking, reading and writing are good. Standards in mathematics are good and they are very good in science.

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- In the non-core subjects, pupils' standards of achievement in KS1 are good in all with the exception of music and physical education where they are satisfactory. In KS2, standards of achievement are very good in design and technology and good in the remainder.
  - Since the last inspection, obvious progress has been seen in pupils' standards of achievement in all subjects in both key stages with the exception of Welsh in KS2 and physical education in KS1. There has been significant progress, from satisfactory to very good, in science and design and technology in KS2.
  - Girls perform better than the boys in Welsh and English, but there are no obvious differences in the other subjects. Pupils with SEN make sound progress and achieve good standards overall.
  - In the 2002 NC assessments, school results in KS1, based on teacher assessment, compared well with the national figures in mathematics and science and were slightly lower in Welsh. No pupils gained level 3 in Welsh.
  - In the 2002 NC assessment results for KS2, test results compared very favourably with the national averages in English and science, and they matched in mathematics. The results in Welsh were significantly lower than the national average and in the lower quartile compared with those in similar schools in Wales. With the exception of mathematics where boys' results were superior, girls performed substantially better than boys in English and Welsh and a little better in science. Three quarters of the pupils gained level 5 in science.

### **3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum**

The under-fives achieve good standards in literacy and numeracy and in their use of ICT. Key Stage 1 pupils achieve satisfactory standards in Welsh and good in numeracy and ICT. In KS2, standards in Welsh are unsatisfactory but they are good in English, numeracy and ICT.

- The under-fives listen well and speak with increasing confidence with their peers and adults. They begin to look at books with interest and the oldest ones enjoy the experiences of basic writing.
- In KS1, pupils listen well and they achieve satisfactory standards in speaking, reading and writing across the curriculum. In KS2, pupils listen well and achieve good standards in speaking, reading and writing English across the curriculum. In Welsh, although some individuals in each class achieve satisfactory standards in speaking and reading in foundation subjects, standards are unsatisfactory overall. Key Stage 2 pupils do not study any aspect of the other two core subjects, mathematics and science, through the medium of Welsh.
- The under-fives achieve good standards in their use of numeracy across the curriculum; they sing number rhymes together and develop mathematical language through their experiences with water and sand. In KS1 and KS2, pupils make regular and effective use of aspects of numeracy, such as measuring and recording data, in their science, geography, design and technology and information technology lessons.
- The under-fives develop basic ICT skills with confidence, and pupils in KS1 and KS2 apply their ICT skills well in a large number of subjects. The oldest pupils use research skills effectively to support their learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils with SEN achieve good standards overall, commensurate with their levels of ability, in language, numeracy and ICT.

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## **4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Pupils' moral development is very good and their spiritual, social and cultural development is good.

- The school meets statutory requirements as regards providing a daily act of collective worship. Assemblies that are held in the hall for the whole school, and for individual sections separately, are enjoyable occasions which promote pupils' spiritual development successfully. Consideration is given to appropriate issues and pupils often take a prominent part in the presentations.
- The school promotes pupils' moral standards very well. Pupils know the difference between good and bad and what is acceptable and unacceptable and they show respect and courtesy to their teachers, fellow pupils and visitors. During 'circle time', they discuss how important it is to follow the best principles and values, including behaving fairly and correctly towards children and adults of a different race, whatever their belief and lifestyle. Pupils raise money regularly to support good causes and charities.
- Pupils' social development is good. They co-operate well when working in pairs and in groups by sharing each others' ideas and resources. Duties are given to some pupils in class or during break times, and they fulfil these tasks conscientiously.
- Pupils have a sound knowledge of aspects of Welsh culture and traditions, and a number of them take part in Urdd activities. Pupils' awareness of other cultures is developing well, especially as a result of work in geography, history and religious education lessons.

### **4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good.

- The school's behaviour policies and procedures are clear, and the practice of recognising good behaviour is effective.
- The Dina Project, which is implemented effectively at the bottom of the school, develops pupils' ability to respond positively to a variety of situations.
- Pupils have a positive attitude towards their work and they concentrate well during lessons.
- Pupils socialise and play together well and work together effectively in class.
- Clear policies are implemented on equal opportunities and anti-bullying. No instances of bullying were seen during the inspection.

### **4.3 Attendance**

Levels of attendance are satisfactory.

- The school has a good range of policies and procedures to promote and maintain attendance and sets a target for improvement.
- Registers are administered according to the requirements of the National Assembly.

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- The school is aware of patterns of absence which arise, and they are acted on as and when necessary. The quantity and content of parents' letters show that they are aware of the procedures and of their responsibilities.
  - The attendance of the under-fives closely reflects whole-school levels.
  - Punctuality is good and this promotes a swift start to the school day.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

The quality of teaching was good in 56 per cent of the sessions observed, very good in 14 per cent, satisfactory in 25 per cent and unsatisfactory in five per cent.

- The teachers are diligent and conscientious and they are aware of the range of learning needs in their class.
- They have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach, of the requirements of the NC and of the Desirable Outcomes for children under five.
- Good use is made of teachers' specialist knowledge in KS2, and this promotes higher standards in a number of subjects.
- The range of experiences provided for the under-fives ensure that they make appropriate progress in the six areas of learning. The programme of work is various and interesting and the importance of purposeful play is understood fully.
- Lessons are planned carefully in KS1 and KS2 to ensure a balance of knowledge, concepts and skills to be developed.
- Presentations are often lively and interesting and succeed in motivating the pupils.
- A variety of teaching strategies are used which usually suit the topics presented and the tasks given.
- Occasionally, in one or two classes, the pace of lessons is too slow and some pupils tend to lose interest as a result.
- In some subjects, especially Welsh or subjects taught through the medium of Welsh, teachers make do with short responses from pupils and worksheets are overused.

### **5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good.

- There is a whole-school policy which is detailed and gives clear guidelines to the teachers.
- The assessment of under-fives' attainments is implemented appropriately in line with the baseline assessment arrangement.
- Teachers assess regularly based on NC programmes of study. National Curriculum levels are used to assess pupils' achievement and there is an effective moderation of levels in the core subjects.
- Assessment results are analysed and the information is used to review the provision for individuals and small groups, and to develop the curriculum.

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- Pupils' written work is marked on a regular basis and the comments overall enable the pupils to improve the quality of their work.
  - Pupils' individual folio, together with the assessments in the subject portfolio, include detailed records of pupils' progress and these are updated regularly. The information is transferred to the relevant classes.
  - The school conforms fully with statutory requirements for pupils identified as having SEN. Suitable assessments are provided for their needs as well as individual education plans (IEPs) for each one.
  - The annual reports to parents conform fully with statutory requirements. A report is given to parents on their children's progress in every aspect of the curriculum but the comments do not always address sufficiently the next steps in their learning. Parents are invited to the school three times a year to discuss their children's development and they get the opportunity to respond to the report in a meeting with the class teacher in the summer term.

### **5.3 Curriculum**

The quality and organisation of the curriculum are good overall.

- The curriculum for the under-fives is appropriate. The work is well planned and successfully promotes the learning and teaching.
- In KS1 and KS2, the curriculum is broad, balanced and motivating. All NC subjects and religious education are taught for appropriate periods of time. Good emphasis is placed on pupils' personal and social development.
- The planning for the development of key skills across the curriculum is good in Welsh in KS1, English in KS2 and numeracy and ICT in both key stages. However, pupils do not have the opportunity to study any aspect of mathematics or science through the medium of Welsh during the four years they are in KS2.
- The plans and provision of the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is good and the ethos of the school and teachers' attitude contribute to pupils' understanding of Welsh which promotes their bilingualism.
- There are comprehensive schemes of work to support each subject. They are suitably updated and their quality is good overall.
- Teachers' planning concentrates appropriately on learning goals.
- The curriculum is enriched by a diverse programme of extra-curricular activities including team games and Urdd activities. Suitable use is made of educational visits to support pupils' learning.
- The school has an equal opportunities policy and a racial equality policy. These are regularly promoted through curriculum arrangement, daily acts of collective worship and 'circle time' and through the overall ethos of the school.
- Pupils with SEN take a full part in every aspect of the curriculum.
- There is a clear policy on homework and the parents are supportive of its content.

### **5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare**

The quality of support and guidance given to pupils is good.

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- Staff provide a caring, supportive environment. This makes a valuable contribution to the quality of education provided.
  - Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and respect them as individuals, and pupils turn to them easily for help and advice.
  - Pupils are well supervised during the day, including break-times.
  - The school has appropriate policies and procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare while they are in school. The documents are known to all members of staff and are implemented effectively.
  - The school has suitable health and safety policies.
  - Fire drills are held regularly and members of staff have first aid qualifications.
  - Appropriate emphasis is placed on social inclusion and equal opportunities within the school activities and work programme.

### **5.5 Provision for Pupils with SEN**

The provision for pupils with SEN is good and good standards are achieved overall.

- The arrangements for identifying and monitoring pupils with SEN is good and conforms fully with Code of Practice requirements.
- There are 43 pupils on the SEN register and six of these are statemented. Fourteen benefit from provision based on School Action and the remainder from provision based on School Action Plus.
- All pupils have full access to the NC and religious education.
- The IEPs are well compiled by the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) in co-operation with the class teachers; they are clear and set specific and measurable learning targets which appropriately matches the needs of each pupil.
- Five of the pupils with statements attend a SEN unit in a nearby town every morning. The remainder of the pupils on the SEN register are well-supported by a part-time teacher who provides separate group sessions for them. These sessions are well structured to meet pupils' specific needs.
- Suitable differentiated tasks are provided for pupils in classes and good assistance is offered by the teachers and support staff. The spelling and reading improvement plan is effectively implemented by the assistant and pupils make good progress.
- The SENCO fulfils her role effectively. She has a good knowledge of the children and monitors and assesses on a regular basis to ensure that pupils make progress that matches their ability and educational development.
- The governor responsible for special needs is very supportive. She visits the school regularly and monitors the implementation of the school's SEN policy through meetings with the SENCO.

### **5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions**

The partnership with parents and the community, schools and other institutions is good.

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- Information provided for parents is good; it includes letters, a school handbook, reports and a newsletter which is published regularly.
  - The parents praise the staff's readiness to discuss any problem or concern which they may have in relation to their children. They are aware that they are welcome to call to the school at any time.
  - Some parents come in to the school to give support in the class, and others are very ready to help on special occasions.
  - The home/school agreement is of good quality and has been signed by nearly all parents.
  - The Friends of the School Society contributes a significant sum of money to it and it is used mainly to add to the resources which are available for the pupils' use.
  - The school plays an obvious part in social, cultural and charity activities of the community.
  - There is a good partnership with other primary schools in the area and with the secondary school which receives the majority of pupils.
  - The school has formed good links with local institutions and public services.
  - It provides work experience opportunities for pupils from the secondary school and students from Meirion Dwyfor College and, occasionally, opportunities for prospective teachers to observe classes.

### **5.7 Partnership with Industry**

The partnership with industry is good.

- Although the school does not have a policy in this field, the pupils benefit from partnerships with some local businesses and a number of links with the world of work..
- In relation to different themes and aspects of the curriculum, members of the community are invited to the school to talk about their work, for example, a local dentist.
- Pupils' understanding of the source and nature of energy has increased following visits to power stations, and Y6 pupils' visit to a coal pit in Blaenavon in South Wales led to the construction of a model of it in their class.
- There is a close link between the school and a construction study project in the town under the sponsorship of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), and the link with ELWa is developing increasingly.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement**

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory.

- Procedures are in place to look at aspects of school organisation and curricular work as part of the self-evaluation process. In some cases, these have already had an influence for the better on provision and have led to higher standards. Despite this, whole-school strategies and evaluation systems that would ensure clear direction to the work of the school are insufficiently developed.

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- The school's self-evaluation document identifies areas which have recently been monitored but it is not clear in the document on what basis judgements were made about them.
  - There are useful sections in the SDP, among them a review of set priorities for 2001-2002 and a list of plans and targets for the current year and forward to 2005.
  - The current aims for improvement lists among the priorities the need to raise standards in Welsh, and to evaluate teaching across the school. These are fully appropriate for the present needs of the school.
  - Quantitative targets are set for the pupils but these are not always sufficiently ambitious.
  - The school analyses its performance in the NC tests carefully.
  - The school responded to the key issues in the 1997 report and there has been an obvious improvement in some of them. Despite this, a number of the issues raised need to be addressed further and this is reflected in the key issues that appear at the end of this report (Section 8.2).

## **6.2 Leadership and Efficiency**

School leadership and management are satisfactory.

- The school has appropriate aims and values, including a clear commitment to provide equal opportunities for all.
- The headteacher, mainly because he was acting head for two and a half years before being appointed last year, knows the school well and manages it effectively from day to day.
- The subject co-ordinators review and update their schemes of work thoroughly, attend and report on courses in their fields and ensure that sufficient resources are available. They have also collated pupils' samples of work and levelled them. However, with the exception of the mathematics co-ordinator, the remainder have not visited the classes of their fellow teachers in KS1 nor, where applicable, in KS2.
- The governors are supportive of the school and have a satisfactory understanding of its life and work. They give suitable consideration to school policies and plans and some members are linked with specific subjects.
- The headteacher and the governing body manage the budget effectively and efficiently.

## **6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources**

The quality of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good and the school makes effective use of its resources.

- The school has seven full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers. They have suitable qualifications and each one has a job description. Good use is made of teachers' qualifications and expertise to meet a range of pupils' needs. Most of the curricular co-ordinators are responsible for teaching their subjects to every class in KS2.
- Teachers have attended a number of in-service training (INSET) courses and the work carried out and discussed by staff has had a positive influence on educational aspects.

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- Effective use is made of nursery nurses and care assistants and they provide sensitive and caring support. There is good support from the specialist peripatetic teachers and effective use is made of volunteers to support different aspects of the curriculum.
  - The overall condition of the school is good. Classrooms are sufficient for all aspects of the curriculum and use is made of additional rooms for design and technology, information technology and the library.
  - There are good quality displays around the school, including photographs, artwork, technology and murals, which reflect the wide range of experiences provided. These are an aid to increase pupils' self-respect and to show that their work is appreciated.
  - The school yard is well marked for games and the large field adjacent to the school is a valuable resource and is used appropriately.
  - Overall, there are good resources for each subject and they are used effectively in lessons by the staff and pupils. There is a good supply of computers in classes and in the computer suite.

## 7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

### **Standards achieved by pupils**

#### **Provision for the under-fives**

The provision for the under-fives is appropriate and promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Standards achieved in the nursery class and reception class are very good in personal and social development and good in other areas of learning.

#### **Language, literacy and communication skills**

##### **Good features**

- Children enjoy listening to stories and various presentations and readily answer questions or make short comments. Practical experiences, including role-play, encourage them to use language in real situations. They enjoy looking at familiar books and come to understand that words have meaning in books. They form letters accurately by overwriting and underwriting and the more able pupils form original sentences and draw interesting pictures to go with the sentence.

#### **Personal and social development**

##### **Good features**

- By working and playing together, the children's personal and social skills are developing very well. They respond maturely to the situations set for them in the Dina Project, and they show readiness to share and take turn when taking part in activities around the class. Generally, they behave well towards each other and are polite when dealing with others.

#### **Mathematical development**

##### **Good features**

- Through play activities, children learn and use mathematical language increasingly correctly, and are able to count, arrange and sort with considerable confidence. They can classify objects according to their size and they have an understanding of concepts which relate to measurements such as 'shortest' and 'tallest', 'least' and 'most'. They identify

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and name a number of 2-D and 3-D shapes and use them to create patterns and draw a picture. They use money occasionally when role-playing in the café and the shop, and develop their skills by playing games and using appropriate equipment.

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## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

### **Good features**

- Children talk about their environment, families and events in the past and present. Through looking at pictures, discussing artefacts and listening to visitors, they come to understand the concept of change over time. They show an awareness of the Barmouth area, and through various map activities, which is a follow-up to a topic book, they can name the area's geographical features, such as the sea, mountain and river. They have an understanding of the difference between night and day as well as a basic knowledge of the order of the day. They can predict and appreciate the difference in materials, for example, those which sink and float, and understand the life-cycle of a frog. They are confident when using the computer and benefit greatly from the programs available for them.

### **Physical development**

#### **Good features**

- Pupils use small apparatus well and can build and create with blocks and construction kits. The children move with confidence and full of imagination; they run, hop and climb on different levels and in different directions. They use the space in the hall well and follow instructions correctly. They work well in groups and transfer easily from one activity to the next.

### **Creative development**

#### **Good features**

- The children make pictures and patterns in a number of media, and succeed in creating pictures on the computer. They handle painting equipment well and show progress when handling cutting and gluing equipment. They can sing a variety of traditional songs and nursery rhymes from memory. They use percussion instruments and can name and play them effectively.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Welsh**

Standards of achievement in KS1 are good in listening and satisfactory in speaking, reading and writing. In KS2, standards are good in listening, satisfactory in reading and unsatisfactory in speaking and writing.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in both key stages listen well to presentations and instructions.
- In KS1, after listening to stories and presentations, pupils show their understanding of their content by commenting on the events and responding to the teachers' questions. A high percentage of Y2 pupils respond appropriately to the good linguistic patterns introduced.
- Pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of the alphabet, and, by the end of Y2, they show mastery of basic reading skills. A minority of pupils read intelligently and with expression.

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- The standard of writing in KS1 is satisfactory. Pupils write for different purposes and the minority succeed in writing independently by using full sentences and correct spelling.
  - In KS2, the majority of pupils can hold a basic conversation satisfactorily and the small percentage who possess good vocabulary and correct syntax can converse and discuss confidently in class activities.
  - The majority of KS2 pupils show enjoyment when reading and, in the group reading sessions, they readily discuss book content and express opinions about different elements. The more able pupils can read a variety of forms with fluency, expression and accuracy, with some individuals using the fruit of their factual reading to add to their knowledge in other areas of learning and to extend their higher reading skills.
  - Pupils write in a variety of forms, such as letters, diaries, and portraits. The majority of pupils can write simple pieces, using basic words and elementary syntax. The more able pupils, by the end of KS2, can write at length, and there are some examples of good work, including letters and creative, factual and descriptive pieces.
  - Overall, the standard of handwriting is good in both key stages and the majority of pupils present their work neatly.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS2, the oral skills of the majority of pupils are insufficiently developed and, as a result, they show a lack of confidence when speaking Welsh and are unable to offer responses or converse easily.
- In KS1, some pupils' fluency and understanding of text is impaired because they have to spell or break down new words when reading.
- In KS1, a large number of pupils are over-dependent on the teacher when writing sentences, spelling and punctuating and, in KS2, the majority of pupils are unable to write at length or use language in a creative and imaginative way.

### **English**

English is introduced in Y2, but is not a subject which is formally assessed. In KS2, pupils' standards of achievement are good.

### **Good features**

- Pupils listen carefully and display interest in their work. They listen to instructions, stories and each others' contributions in lessons.
- They speak with confidence and increasing clarity. They contribute well to discussions and are developing a wide range of vocabulary and expressions. They ask and answer questions confidently.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards reading and the majority of them read fluently with good understanding and expression. They enjoy reading fiction and poetry and can discuss the content of the text well by sharing opinions on it. They sensibly predict the end of some stories by using their previous knowledge and their imagination.
- Pupils write in a number of forms. They know the difference between factual writing and creative writing. They structure stories effectively and their ability to write poetry is developing satisfactorily. They make good use of adjectives, comparisons and some idioms in their creative work.

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- Standards of writing are also good. They often write at length and a large number write in paragraphs. Standards in punctuation vary but, by the end of the key stage, the majority make good use of a wide range of punctuation marks. The more able pupils have a very good awareness of style, form and organisation.
  - The majority of pupils make good progress when developing legible and tidy handwriting. Their presentation skills are often supported by conscientious draft work and effective use of ICT.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Mathematics**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils' knowledge and understanding of number work is developing well. They can add and subtract, show a good understanding of number bonds, and have the ability to fulfil basic multiplication and division work. They can count backwards and forwards in steps of different sizes by showing an awareness of number patterns, including odd numbers and even numbers. They understand the concept of doubling numbers and their understanding of place value is developing appropriately.
- They have a relevant knowledge of simple fractions and their understanding of measures of length and weight are developing well; the majority of them use standard measures accurately.
- Pupils identify 2-D and 3-D shapes and can describe their features. They can collate, record and interpret data correctly. They have a good knowledge of money and handle it with confidence when role-playing in the shop and the café.
- Across both key stages, obvious attention is given to mental arithmetic and there is good progress in number work. The majority of older pupils can answer quickly and correctly.
- In KS2, the majority of pupils can use the four rules of number confidently; the older pupils develop a range of strategies for mathematical problem-solving and use appropriate mathematical vocabulary.
- The majority of pupils have a good understanding of number bonds and can estimate and measure in metres and centimetres and weigh in grams and kilograms.
- The majority have a satisfactory understanding of fractions and the older pupils have a good understanding of the link between fractions, percentages and decimals. They are familiar with the concept of time and the 24-hour clock and can solve simple problems relating to the passage of time.
- Pupils identify the features and properties of 2-D and 3-D shapes with the older pupils showing a good knowledge of angles and degrees and using appropriate vocabulary when discussing them. They are able to find the perimeter and area of shapes.
- They can record and present data in graph form by intelligently interpreting the information collated. The most able pupils analyse, compare and interpret data with good accuracy.

### **Shortcomings**

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- In KS2, pupils' mastery of independent research and undertaking their own mathematical strategies are not developed sufficiently.

## **Science**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils know the difference between living things and non-living things and make good progress in their ability to classify and predict.
- By Y2, they develop good research skills. They carefully observe objects and events when conducting simple experiments and they develop their enquiry, prediction and analytical skills and their understanding of a fair test.
- Pupils can explain the function of different parts of the human body and the importance of healthy eating.
- They can make a simple electric circuit and explain the contribution made by bulbs, batteries and switches in the process.
- They record their findings carefully.
- In KS2, pupils extend their understanding of scientific research appropriately. They have a sound understanding of fair testing and predict results sensibly. They discuss evidence carefully amongst themselves to draw reliable conclusions.
- They have a very good knowledge of the life-cycle of plants and organs of the human body and their functions.
- Their understanding of light and sources of light are developing very well. They know how shadows are formed and why their size changes when varying the distance between the light and the object.
- Their understanding of the effects of forces and friction on motion is developing well.
- They understand the importance of accuracy when measuring and use a suitable variety of recording methods.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and very good in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In both key stages, pupils plan their artefacts appropriately on specifically-prepared design sheets.
- In KS1, pupils follow a structured learning method; observation and research, discussing ideas, making more than one design, choosing the best and making and evaluating the product. They fulfil these tasks well.
- When creating colourful greetings cards, Y1 pupils mark, cut and glue carefully and are aware of the importance of being organised. Year 2 pupils create puppets with movable

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body components. They make sensible suggestions when evaluating their work and the product is of good quality overall.

- In KS2, pupils design and create a wide range of objects including a scarecrow which moves and makes a noise, a moving animal, a head-dress, and models of bridges and a model of a coal pit.
- In each case, pupils discuss and record their initial ideas thoroughly by considering the best ways of developing, designing and redesigning as they go along and evaluating the artefacts at the end.
- Pupils understand how simple gear systems work and use the knowledge when making some models.
- In Y4, pupils researched thoroughly into structures before applying themselves to make their models of bridges. Thorough consideration is given to any weakness discovered before moving on.
- Year 6 pupils' skills in structures, control and mechanisms are developing very well when fulfilling the task of making a model of a coal pit of a significant size.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Information technology**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- Key Stage 1 pupils generally use equipment skilfully. They develop the appropriate skills and use appropriate vocabulary which is specific to the subject.
- Pupils show increasing ability when using the keyboard and mouse. They are developing the ability to use CD-ROMs and various programs to access a wider range of information.
- Pupils use art packages effectively to draw pictures and to convey ideas in their topic work.
- In KS2, pupils' data-handling skills are developing well. In conjunction with their investigations in science and mathematics, they produce various graphs to show data in bar and line form with confidence.
- By the end of KS2, children's control skills are developing well extending from the use of the Roamer to Logo programs and more complex control systems. They use suitable programs such as Coco and Eco Log, to develop work to good effect in mathematics, science, geography and design and technology.
- Pupils use art programs skilfully creating graphic pictures of a good standard. They can use the scanner and digital camera confidently by combining the different aspects to create presentations such as the Teledu 5 presentation, which was produced by Y5 pupils. They use processing programs skilfully to publish newspapers, posters and articles.
- Pupils use the e-mail to send messages to a school in England, and use the Internet confidently to research texts associated with their studies in other subjects.
- Some classes make good use of the interactive whiteboard to develop their computer skills and to present aspects of work in subjects across the curriculum.

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### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **History**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils are developing well their use of simple historic vocabulary. They use the correct terms when describing the passage of time and deal with time lines intelligently.
- They develop the idea of chronology when looking at changes in their own growth and at signs of change in their families over a period of time.
- Through looking at pictures and photographs, they compare the types of shop that were in Barmouth in their grandparents' days and the differences in the goods that were sold at that time compared with today.
- Pupils can discuss well some local stories and customs and famous peoples' lives.
- In KS2, pupils recall well historic facts when discussing famous people from the past and succeed in putting events in their correct context.
- Year 3 and Y4 pupils have a good knowledge of the Celts; they can describe their lifestyle in detail and the type of weapons and utensils that were used by them.
- Year 5 pupils can describe the most obvious features of the Victorian age and compare the social conditions and work conditions during the industrial revolution in Britain with those of today.
- Pupils can list the companies that built the railways in North Wales in the decade 1861-1870 and explain how society began to change as a result of this.
- Year 6 pupils' knowledge of what led to the Second World War and the facts about the war itself and its impact on individuals and society is developing well.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Geography**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils' mapping skills are developing well. They start within the classroom before extending to the school and then to the town.
- Pupils use and understand a number of geographical terms and do appropriate fieldwork near the school.
- They can list natural and human features of the journey from their home to the school and then record them in the form of a simple sketch map.
- They use geographical skills effectively to study a neighbourhood in Botswana, and compare the main features of that location with Barmouth in Wales.

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- In KS2, pupils develop their map skills effectively by using a range of maps and pictures. They have compared modern maps of Wales with Humphrey Llwyd's map made in 1573 and one that John Speed drew up in 1610.
  - Their knowledge of symbols and keys is good and they use co-ordinates confidently to find places on a map.
  - Pupils' knowledge of the local area is developing well. They know about the main human and physical features of Yr Aber and they have made a study of the course of the river Mawddach from its source to the sea.
  - Pupils can compare well their own area with contrasting neighbourhoods in Wales and can explain how the physical features of Wales are different from those in Lesotho.
  - Year 6 pupils know the location of the National Botanical Garden near Llanarthne, and can list its most important features.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Art**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

#### **Good features**

- Key Stage 1 pupils are developing a good understanding of the language of line, mood, colour, pattern, texture, shape, form and space and apply it effectively in their work. They use a good range of materials, including colour pencils, crayons, wax and paint and the collage work and the drawings are generally of good standard.
- The majority can discuss their work with pleasure and understanding.
- Pupils are familiar with the work of artists such as Kyffin Williams, Ogwyn Davies, Van Gogh and Cézanne. They study the techniques used by them, and mimic their style in their own work.
- In KS2, pupils use a range of media and methods to express their visual ideas in 2-D and 3-D form.
- Pupils make suitable use of ICT to produce attractive pictures and patterns as part of their topic work.
- Pupils have benefited from working with local craftsmen and artists, such as Catrin Williams and Eluned Rhys Parry, and their productions promote the quality of the school environment. There are good examples around the school of Y6 pupils' art projects and murals relating to class topic work.
- The standard of artwork in Oriol y Traeth and in the classes is good and shows the care and attention which pupils give to exhibiting the work.

### **Shortcomings**

- Key Stage 1 pupils do not study the work of artists from Wales.

### **Music**

Standards in music are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

#### **Good features**

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- Key Stage 1 pupils sing a satisfactory range of songs which is suitable for their age and level of development. The quality of singing is satisfactory. Effective use is made of some songs to promote pupils' linguistic development.
  - When investigating different sounds, they come to recognise the sounds of tuned and untuned instruments. They can simulate simple rhythms correctly and keep beat. They can use percussion instruments correctly and play them in the appropriate place when following a graphic score.
  - In KS2, pupils sing a suitable range of songs with confidence and get the experience to perform musically in assemblies, concerts and community events. The quality of singing is good; they pay attention to pitch and expression.
  - The majority of pupils have a basic understanding of the essentials of composition and can compose simple pieces of music. In response to various motivations such as a picture, verse or story, pupils can compose and arrange music by investigating and using a range of sound sources. Pupils' knowledge of musical elements such as dynamics, texture, pitch structure and tempo is developing well.
  - They can name instruments they hear in pieces of music. Pupils listen to the work of famous composers and can recognise musical features by drawing attention to similarities and differences. They use musical vocabulary correctly.

#### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1, pupils seldom use instruments for performing and composing, and their ability to evaluate and discuss their own work and the work of other composers is insufficiently developed.

#### **Physical education**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS1 and good in KS2.

#### **Good features**

- In both key stages, pupils dress appropriately for lessons and warm-up appropriately at the start of the lesson and relax at the end.
- In KS1, the majority of pupils follow teachers' instructions closely and make good use of space.
- When moving around the hall, pupils change direction and speed satisfactorily and Y2 pupils complete a sequence of movements and shapes effectively.
- The most able pupils develop good eye and hand co-ordination when throwing and catching a ball.
- In KS2, pupils' standard of performance in gymnastics and dance are generally good and they show obvious progress in the development of their skills.
- Pupils have good control over their bodies and work effectively as individuals and pairs and in groups. They perform a range of basic movements in floor work and link movements effectively and smoothly.
- In outside games activities, pupils show good skills when handling a ball and when taking part in a practice session for rounders.

#### **Shortcomings**

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- In KS1, some of the youngest pupils do not concentrate sufficiently or perform to their potential.

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## **Religious education**

Standards of achievement are good in KS1 and KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils make increasing development in their understanding of the relationship that exists between belief and morals, as is evident in values such as sharing, forgiving and respecting.
- Pupils can recall well-known stories from the Bible accurately and they have knowledge of Christian festivals and customs and of those relating to other religions.
- They appreciate that light is an important symbol in the Christian religion as well as the Hindu religion and can explain why in simple terms.
- In KS2, pupils visit a local place of worship and can list the main features of the building and furniture and the method of worship which takes place there.
- They know why the practice of baptism takes place in a place of worship and can explain the symbolic meaning of water and white dresses.
- Through studying the story of two different traditions, one from the Old Testament, the other from the holy book of the Moslems, and seeing the similarity between them, they realise that there are common roots to these religions.
- The oldest pupils' have an increasing knowledge of the main features of the Jewish religion.

### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection**

The key issues identified in the previous inspection, which was held in the autumn term 1997 were as follows:

There was a need to:

- raise standards of achievement in Welsh and music in KS1 and KS2;
- place more emphasis on suitable methods of teaching language in a bilingual situation;
- improve the marking system and set realistic targets for improvement;
- continue to develop the monitoring role of curricular leaders;
- include in the SDP targets and long-term and short-term priorities and a clear budget framework;
- ensure that the content of the prospectus and annual report for parents met statutory requirements.

The school has responded to these issues and there has been obvious improvement or some improvement in the majority of them. Standards in Welsh and music in KS1 are now satisfactory and are good in music in KS2. However, standards remain unsatisfactory in important elements of Welsh in KS2. Teachers have attended suitable courses in teaching

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language in a bilingual situation and this influence can be seen in the work in KS1. However, it has not as yet sufficiently influenced the Welsh skills of the majority of pupils in KS2. There has been an obvious improvement in general assessment, including the marking system, and clear, carefully costed priorities have been included in the SDP. Some of the targets given to pupils are still not sufficiently ambitious, and the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators has not been developed sufficiently. The prospectus and annual report for parents now meets statutory requirements.

## **8.2 Key Issues for Action**

There is a need to:

- raise pupils' standards of achievement in speaking and writing Welsh in KS2;
- eliminate shortcomings in music and physical education in KS1 where standards are satisfactory;
- address the planning of key skills in KS2 to ensure better balance in the language provision and raise pupils' standards in their use of Welsh across the curriculum in KS2;
- further develop the role of subject co-ordinators in the monitoring process;
- refine the school's self-evaluation procedures to ensure they are effective tools to promote high standards and move the school forward.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic Information About the School

Name of School	Ysgol y Traeth
School type	Community/LEA maintained
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Princes Avenue Barmouth Gwynedd
Post-Code	LL42 1HH
Telephone Number	01341 280479

Headteacher	Mr Ywain Myfyr
Date of appointment	June 2002
Chair of Governors	Reverend K Horswell
Registered Inspector	Mr E Lloyd Williams
Dates of inspection	May 19-22, 2003

### B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	12	24	19	23	23	22	20	22	165

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	2	8.3

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio excluding nursery and special classes	18.4:1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	13:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	21.8
Teacher (fte) : class ratio	1.2:1

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>				
	<b>R</b>	<b>KS1</b>	<b>KS2</b>	<b>Whole school</b>
Summer 2002	90.6	92.2	90.4	91.1
Autumn 2002	90.4	94.7	90.7	91.9
Spring 2003	91.4	92.4	95.0	93.0

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	30
Number of pupils excluded 12 months prior to the inspection	0

## C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

END OF KEY STAGE 1: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results: 2002			Number of pupils in Y2: 21					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
WELSH	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	15	85	0	0
		National	0	1	12	66	21	0
WE: Oracy	Teacher Assessment	School	0	8	26	66	0	0
		National	0	1	12	67	20	0
WE: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	8	26	66	0	0
		National	0	2	16	59	23	0
WE: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	10	30	60	0	0
		National	0	3	22	66	9	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	52	38	0
		National	0	2	10	65	23	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	90	5	0
		National	0	2	11	70	17	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	86	In Wales	80

D Pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 and 365 of the Education Act 1996 or, in the case of the Task/Test were absent.

W Pupils who are "working towards" level 1, but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1.

END OF KEY STAGE 2: 2002

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2002							Number of pupils in Y6: 24						
Percentage of pupils at each level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	12	4	17	42	25	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	17	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	9	0	4	0	0	0	5	5	45	41	0
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	5	12	41	38	0
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	17	0	0	0	0	8	37	17	21	0	0
		National	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	50	23	0
	Test/Task	School	16	0	0	0	5	0	10	58	26	0	0
		National	1	2	0	1	0	0	3	18	51	24	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	33	33	25	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	47	28	0
	Test/Task	School	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	41	32	0
		National	0	2	1	1	0	0	4	19	43	30	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	8	46	38	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	50	33	0
	Test/Task	School	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	17	75	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	10	47	38	0

<b>Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)</b>			
<b>by Teacher Assessment</b>		<b>by Test</b>	
In the school	68	In the school	63
In Wales	70	In Wales	68

- D Pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 and 365 of the Education Act 1996.  
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 levels of the tests.  
W Pupils who are “working towards” level 1, but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1.

**D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection**

- Three inspectors, including the lay inspector, visited the school for a total of 10 inspector days.
- Fifty lessons or parts of lessons were inspected.
- Pupils, representing different ages and abilities, were listened to reading. A number of pupils were spoken to and asked about their attitudes to their work.
- Samples of their written and practical work in all subjects were examined.
- The inspectors held discussions with the teachers at the end of the inspection days on a wide range of issues regarding the school’s work. Consideration was given to the school’s planning documents and its various files and records.
- The inspectors were present in morning services and in the hall at lunch times.
- Seven parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 49 questionnaires were completed.
- The inspectors held a meeting with the governing body before and after the inspection.

## E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subject Responsibilities
Mr E Lloyd Williams	RgI	Context Main findings Educational standards achieved by pupils Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Quality of teaching Curriculum Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement Leadership and efficiency School improvement	English science design and technology history geography physical education religious education
Mr D W Bundock	Team	Behaviour and attitudes Assessment, recording and reporting Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Provision for pupils with SEN Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	early years Welsh mathematics information technology music art
Mr W Owen	Lay	Attendance Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions Partnership with industry	

*The visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, the headteacher and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.*