

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

**YSGOL CYNFRAN
DOLWEN ROAD
LLYSFAEN
COLWYN BAY
LL29 8SS**

School Number: 662-2264

Date of Inspection: 22 – 24 November 2004

by

Mr Merfyn D Jones

Registered Inspector: 78185

Date: 27 January 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/22/04P

Contractor:

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Ysgol Cynfran was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of **Ysgol Cynfran** took place between **22nd and 24th November 2004**. An independent team of inspectors, led by **Mr Merfyn D Jones** undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

Ysgol Cynfran is a maintained primary school situated in the village of Llysfen, which is near Colwyn Bay. It is maintained by the local authority of Conwy.

There are 190 pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11 years. Seventeen children attend the nursery on a part-time basis in the afternoon. About 30 per cent of pupils come from outside the immediate vicinity of the village.

The pupils' first language is English and they have a full range of ability.

There are 50 pupils on the register of special educational needs (SEN) and five have statements of SEN. Thirty-nine pupils are on 'school action' and six on 'school action plus'.

Two pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority.

22.6 per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals.

There are seven full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and three part-time teachers. They are supported by three full-time and four part-time classroom assistants.

The school was last inspected in December 1998, and the headteacher has been in post since September 1998.

The school aims to:

- have high expectations in terms of standards of work and encourage pupils to take pride in their work;
- create opportunities for developing each child's aesthetic skills;
- encourage children to have high standards of behaviour and to co-operate with each other, thus contributing to a happy and safe environment;
- cater for children with SEN;
- emphasise to children the necessity for mutual respect towards their peers and adults;
- promote a sense of European / International identity.

The school's mission statement is:

"This is our school where all those involved have a valuable contribution to make. We fully recognise that the school is an important partner in educating children for the future, where they will take their place as responsible members of society".

The school's priorities and targets

The school's major priorities and targets for 2004 – 2005 include:

- to review the Phonological Awareness Training (PAT) books for each age group.
- continue to integrate the Jolly Phonics scheme in Key Stage (KS) 1 and develop strategies to improve creative writing in KS2.
- introduce an electronic library system to track pupils and improve reading. Work on strategies to motivate boys to read more frequently.

- to facilitate the use of the interactive white board in each class and link to curriculum resources, building on the good practice in early years, Year (Y) 5 and Y6.

Summary and recommendations

1. Ysgol Cynfran is a good school with outstanding features, particularly in caring, guiding and supporting pupils.
2. The inspection team agreed with three of the seven judgements made by the school in the self-evaluation document. Key questions 4 and 7 are graded as higher because of outstanding features. Key question 5 is graded lower because targets are not always sufficiently challenging or focused to raise standards in the core subjects and to raise benchmarking levels. Key question 6 is judged as grade 2 and not grade 1 because not all aspects of school work were evaluated.

Table of grades awarded

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

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?	1

Standards

4. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
5. Early years children make good progress in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT).
6. At both KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, numeracy and using ICT are good. There are some shortcomings in pupils' writing standards, particularly in creative writing.
7. Pupils' bilingual competence shows good progress across the school, particularly in early years and Y3.
8. Pupils with SEN make good progress and regularly achieve the targets set for them.
9. Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills are developing satisfactorily throughout the school. Most pupils show good collaborative skills when working in pairs or in groups.

10. Standard assessment tests' (SATs) results, for both key stages, show steady improvement over the past six years. In comparison with similar schools, they are generally near the median.
11. In 2004, at the end of KS1, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum (NC) core subjects of English and mathematics were below local and county averages, and on a par in science. When compared with similar schools across Wales, they were below average.
12. In KS2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were in line with the targets set by the school, but were just below county and national averages in English and science and in line in mathematics.
13. Pupils' attitudes to their learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are good and they readily participate in the range of activities provided.
14. With the exception of a few pupils in Y6, behaviour throughout the school day is good. The school achieves one of its aims of establishing a happy, hard working atmosphere based on sound interpersonal relationships between pupils and staff.
15. Pupils achieve good levels of attendance. The average attendance for the three terms before the inspection was 95.3 per cent. Registration arrangements meet statutory requirements and pupils are punctual at the start of the day.
16. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. They also have an understanding of equal opportunities issues and have respect for the diversity of beliefs and cultural traditions within society. However, their awareness of spirituality is underdeveloped.
17. Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills are developing satisfactorily throughout the school but opportunities to develop them further are sometimes missed.
18. Participation in the life of the community and visits to places of historical and cultural interest help to broaden pupils' understanding of their community, and at times, the world of work.

The quality of education and training

19. During the inspection, the quality of teaching in the twenty-five lessons observed was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	48%	24%	4%	0%

20. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and demonstrate good pupil management, particularly when dealing with any misbehaviour. They know their pupils well and actively address the issues of gender, race and disability, promoting equality of opportunity for all.
21. Twenty-four per cent of the lessons contain outstanding features which include:
 - very good use of open-ended questioning to develop pupils' communication and investigative skills;
 - very effective use of appropriate resources and role-play to stimulate and motivate pupils;
 - tasks and activities that are challenging within a set time scale and very well matched to pupils' abilities;

- lively presentations with clear lesson objectives and high expectations, and
 - very good deployment of classroom assistants.
22. Where teaching was graded as less than 2, tasks lacked challenge and differentiation, lessons lacked pace and rigour, and pupils were not sufficiently motivated. Some of the worksheets used restrict pupils' ability to express themselves creatively or develop their own ideas.
 23. Teachers assess pupils' achievements and progress in English, mathematics and science fairly and regularly. There are, however, discrepancies at times between the assessment of the staff and the attainment of the pupils in SATs.
 24. The school has recently undertaken to assess religious education and geography formally and is planning to assess the other foundation subjects in the near future.
 25. Teachers are clear in their understanding of the purpose of assessment to identify pupils' learning strengths and shortcomings and to identify pupils with SEN.
 26. The school successfully tracks pupils' progress over time and uses this information to create specific learning groups and to identify individual pupils to be given extra support in the classroom or by withdrawal. This information is not used sufficiently throughout the school to guide challenging provision for more able pupils.
 27. The baseline assessment of children under five is systematic and efficient, giving good quality information in all aspects of a child's development.
 28. The recent audit and review of SEN procedures have resulted in a more streamlined and effective system of assessment, recording and reporting.
 29. The quality of feedback to pupils on their progress and on how to raise the standard of their work is inconsistent. Where it is good, pupils are fully aware of what they need to do to improve.
 30. Reporting to parents and other agencies is of good quality for pupils with SEN.
 31. There is some inconsistency in the quality of annual reports to parents of pupils' progress. Often comments are too bland; and they do not offer guidance to pupils or parents on what needs to be done to improve.
 32. The planning and provision for promoting the Desirable Outcomes in early years education are good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements and reflects the main aims of the school.
 33. Overall, the schemes of work for the majority of subjects provide useful frameworks for the coherent teaching of subjects in both key stages. The absence of a scheme of work in English, linked to school-based information, results in a lack of fluency in the development of literacy, particularly writing, throughout the school.
 34. The school provides pupils with a wide range of enriching experiences, reflecting full educational and social inclusion and promotion of equal opportunities in relation to ability, gender or ethnicity.

35. The school is highly successful in managing very effective care arrangements and support services, resulting in very good quality care for its pupils.
36. The procedures taken by the headteacher and staff to deal with pupils whose behaviour is disruptive to others are very good. Imaginative and sensitive use is made of a variety of methods and agencies to raise the standard of individuals' behaviour. This is a strong feature of the school.
37. Staff and pupils have an appropriate awareness of health and safety requirements. There are relevant policies in relation to staff responsibilities. All staff undertake their responsibilities effectively.

Leadership and management

38. The school is confidently led by a headteacher whose management is purposeful and sincere and who is ably supported by an active and committed deputy. Together, the governors, headteacher and senior staff provide positive leadership which gives a clear direction to the school's work.
39. The school's clear aims and values, especially respect for individuals, their needs and achievements, are understood by all staff and have a positive effect on pupils.
40. Good procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvement. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning, funded by the General Teaching Council for Wales, helps to identify strengths and developmental needs.
41. The school development plan (SDP) is a detailed document which clearly sets out the school's priorities, as identified in the self-evaluation report. It takes account of training needs, time-scale, costs and resources. Criteria for success are identified and regularly reviewed. The governors ensure that the appropriate resources are made available to support the priorities and objectives identified.
42. There are enough suitably qualified teachers and support staff to provide for the educational needs of all pupils, including those with special needs and the under-fives. They work hard together as an effective team, supporting each other with their specialisms and strengths.
43. Learning support assistants provide very good support for teachers during lessons. Their contribution to pupils' learning affects positively the progress pupils make.
44. The school secretary makes a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school.
45. The quality and quantity of resources to support the delivery of the curriculum are very good. The school is very successful in improving or supplementing resources through a wide range of national bids or awards.
46. The sufficiency of resources is regularly reviewed and money is allocated appropriately to maintain the provision. Pupils benefit from the quantity and quality of ICT hardware in the school.
47. Governors and managers budget for school priorities wisely. Spending decisions benefit all pupils and, overall, the school gives very good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- ensure that school targets are sufficiently challenging and focused to raise standards in the core subjects, and to raise benchmarking levels;
- produce a scheme of work for English across the school, and continue to develop pupils' writing skills;
- continue to develop assessment and recording in the foundation subjects;
- review:
 - (a) the quality and effectiveness of marking across the school;
 - (b) the consistency and usefulness of reports to parents;
- ensure tasks consistently challenge pupils of all abilities in all classes, and
- improve provision for pupils' spiritual and creative development.

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

48. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
49. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
50. Early years children make good progress in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and using ICT.
51. At both KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, numeracy and using ICT are good. Pupils make good use of these key skills in different subjects. However, there are some shortcomings in pupils' writing standards, particularly in creative writing.
52. Pupils' bilingual competence shows good progress across the school, and is very good in early years and Y3.
53. Pupils with SEN make good progress and regularly achieve the targets set for them. 'Looked-after' children are also making good progress.
54. Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills are developing satisfactorily throughout the school but opportunities to develop them further are sometimes missed.
55. Standard assessment tests' results, for both key stages, show steady improvement over the past six years.

56. 2003 Benchmark information for KS1 places the school in the median quartile for language, mathematics and science. At KS2, the school is in the upper median in language and mathematics, and in the upper quartile in science.
57. In 2004, at the end of KS1, pupils' attainment in the NC core subjects of English and mathematics were below local and county averages, and on a par in science. When compared with similar schools across Wales, they were below average.
58. In KS2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were in line with the targets set by the school, but were just below county and national averages in English and science and in line in mathematics.
59. Generally, girls perform better than boys in English in both key stages.
60. The majority of pupils make good progress in gaining new skills, knowledge and understanding. However, their understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to improve is inconsistent.
61. Pupils' attitudes to their learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are good and they readily participate in the range of activities provided.
62. With the exception of a few pupils in Y6, behaviour throughout the school day is good, and the school achieves one of its aims of establishing a happy, hard working atmosphere based on sound interpersonal relationships between pupils and staff.
63. The school is an orderly community and pupils are well mannered, always ready to support one another, courteous and friendly. They exercise good self-discipline and responsibility and are eager to take on classroom and playtime responsibilities.
64. Pupils achieve good levels of attendance. The average attendance for the three terms before the inspection was 95.3 per cent. Registration arrangements meet statutory requirements. Pupils are punctual at the start of the day.
65. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. They also have an understanding of equal opportunities issues and have respect for the diversity of beliefs and cultural traditions within society. However, their awareness of spirituality is underdeveloped.
66. Participation in the life of the community and visits to places of historical and cultural interest help to broaden pupils' understanding of their community and at times the world of work.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

67. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
68. The inspection team observed the teaching of a range of NC subjects, including English, mathematics, science, Welsh, art, music, physical education and religious education.

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	48%	24%	4%	0%

70. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and demonstrate good pupil management, particularly when dealing with any misbehaviour. They know their pupils well and actively address the issues of gender, race and disability, promoting equality of opportunity for all.

71. Twenty-four per cent of the lessons contain outstanding features which include:

- very good use of open-ended questioning to develop pupils' communication and investigative skills;
- very effective use of appropriate resources and role-play to stimulate and motivate pupils;
- tasks and activities that are challenging within a set time scale and very well matched to pupils' abilities;
- lively presentations with clear lesson objectives and high expectations, and
- very good deployment of classroom assistants.

72. Where teaching was graded as less than 2, tasks lacked challenge and differentiation, lessons lacked pace and rigour, and pupils were not sufficiently motivated. Some of the worksheets used restrict pupils' ability to express themselves creatively or develop their own ideas.

73. Most teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboard and of a range of other resources. Support staff and voluntary assistants contribute substantially to the progress of those pupils who require additional attention.

74. Short-term planning is varied and does not always identify differentiated tasks.

75. Teachers assess pupils' achievements and progress in English, mathematics and science fairly and regularly. There are, however, discrepancies at times between the assessment of the staff and the attainment of the pupils in SATs.

76. The school has recently undertaken to assess religious education and geography formally and is planning to assess the other foundation subjects in the near future.

77. Teachers are clear in their understanding of the purpose of assessment to identify pupils' learning strengths and shortcomings and to identify pupils with SEN.

78. Assessment data are efficiently collated, including NC assessments, and are well used to inform the planning of teaching and learning in the core subjects.

79. The school successfully tracks pupils' progress over time and uses this information to create specific learning groups and to identify individual pupils to be given extra support in the classroom or by withdrawal. This information is not used sufficiently throughout the school to guide more challenging provision for more able pupils.

80. The baseline assessment of children under five is systematic and efficient giving good quality information in all aspects of a child's development.

81. The recent audit and review of SEN procedures have resulted in a more streamlined and effective system of assessment, recording and reporting.
82. The school meets statutory requirements in the quality of recording pupils' progress. Records provide a clear and comprehensive picture of the pupils' progress. The recording system is manageable and useful to all concerned.
83. Records of pupils' progress are transferred effectively from each stage to the next, including the transition to the secondary school.
84. The school has established a system for pupils to know the targets set for them by teachers and plans to develop this further so that pupils can become more involved in planning their own improvement.
85. The quality of feedback to pupils on their progress and on how to raise the standard of their work is inconsistent. Where it is good, pupils are fully aware of what they need to do to improve.
86. Reporting to parents and other agencies is of good quality for pupils with SEN.
87. There is some inconsistency in the quality of annual reports to parents of pupils' progress. Often, comments are too bland and they do not offer guidance to pupils or parents on what needs to be done to improve.
88. Although reports do not give parents the opportunity to write their own comments, the school holds two open evenings per term and parents report that they are welcomed into the school at any time to discuss their children's welfare.

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

89. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school judged this key question as grade 1.
90. The lack of an English scheme of work results, at times, in limited progression and continuity in pupils' work, particularly in writing.
91. The school does not sufficiently promote the education of pupils for sustainable development.
92. The planning and provision for promoting the Desirable Outcomes in early years education are good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements and reflects the main aims of the school.
93. Overall, the schemes of work for the majority of subjects provide useful frameworks for the coherent teaching of subjects in both key stages. The absence of a scheme of work in English, linked to school-based information, results in a lack of fluency in the development of literacy, particularly writing, throughout the school.
94. The school provides pupils with a wide range of enriching experiences, reflecting full educational and social inclusion and promotion of equal opportunities in relation to ability, gender or ethnicity.
95. A main strength of the curriculum is its flexibility to meet a variety of learning needs as opportunities arise. The school provides very imaginative

- programmes involving international, residential and many interesting school-based clubs and activities.
96. Good provision is made for pupils with SEN by means of withdrawal groups and in-class support.
 97. Teachers plan for the development of the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology across all subjects and for problem-solving and creative skills in a few subjects. The school has identified the need to plan for the development of these two skills across the curriculum.
 98. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Provision for spiritual development is less effective however. Opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own values and those of others are sometimes missed, particularly in daily acts of worship.
 99. The school promotes a strong sense of right and wrong throughout the whole of school life.
 100. Personal and social education is well planned across the curriculum.
 101. A number of parents are involved in the day-to-day life of the school and their contribution makes a significant impact on pupils' learning.
 102. The school offers pupils frequent opportunities to take responsibility for others as well as themselves. For example, the "buddy" system to help pupils settle in and where older pupils take care of younger or new children. Members of the school council take a close interest in many aspects of the school. In the class council meeting observed during the inspection, each pupil was fully involved and contributed maturely to the discussion.
 103. The school promotes comprehensive coverage of the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig*.
 104. The school is outstanding in its encouragement of raising pupils' awareness of other Western cultures in its many connections with other countries. In subjects such as geography, history, religious education, music and art, pupils explore both Western and non-Western cultures with interest.
 105. The provision for bilingualism is very good and is making steady progress in permeating the whole curriculum. Pupils respond positively to the reward system for using both Welsh and English.
 106. The school is aware of the importance of educating its pupils in sustainable development and plans to develop this further.
 107. Pupils are making very good progress in developing an understanding of their roles as global citizens regardless of gender, ability, race or creed.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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108. The findings of the inspection team are higher than the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report. The school is highly successful in managing very effective care arrangements and support services, resulting in very good quality care for its pupils.
109. The school has very close, positive and constructive partnerships with parents, outside agencies, other schools and colleges.

110. The “buddy” system and school council make invaluable contributions to how well pupils settle into school and how they participate in a happy, caring school. Pupils report that they feel valued and safe, and parents report that they have total confidence in the support the school provides.
111. The personal and social programme permeates school life; relevant policies are in place to deal with problems that may arise, including those relating to drugs, bullying and racism. Sex education is given in science and through other topics.
112. Teachers aim to build a framework of values that regulates personal behaviour through promoting principles that distinguish right from wrong. The school fosters values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice effectively. Pupils are encouraged to behave responsibly by accepting group rules and taking responsibility for their own actions.
113. The procedures taken by the headteacher and staff to deal with pupils whose behaviour is disruptive to others are very good. Imaginative and sensitive use is made of a variety of methods and agencies to raise the standard of individuals’ behaviour. This is a strong feature of the school.
114. Staff and pupils have an appropriate awareness of health and safety requirements. There are relevant policies in relation to staff responsibilities. All staff undertake their responsibilities effectively.
115. Procedures for dealing with child protection, appeals and complaints are in place and implemented effectively. They are well established and understood by all staff. First aid, health and fire prevention procedures are also well established and risk assessments are undertaken as required.
116. Registration periods are undertaken appropriately and effective procedures are used for monitoring pupils’ punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance. These factors have an overall beneficial effect on pupils’ progress and confidence and help them thrive in a well-structured environment.
117. Individual learning needs are carefully identified early in the pupils’ school lives and catered for well through small SEN withdrawal groups. However, in some classes, the work is not always specific or finely tuned enough to suit individual learning needs. Pupils with SEN, including those with physical difficulties, are fully integrated into school life.
118. A notable feature of the life of the school is that through its well-established links with schools in four other countries the pupils are able to gain a broader understanding of global citizenship and diversity. There is also a good representation of diversity in the curriculum, the teaching of religious education and within the personal and social education programme.
119. The school’s provision effectively promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils regardless of gender, ability, language or ethnicity. Nevertheless, the school is aware that there is room for further development in raising pupils’ awareness of race relations in multi-cultural Britain.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

120. The findings of the inspection team do not match the grade 1 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
121. The school is confidently led by a headteacher whose management is purposeful and sincere and who is ably supported by an active and committed deputy. Together, the governors, headteacher and senior staff provide positive leadership which gives a clear direction to the school's work.
122. The school's clear aims and values, especially respect for individuals, their needs and achievements, are understood by all staff and have a positive effect on pupils.
123. Staff understand the role that they are encouraged to play in the development and running of the school and work together as an effective and enthusiastic team, ensuring equality of opportunity.
124. The school takes good account of national priorities, local partnerships and cluster agreements. Staff are involved in a wide range of initiatives, often achieving national awards and commendations. For example, the development of the healthy eating initiative has increased pupils' awareness and influenced their decisions positively.
125. Although realistic targets are set, they are not always sufficiently challenging or focussed to raise standards in the core subjects, and to raise benchmarking levels.
126. Professional development of staff is closely linked to the school's development objectives contained within the SDP and to annual reviews of training needs. The deputy headteacher is responsible for managing and organising in-service training, and ensures dissemination of information.
127. The governing body is very supportive and has a good awareness of its responsibilities. It fulfils its legal requirements and pays due attention to Welsh Assembly Government guidelines.
128. Governors are very involved in school activities and have a high profile in the school. One in particular, makes himself available every day and is regularly supporting pupils or helping staff.
129. Governors contribute effectively to set strategic direction and targets, and monitor pupils' progress and the quality of provision. They have very good oversight of the budget and supervise expenditure very well securing best value for money.
130. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents meet all statutory requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

131. The findings of the inspection team differ from the grade 1 judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation document.
132. Good procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvement. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning by headteacher and co-ordinators, funded by the General Teaching Council for Wales, helps to identify strengths and developmental needs.
133. The school has effective strategies for assessing and evaluating pupils' standards of achievement. Staff analyse assessment records, including end of key stage tests, to identify trends and shortcomings.
134. All governors have curriculum responsibilities and keep well informed through visiting classes and discussing pupil progress with subject co-ordinators.
135. The self-evaluation report, produced by the school before the inspection, is based on reliable evidence which has been clearly identified.
136. The inspection team agreed with the judgements made by the school in three of the seven key questions. A higher grade was awarded in key question 4 because of the outstanding features, but a lower grade in key questions 5 and 6 because not all aspects, such as pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, were evaluated.
137. Although not all aspects of school life and work were identified in the school's self-evaluation report, the governors, teaching and non-teaching staff were all given an opportunity to contribute to it. Parents and pupils were canvassed through questionnaires and the school council was consulted.
138. The SDP is a detailed document which clearly sets out the school's priorities, as identified in the self-evaluation report. It takes account of training needs, time-scale, costs and resources. Criteria for success are identified and regularly reviewed. The governors ensure that the appropriate resources are made available to support the priorities and objectives identified.
139. Overall, the school has made good progress since the last inspection. Five of the six key issues have been well addressed, but the sixth remains unchanged. Acts of collective worship still do not contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual development.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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140. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
141. There are enough suitably qualified teachers and support staff to provide for the educational needs of all pupils, including those with special needs and the under-fives. They work hard together as an effective team, supporting each other with their specialisms and strengths.

142. Learning support assistants provide very good support for teachers during lessons. Their contribution to pupils' learning affects positively the progress pupils make.
143. Job descriptions are agreed and reviewed regularly with all staff. Teacher appraisal and training are effective, and enhance their effectiveness on raising standards. Performance management is well established.
144. The school secretary makes a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school.
145. The quality and quantity of resources to support the delivery of the curriculum are very good. The school is very successful in improving or supplementing resources through a wide range of national bids or awards. The sufficiency of resources is regularly reviewed and money is allocated appropriately to maintain the provision. Pupils benefit from the quantity and quality of ICT hardware in the school.
146. The lack of space in some classrooms and the hall sometimes affects the progress pupils make, particularly in practical subjects and activities. The school building is secure, clean and well maintained, and good use is made of all the available spaces. The playground is well used and organised for small team games to encourage group co-operation.
147. Governors and managers budget for school priorities wisely. Spending decisions benefit all pupils and, overall, the school gives very good value for money.

School's response to the inspection

The staff and governors are pleased with the very positive report. The judgements and observations made by the team are in accord with those made by the school. The report emphasises the successful efforts to involve parents, governors and the community in the daily life of the school and the work put in by staff to care, guide and support pupils.

The short inspection was a thorough and intense process for the school, parents and governors. The recommendations will now provide the school with a clear way forward for further school improvement.

The nominee's role was undertaken by the headteacher who appreciated being present when inspection outcomes were being discussed. The process was open and transparent. Opportunities were provided as the team gathered and evaluated work for additional evidence to be considered as the graded judgements were made.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Cynfran
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Dolwen Road Llysfaen Colwyn Bay
Post-code	LL29 8SS
Telephone number	01492 517326

Headteacher	Mr R Geraint Williams
Date of appointment	September 1998
Chair of governors	Mr Gwynfor Davies
Registered inspector	Mr M D Jones
Dates of inspection	22-24 November 2004

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	8	18	21	30	29	34	28	22	190

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	3	8.34

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	4:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Autumn 2003	94.9	95.1	95.5	95.1
Spring 2004	95.3	95.4	95.5	95.4
Summer 2004	95.2	95.5	95.5	95.4

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	22.6
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y2:					26
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	19	65	12	0
		National	0	4	14	64	18	0
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	15	62	19	0
		National	0	4	13	63	20	0
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	23	62	12	0
		National	0	4	14	54	28	0
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	12	77	8	0
		National	0	3	12	63	22	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	12	54	31	0
		National	0	2	9	63	26	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	8	69	19	0
		National	0	2	10	68	20	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	77	In Wales	80
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D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004			Number of pupils in Y6: 30									
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	10	23	47	20	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	6	17	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	17	13	50	20	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	5	12	41	38	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	10	16	47	27	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	4	19	47	28	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	10	17	40	33	0
		National	0	5	1	0	0	4	19	43	30	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	3	17	47	33	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	50	33	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0	0	3	17	57	23	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	1	10	47	38	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)

by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	66.7	In the school	63.3
In Wales	69.6	In Wales	68.1

D Pupils who are exempted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

- A team of three inspectors, including a lay inspector, carried out the inspection over a period of three days.
- The headteacher was the nominee, and he played an active, supportive and valuable role during the inspection.
- Twenty-five lessons or parts of lessons were inspected, as well as a selection of the pupils' work.
- Registration, collective worship and extra-curricular activities were seen.
- Interviews and discussions were held with a wide range of staff and pupils about their work.
- All documents presented by the school prior to the inspection, and during the inspection, were analysed.
- Meetings were held prior to the inspection with staff, parents and the governing body.
- Twenty-four parents were present and expressed an opinion during the meeting held prior to the inspection. Fifty-one questionnaires were returned by parents and the responses were analysed by the inspection team.
- Post-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governing body.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr M D Jones Registered inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key questions 1, 5, 6 and 7 and contributions to key question 2
Mrs M Meredith-Jones Team inspector	Key questions 2, 3 and 4 and contributions to key question 7
Mr G G Jones Lay inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3 and 5

Acknowledgement

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

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

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

YSGOL CYNFRAN
DOLWEN ROAD
LLYSFAEN
COLWYN BAY
LL29 8SS

School Number: 662-2264

Date of Inspection: 22 – 24 November 2004

by

Mr Merfyn D Jones

Registered Inspector: 78185

Date: 27 January 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/22/04P

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Ysgol Cynfran was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of **Ysgol Cynfran** took place between **22nd and 24th November 2004**. An independent team of inspectors, led by **Mr Merfyn D Jones** undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Cynfran
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Dolwen Road Llysfaen Colwyn Bay
Post-code	LL29 8SS
Telephone number	01492 517326

Headteacher	Mr R Geraint Williams
Date of appointment	September 1998
Chair of governors	Mr Gwynfor Davies
Registered inspector	Mr M D Jones
Dates of inspection	22-24 November 2004

Context

The nature of the provider

Ysgol Cynfran is a maintained primary school situated in the village of Llysfaen, which is near Colwyn Bay. It is maintained by the local authority of Conwy.

There are 190 pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11 years. Seventeen children attend the nursery on a part-time basis in the afternoon. About 30 per cent of pupils come from outside the immediate vicinity of the village.

The pupils' first language is English and they have a full range of ability.

There are 50 pupils on the register of special educational needs (SEN) and five have statements of SEN. Thirty-nine pupils are on 'school action' and six on 'school action plus'.

Two pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority.

22.6 per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals.

There are seven full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and three part-time teachers. They are supported by three full-time and four part-time classroom assistants.

The school was last inspected in December 1998, and the headteacher has been in post since September 1998.

The school aims to:

- have high expectations in terms of standards of work and encourage pupils to take pride in their work;
- create opportunities for developing each child's aesthetic skills;
- encourage children to have high standards of behaviour and to co-operate with each other, thus contributing to a happy and safe environment;
- cater for children with SEN;

- emphasise to children the necessity for mutual respect towards their peers and adults;
- promote a sense of European / International identity.

The school's mission statement is:

"This is our school where all those involved have a valuable contribution to make. We fully recognise that the school is an important partner in educating children for the future, where they will take their place as responsible members of society".

The school's priorities and targets

The school's major priorities and targets for 2004 – 2005 include:

- to review the Phonological Awareness Training (PAT) books for each age group.
- continue to integrate the Jolly Phonics scheme in Key Stage (KS) 1 and develop strategies to improve creative writing in KS2.
- introduce an electronic library system to track pupils and improve reading. Work on strategies to motivate boys to read more frequently.
- to facilitate the use of the interactive white board in each class and link to curriculum resources, building on the good practice in early years, Year (Y) 5 and Y6.

Summary and recommendations

Ysgol Cynfran is a good school with outstanding features, particularly in caring, guiding and supporting pupils.

The inspection team agreed with three of the seven judgements made by the school in the self-evaluation document. Key questions 4 and 7 are graded as higher because of outstanding features. Key question 5 is graded lower because targets are not always sufficiently challenging or focused to raise standards in the core subjects and to raise benchmarking levels. Key question 6 is judged as grade 2 and not grade 1 because not all aspects of school work were evaluated.

Table of grades awarded

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

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?	1

Standards

The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Early years children make good progress in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and using information and communications technology (ICT).

At both KS1 and KS2, pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, numeracy and using ICT are good. There are some shortcomings in pupils' writing standards, particularly in creative writing.

Pupils' bilingual competence shows good progress across the school, particularly in early years and Y3.

Pupils with SEN make good progress and regularly achieve the targets set for them.

Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills are developing satisfactorily throughout the school. Most pupils show good collaborative skills when working in pairs or in groups.

Standard assessment tests' (SATs) results, for both key stages, show steady improvement over the past six years. In comparison with similar schools, they are generally near the median.

In 2004, at the end of KS1, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum (NC) core subjects of English and mathematics were below local and county averages, and on a par in science. When compared with similar schools across Wales, they were below average.

In KS2, in 2004, pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were in line with the targets set by the school, but were just below county and national averages in English and science and in line in mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes to their learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to sustain concentration are good and they readily participate in the range of activities provided.

With the exception of a few pupils in Y6, behaviour throughout the school day is good. The school achieves one of its aims of establishing a happy, hard working atmosphere based on sound interpersonal relationships between pupils and staff.

Pupils achieve good levels of attendance. The average attendance for the three terms before the inspection was 95.3 per cent. Registration arrangements meet statutory requirements and pupils are punctual at the start of the day.

Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. They also have an understanding of equal opportunities issues and have respect for the diversity of beliefs and cultural traditions within society. However, their awareness of spirituality is underdeveloped.

Pupils' creative and problem-solving skills are developing satisfactorily throughout the school but opportunities to develop them further are sometimes missed.

Participation in the life of the community and visits to places of historical and cultural interest help to broaden pupils' understanding of their community, and at times, the world of work.

The quality of education and training

During the inspection, the quality of teaching in the twenty-five lessons observed was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	48%	24%	4%	0%

Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and demonstrate good pupil management, particularly when dealing with any misbehaviour. They know their pupils well and actively address the issues of gender, race and disability, promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Twenty-four per cent of the lessons contain outstanding features which include:

- very good use of open-ended questioning to develop pupils' communication and investigative skills;
- very effective use of appropriate resources and role-play to stimulate and motivate pupils;
- tasks and activities that are challenging within a set time scale and very well matched to pupils' abilities;
- lively presentations with clear lesson objectives and high expectations, and
- very good deployment of classroom assistants.

Where teaching was graded as less than 2, tasks lacked challenge and differentiation, lessons lacked pace and rigour, and pupils were not sufficiently motivated. Some of the worksheets used restrict pupils' ability to express themselves creatively or develop their own ideas.

Teachers assess pupils' achievements and progress in English, mathematics and science fairly and regularly. There are, however, discrepancies at times between the assessment of the staff and the attainment of the pupils in SATs.

The school has recently undertaken to assess religious education and geography formally and is planning to assess the other foundation subjects in the near future.

Teachers are clear in their understanding of the purpose of assessment to identify pupils' learning strengths and shortcomings and to identify pupils with SEN.

The school successfully tracks pupils' progress over time and uses this information to create specific learning groups and to identify individual pupils to be given extra support in the classroom or by withdrawal. This information is not used sufficiently throughout the school to guide challenging provision for more able pupils.

The baseline assessment of children under five is systematic and efficient, giving good quality information in all aspects of a child's development.

The recent audit and review of SEN procedures have resulted in a more streamlined and effective system of assessment, recording and reporting.

The quality of feedback to pupils on their progress and on how to raise the standard of their work is inconsistent. Where it is good, pupils are fully aware of what they need to do to improve.

Reporting to parents and other agencies is of good quality for pupils with SEN.

There is some inconsistency in the quality of annual reports to parents of pupils' progress. Often comments are too bland; and they do not offer guidance to pupils or parents on what needs to be done to improve.

The planning and provision for promoting the Desirable Outcomes in early years education are good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements and reflects the main aims of the school.

Overall, the schemes of work for the majority of subjects provide useful frameworks for the coherent teaching of subjects in both key stages. The absence of a scheme of work in English, linked to school-based information, results in a lack of fluency in the development of literacy, particularly writing, throughout the school.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of enriching experiences, reflecting full educational and social inclusion and promotion of equal opportunities in relation to ability, gender or ethnicity.

The school is highly successful in managing very effective care arrangements and support services, resulting in very good quality care for its pupils.

The procedures taken by the headteacher and staff to deal with pupils whose behaviour is disruptive to others are very good. Imaginative and sensitive use is made of a variety of methods and agencies to raise the standard of individuals' behaviour. This is a strong feature of the school.

Staff and pupils have an appropriate awareness of health and safety requirements. There are relevant policies in relation to staff responsibilities. All staff undertake their responsibilities effectively.

Leadership and management

The school is confidently led by a headteacher whose management is purposeful and sincere and who is ably supported by an active and committed deputy. Together, the governors, headteacher and senior staff provide positive leadership which gives a clear direction to the school's work.

The school's clear aims and values, especially respect for individuals, their needs and achievements, are understood by all staff and have a positive effect on pupils.

Good procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvement. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning, funded by the General Teaching Council for Wales, helps to identify strengths and developmental needs.

The school development plan (SDP) is a detailed document which clearly sets out the school's priorities, as identified in the self-evaluation report. It takes account of training needs, time-scale, costs and resources. Criteria for success are identified and regularly reviewed. The governors ensure that the appropriate resources are made available to support the priorities and objectives identified.

There are enough suitably qualified teachers and support staff to provide for the educational needs of all pupils, including those with special needs and the under-fives. They work hard together as an effective team, supporting each other with their specialisms and strengths.

Learning support assistants provide very good support for teachers during lessons. Their contribution to pupils' learning affects positively the progress pupils make.

The school secretary makes a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school.

The quality and quantity of resources to support the delivery of the curriculum are very good. The school is very successful in improving or supplementing resources through a wide range of national bids or awards.

The sufficiency of resources is regularly reviewed and money is allocated appropriately to maintain the provision. Pupils benefit from the quantity and quality of ICT hardware in the school.

Governors and managers budget for school priorities wisely. Spending decisions benefit all pupils and, overall, the school gives very good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school needs to:

- ensure that school targets are sufficiently challenging and focused to raise standards in the core subjects, and to raise benchmarking levels;
- produce a scheme of work for English across the school, and continue to develop pupils' writing skills;
- continue to develop assessment and recording in the foundation subjects;
- review:
 - (a) the quality and effectiveness of marking across the school;
 - (b) the consistency and usefulness of reports to parents;
- ensure tasks consistently challenge pupils of all abilities in all classes, and
- improve provision for pupils' spiritual and creative development.

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.

Acknowledgement

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