

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

**Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin
Sudbrook
Newport
Monmouthshire
NP6 4SY**

School Number:679/2318

Date of Inspection: 14th – 16th March 2005

By

**Mr Brinley Jones
W263/78379**

Date:19th May 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/183/04P

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Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin 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 the 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 Gymraeg Y Ffin took place between 14th and 16th March 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Brinley 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.

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

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol y Ffin is situated in Sudbrook, near Caldicot in Monmouthshire. The school was established in September 2001 and serves areas of South Monmouthshire. A minority of pupils attend from across the border with England. The school states that the majority of pupils come from areas which are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.
2. Ysgol y Ffin is a designated Welsh-medium school and in the Reception class and in KS1, children are immersed in Welsh to ensure mastery of the language at a young age. English is formally introduced at the start of KS2. While the majority of pupils entering the school have experienced Nursery education, only around a third have experienced Welsh-medium Nursery education. Approximately 3% of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main home language. 16% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are currently 46 pupils on roll. For the first time, the school has a Y6 comprising of pupils who have only received a Welsh medium education for just over three and a half years. There are 8 pupils with Special Educational needs.
3. Since September 2004, an acting headteacher, who was seconded from another Welsh-medium school, has been in post. The secondment was initially intended to last one term, but as the Governing Body was not successful in filling the post, the acting head agreed to stay on for one more term in order to see the school through its impending Estyn inspection. Two of the other three teachers are in their second year of teaching.

Mission Statement

4. The school's mission statement includes the following features. To:
 - provide the opportunity through the medium of Welsh for children to develop into rounded individuals, enabling them to play a positive and constructive role in society;
 - make the children fluent in Welsh and English so that they can make an active and full contribution to the social and industrial life of our bilingual society;
 - create a happy school environment where children will be cared for sensitively and will enjoy life at school, work hard and achieve their full potential;
 - foster a partnership in which teaching and support staff, governors, advisory colleagues, parents, future parents and friends of Ysgol y Ffin can develop and work together for the successful achievement of these aims.

School Aims

- To ensure that every child is completely literate and numerate in both Welsh and English and to promote and practise bilingualism.
- To provide a curriculum that enables children to acquire the knowledge and skills that will also serve them through adult life in accordance with national legislation.
- To help every child to be independent, creative and curious by developing the ability to process information, to reason, enquire and evaluate.
- To treat all children as individuals, to give them an equal opportunity and to encourage them to realise their full potential, regardless of gender, religion or race.
- To provide a safe, happy environment that is caring, nurturing and supportive for all in the school.
- To foster a sense of belonging, care and enjoyment in which all pupils have the opportunity to develop good social skills, self-esteem, respect for others, tolerance and self discipline, and in which high standards are encouraged and valued, both at home and in the wider world.
- To develop strong links and foster good relationships with parents and other members of the local and wider community. To work towards a partnership, in recognition that joint resources can be of mutual benefit.

The school's priorities and targets for the current year

5. Promote and raise literacy standards in Welsh across the school.
6. Review and develop strategies for language learning and teaching.
7. Raise awareness and understanding of the key skills and ensure that they are included in planning.
8. Review all curriculum policies.
9. Complete schemes of work and adapt curriculum maps.
10. Review provision for the early years.
11. Audit all resources and order appropriate resources where necessary.
12. Create a School Improvement Plan to include issues arising from the self-valuation process.
13. Address the next step in the process of reducing teachers' workload.
14. Review and adapt discipline procedures and write a discipline policy.

Summary

15. Ysgol y Ffin Primary school promotes a warm, caring family atmosphere where pupils feel secure and valued. Relationships within the school and pupils' behaviour are good and often very good. The school has strong links with parents and the local community. The acting head teacher, who has been in post since September 2004, provides very good leadership. The staff work hard to move the school forward.
16. The judgements of the inspection team, in relation to six of the key questions matched the judgements made by the school in its self evaluation report. The team awarded a higher grade to one question.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

Early Years Subjects and Areas of Learning

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	1
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	2
Physical development	2

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	2	3
English	Not applicable	2
Mathematics	2	2
Science	2	3
Design and technology	3	3
Information technology	4	4
History	1	3
Geography	2	3

Art	3	3
Music	1	2
Physical education	3	2
Religious education	2	3

17. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.
18. While baseline assessments indicate that children entering the school display the full range of abilities, the school notes that the majority have a limited grasp of Welsh. Most pupils from all backgrounds make good progress and achieve standards which are good or where good features outweigh shortcomings in the majority of subjects. There are however important shortcomings in progress and standards achieved in information technology.
19. The majority of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress.
20. The under fives make good progress in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology. Overall, good features outweigh shortcomings in progress and standards achieved in key skills in KS1 and KS2.
21. Progress and standards in bilingual skills are good. Pupils achieve well in relation to age and ability.
22. The majority of pupils are developing a good awareness of their strengths and areas for further development. Most make progress which is at least satisfactory in acquiring new knowledge and skills in the majority of subjects. A significant number make good progress.
23. KS1 teacher assessment results in the core subjects for 2004 show a consistent improvement over the last three years although the Core Stage Indicator (pupils achieving at least level 2 in the three subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science) is below local and national figures. This is the first year that the school has pupils in Y6 and therefore there are no available National Curriculum test results for end of KS2 pupils.
24. The great majority of pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their work and school life in general.
25. Pupils' personal and social development is good and often very good.
26. While most work independently in an appropriate manner, the school has noted this as an area for development.
27. Pupils have a good understanding of equal opportunities and respect diversity.
28. While a very small number of examples of pupils displaying a lack of attention and appropriate responses to teachers were seen, the behaviour of the great

majority in the classrooms and around the school is good and, for the most part, very good. The behaviour of children in the reception class is very good. No instances of bullying or aggressive behaviour were observed during the inspection.

29. Although average attendance is good, at above 94% over the last three terms, family holidays during term time, does have an impact on attendance levels during certain periods of the year. Punctuality is good.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	49%	43%	0%	0%

31. The school exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government target of 50 per cent for good or better teaching.
32. Relationships with pupils are good and often very good and consistent encouragement helps pupils' progress. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring equality of opportunity.
33. Teachers, overall, have a good subject knowledge in the majority of subjects.
34. During the current year there has been a heavy emphasis on ensuring that lessons are well planned, structured and organised. These factors have made significant contributions to the overall quality of the teaching.
35. The more effective lessons develop at a good pace. Teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies and focus effectively on differentiated activities. These lessons meet the linguistic needs of pupils very effectively.
36. In less effective lessons, differentiation is not always sufficient, the pace of lessons is not as effective, teacher pupil interaction is not as well developed and best use is not made of resources.
37. Good use is made of a range of tests, including, the baseline test to identify pupil strengths and areas for development.
38. Good records of pupils' achievements are kept in the core areas and appropriate use is made of pupils' records of achievement folders. Portfolios of levelled work are being developed in some core subjects.
39. In foundation subjects, assessment procedures are at an early stage of development.
40. Evidence gained from on-going assessment does not consistently inform planning in a rigorous enough manner. Marking is generally consistent but it does not always identify ways forward for pupils.

41. Annual reports to parents conform to statutory requirements and are of a good quality.
42. The school, for the most part, provides a broad and balanced curriculum which generally meets legal and course requirements. Children under-five receive stimulating and purposeful learning experiences and are often actively involved in their own learning. Underdevelopment of the outdoor curriculum, however, limits their full learning potential.
43. The recent revision of schemes of work and the head's monitoring have helped ensure that longer term planning ensures opportunities for progression in most subjects. Long term curriculum planning, however, does not always ensure full coverage of the programmes of study in a minority of areas. A scheme of work for information technology (IT) is in the process of being developed.
44. The key skills policy and procedures have secured a more focused attention on their development. Short term planning is very well focused. Lesson aims are clearly identified, key skills are incorporated and differentiated activities noted in detail.
45. The school effectively promotes learners' bilingual skills.
46. The recording and presentation of work in some areas are, however, underdeveloped.
47. There are good opportunities for the development of creative skills in music but these are less well-developed in art. Planning for the development of problem solving skills is satisfactory.
48. The focus on equal opportunity underpins all aspects of school life.
49. Provision is enhanced by rich, first hand experiences and by the good use made of visitors to the school. The school offers a range of extra curricular activities which help enhance the use of Welsh. KS2 pupils learn French. Homework for the most part is appropriately targeted,
50. The focus on personal and social education (PSE) is developing well and acts of collective worship make important contributions to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Pupils have a good awareness of those less fortunate and the school council has decided to sponsor a child in India.
51. Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility for their own actions and help determine school aims and class rules.
52. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is well developed overall and pupils also develop an awareness of other cultures. Good progress is being made in promoting pupils understanding of global citizenship and sustainable development.

53. Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents receive detailed information. The school is interested in parents' views and they seek these as part of the process of self evaluation. Parents are prepared to help and engage in numerous activities.
54. The home -school agreement document meets requirements. While the school prospectus fully conforms with statutory requirements, the governing body (GB) has not presented its annual report to parents for the year 2003-2004.
55. Formal and supportive meetings are held regularly with some nearby schools, Welsh medium schools and the comprehensive school (Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw) to which pupils will transfer.
56. There are a number of opportunities to develop pupils' awareness and respect for their community. Some opportunities linked to the world of work and business have been developed and these have contributed well to learning experiences.
57. This is a very caring school, one in which pupils feel safe, respected and valued. There are very effective and carefully constructed induction arrangements in place. Plans for transferring pupils to the comprehensive school are well developed.
58. An appropriate health and safety policy is effectively implemented. Governors regularly carry out health and safety checks. All staff members are trained in first aid.
59. An appropriate child protection policy is in place and staff have received training in this field. The acting headteacher is the designated responsible person and she is very well supported by a member of the governing body who has expertise in this field.
60. Health education forms part of the PSE programme and is also addressed in science.
61. SEN provision is generally good and complies with the Code of Practice. Early identification of individual need commences with the analysis of the Baseline. While Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are for the most part good, they do contain some inconsistencies.
62. The school promotes high expectations in relation to behaviour and these are constantly discussed. Pupils have been given the responsibility of devising class rules and teachers follow a five step plan of action when pupils' behaviour affects their work and that of others. This is consistently implemented and is very effective. Good behaviour is celebrated.
63. There are effective procedures to address any instances of bullying and oppressive behaviour.

64. The school has an appropriate policy statement and procedures in place to develop pupils understanding of racial equality and diversity.
65. The building needs some adjustments to meet the needs of people, including pupils, with disabilities.
66. Attendance is thoroughly monitored and registers conform with statutory requirements.

Leadership and management

67. There are clear structures for effective and efficient management.
68. The acting head, who is a very good role model as a class teacher, provides very good leadership and gives a clear sense of direction to the life and work of the school. She is well supported by other staff members.
69. Working closely with staff members, she has introduced a number of well-defined procedures to move the school forward. She plays a key role in monitoring. Good use has also been made of LEA support, and plans are in place for curriculum leaders to become more involved in the monitoring process.
70. All staff contribute to priorities and targets. A number of beneficial initiatives are now in place.
71. The school takes good account of national priorities and local partnerships and consortia agreements. The school improvement plan (SIP) is a three-year plan and in the first year the school's aim is to focus on the development of the core areas with the emphasis on pupils' achievements.
72. Performance management is seen as an integral feature of professional and school development. Effective procedures have enabled teachers to benefit from good opportunities for professional development and these have had a positive impact.
73. There are very good links with school governors, who, to a very marked degree, carry out their duties conscientiously and effectively. School governors have a very good understanding of their responsibilities, they carefully monitor the work of the school and contribute to evaluation and strategic management.
74. Day to day routines are effective. The school secretary carries out her duties efficiently.
75. A culture of self- evaluation is well established and there are strong links between the process of self- evaluation and the school improvement plan.
76. A notable strength is that all staff and governors are very much involved in the process of school review. A further important feature is that the school involves parents in the self- evaluation process.

77. During the current year the process of self-evaluation has led to the establishment of a wide range of important initiatives, many of which have already brought about clear improvements.
78. The school makes good use of a range of tests to set realistic targets for pupils. Governors are involved in discussions on target set for pupils.
79. The self-evaluation document produced by the school, prior to the inspection, is an outstanding feature. The document is based on a wide range of evidence. The inspection team agreed, to a very marked extent, with the judgements made by the school in relation to its achievements and areas for development.
80. The school has sufficient qualified teachers for the numbers on roll. All have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and are deployed efficiently and effectively. The learning support assistant, who is a Welsh learner is appropriately deployed.
81. The school has effective procedures for promoting staff development. These experiences have ensured consistency in teaching strategies and contributed to professional development, which reflects the priorities of the SIP.
82. An audit undertaken has led to the acquisition of further resources which has enhanced learning in a number of areas. There are insufficient resources to promote learning through play, both indoors and outdoors, for children under five and for the development of information technology.
83. The size of the classrooms is adequate for the number of pupils, and teachers, for the most part, make good use of the space available. The play area, which includes a grassed area, provides sufficient space for pupils but there are shortcomings in the quality and safety of some parts of the boundary.
84. The school makes optimum use of the funds at its disposal and overall ensures good value for money.

Recommendations

85. In order to move the school forward, the acting head, staff and governing body need to:
 - R1 Raise standards in information technology in both key stages and address identified shortcomings in subjects;
 - R2 Extend the examples of good and very good teaching;
 - R3 Further develop procedures for assessment;
 - R4 Further refine long-term curriculum planning;
 - R5 Adopt a more consistent approach to the presentation of work:

- R6 Ensure that the annual GB report to parents is distributed as soon as possible and that it complies with statutory requirements.
86. The self-evaluation document and school improvement plan include a number of features relating to recommendations 1, 3 and 4 in particular.
87. The governing body is responsible for amending its current improvement plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this 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 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

88. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
89. No lessons were observed in information technology in both key stages. No lessons were observed in art in KS1 and in design and technology in KS2.
90. In lessons observed the standards achieved by pupils were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
3%	56%	41%	0%	0%

91. While baseline assessments indicate that while children entering the school display the full range of abilities, the school notes that the majority have a limited grasp of Welsh.
92. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.
93. Most pupils from all backgrounds make good progress and achieve standards which are good or where good features outweigh shortcomings in the majority of subjects. There are however important shortcomings in progress and standards achieved in information technology.
94. The majority of pupils with SEN make good progress.
95. The under fives make good progress in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology. Overall, good features outweigh shortcomings in progress and standards achieved in the key skills in KS1 and KS2. Progress and standards in speaking and listening are good in Welsh in KS1 and in both languages in KS2. Standards and progress in the key skills of reading for information and writing in a variety of forms across the curriculum are satisfactory.
96. Pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in applying their mathematical skills across the curriculum. There are limited opportunities for the use of information technology in most subjects and progress and standards are unsatisfactory.

97. The successful development of pupils' bilingual skills is a key priority of the school and is very well promoted. Progress and standards are good, with pupils achieving well in relation to their age and ability.
98. Since September 2004, pupils have been set specific targets against which to evaluate their work and the majority are developing a good awareness of their strengths and areas for further development. For the most part, the great majority make progress which is at least satisfactory in acquiring new knowledge and skills. A significant number make good progress.
99. KS1, teacher assessment results in the core subjects for 2004 show a consistent improvement over the last three years. The percentages of pupils achieving at least Level 2 in all three core subjects (Welsh, mathematics and science), are, however, below LEA and national averages. While science results were above LEA and national averages in 2002 and 2003, the 2004 figures show a slight fall although they remained above national averages. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was above the national average for speaking and listening in Welsh, but no pupil achieved this level in mathematics or science in 2004. When compared to schools with a similar background, the figures show the school to be in the lower quartile for Welsh and slightly below the average figure for mathematics and science.
100. This is the first year that the school has pupils in Y6 and therefore there are no available National Curriculum test results for end of KS2 pupils.
101. The great majority of pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their work and school life in general. They show interest and enthusiasm in lessons, focus well on given tasks and concentrate effectively. They listen well to advice and for the most part act upon it. These positive attitudes are important elements in the progress the pupils make in their work.
102. Pupils' personal and social development is good and often very good. They are very considerate and sociable and have a good relationship with each other and with staff; they are courteous and friendly to visitors. While most work independently in an appropriate manner, the school has noted this aspect as an area for development. When given the opportunity, pupils work well in pairs and in groups. Pupils develop a good understanding of moral values such as fairness and consideration; features which they exhibit during the school day.
103. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of equal opportunities; they have a good awareness of people's different traditions and beliefs and that diversity should be respected. They are very much aware of those less fortunate and contribute well to charitable causes.
104. The standard of behaviour of the great majority of pupils in the classrooms and around the school is good and, for the most part, very good. Pupils in the reception class demonstrate very good standards of behaviour. A very small number of incidents involving a lack of attention and appropriate responses to teachers were seen in KS1 and KS2 but these were generally dealt with effectively. Pupils are aware of the school's high expectations in relation to

behaviour. The school has never had cause to exclude a pupil and no instances of bullying or aggressive behaviour were observed during the inspection.

105. Attendance at the school is good and consistently above 94% over the last three terms. However there are instances of family holidays during term time which have an impact on attendance levels at certain periods. Pupils' punctuality is good.
106. Pupils develop an awareness of the nature of the surrounding community and contribute well to a number of local activities.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	49%	43%	0%	0%

109. The school exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government target of 50 per cent for good or better teaching.

110. Teachers work very hard at creating a sensitive, caring atmosphere and relationships with pupils is good and often very good. Pupils' efforts and good work are praised and consistent encouragement helps pupils' progress. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring equality of opportunity.

111. For the most part, teachers provide a stimulating environment with attractive displays of pupils' work, which are conducive to good teaching and learning.

112. Teachers, in the main, have a good subject knowledge in the majority of subjects. In a minority of areas, which include information technology, procedures are in place to enhance their expertise further.

113. During the current year, there has been a very strong emphasis on ensuring that lessons are well planned, structured and organised. These factors have made significant contributions to the overall quality of the teaching. Teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies. Aims are clearly shared with pupils at the beginning and, in the best examples, the extent to which they have been achieved are effectively discussed.

114. The more effective lessons develop at a good pace. Teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies and focus effectively on differentiated activities which are well matched to pupils' needs and levels of development. Other key features of these lessons include imaginative approaches which gain and maintain interest and enthusiasm very effectively, skilled questioning which enable pupils to focus on activities in increasing depth and detail, and well focused interventions to support pupils with their tasks. These lessons meet the linguistic needs of pupils very effectively.

115. In less effective lessons, the focus on differentiation is not always sufficient, the pace of lessons is not as effective, levels of teacher pupil interaction are not always as well developed and best use is not made of resources.
116. There is a well focused, revised policy in place for assessment, recording and reporting which is beginning to be used effectively. Good use is made of a range of tests including the baseline test to identify pupil strengths and areas for development.
117. Teachers keep good records of pupils' achievements in the core areas. Appropriate use is made of pupils' records of achievement folders which contain the results of tests and projected targets.
118. Portfolios of levelled work are being developed in some core subjects.
119. In the foundation subjects and religious education, assessment and recording procedures are at an early stage of development.
120. While assessment opportunities are identified in short term planning, evidence gained from on-going assessment does not consistently inform the next stage of planning in a rigorous enough manner.
121. While the marking of work is generally consistent, it does not always identify ways forward for pupils. In some classes, discussion with pupils helps develop their understanding of their strengths and areas for further development.
122. Annual reports to parents conform to statutory requirements and are of a good quality. They contain evaluative comments about pupils' achievements in all subjects and in relation to their personal and social development. In addition, the reports focus on areas for further development in the core areas.

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

123. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
124. Overall, the school succeeds in meeting pupils' needs and generally provides a broad and balanced curriculum which meets legal and course requirements.
125. Children under five are receiving stimulating and purposeful learning experiences and are often actively involved in their own learning. Underdevelopment of the outdoor curriculum, however, limits their full learning potential.
126. The recent revision of schemes of work and the head's monitoring has helped ensure that longer term planning in most areas ensures opportunities for progression in skills, knowledge and understanding in the majority of subjects. Long term curriculum planning, however, does not ensure full coverage of the programmes of study in a minority of subjects. A scheme of work for information technology is being developed.
127. The policy and procedures for the key skills which has secured a more focused attention on their development. Short term planning is very well focused and provides a good framework for the development of lessons. Lesson aims are clearly identified, key skills are incorporated and differentiated activities noted in detail.
128. The school effectively promotes learners' bilingual skills and at appropriate levels, particularly in KS2; pupils transfer with ease from one language to another in various situations.
129. The recording and presentation of work in the foundation subjects are generally underdeveloped in KS2. The handwriting skills of a significant minority of pupils at the lower end of KS2 are underdeveloped.
130. While good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop creative skills in music, they are less well developed in art. Planning for the development of problem solving skills is satisfactory.
131. The focus on equal opportunity underpins all aspects of school life. The needs of pupils with SEN, are well catered for.
132. Pupils' learning experiences are enhanced by the provision of rich, first hand experiences, both in the locality and further afield. Good use is also made of visitors to the school.

133. The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities and is very much involved in the Urdd movement. Weekly activities involve all teachers and provide good, informal opportunities for pupils to develop and use the Welsh language whilst engaging in, for example, sport and art activities. These are well attended. KS2 pupils also have opportunities to learn French. Homework for the most part, is appropriately targeted.
134. Acts of collective worship make important contributions to pupils' moral and spiritual development. On these occasions, there is a quiet but distinctive spiritual atmosphere in which music plays an important role. Pupils are given very good opportunities for quiet reflection.
135. The focus on PSE is developing well and there are very good opportunities in circle time sessions and assemblies as well as during general classroom activities, to develop caring values.
136. All pupils, including the youngest children, contribute thoughtfully and purposefully to discussions about moral issues such as bullying and the need to take responsibility for helping others. They have a good awareness of those less fortunate. The school council has decided to sponsor a child in India. Pupils demonstrate empathy when they learn about his way of life and think of him as a friend.
137. Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility for their own actions from the time they begin school. They help determine school aims, their class rules and sanctions and rewards, and this ownership contributes positively to the good standards of behaviour. School council members take their responsibilities seriously.
138. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is well developed overall. Pupils also develop an awareness of other cultures and their characteristics, in subjects such as religious education.
139. The school is making good progress in providing pupils with good opportunities to develop their understanding of global citizenship and sustainable development. (Plans are in place to develop these features further).
140. Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents receive detailed information through regular letters. The home-school diaries ensure that parents receive information about their children's learning and well-being. This process makes a positive contribution to relationships.
141. The school is interested in parents' views and they seek these as part of the process of self-evaluation. Parents are prepared to help and engage in numerous activities. A very active Parents Committee raises funds and supports the school.

142. The home school agreement document meets requirements. While the school prospectus fully conforms with statutory requirements, the GB has not presented its annual report to parents for the year 2003-2004.
143. Formal and supportive meetings are held with nearby schools and Welsh-medium schools. The school has received very good support in relation to recent developments in self-assessment. There is a particularly good working relationship with one English-medium school in the county. Pupils have benefited from opportunities to be involved in games activities with pupils from a nearby school. The end of the current academic year will see the first transfer of pupils to the Welsh medium comprehensive school, Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw, and the good relationships that exist will help make the transition a smooth one.
144. The school provides a number of opportunities to develop pupils' awareness and respect for their community. They contribute well to a number of local events and at the same time raise the profile of the Welsh language and culture in the locality. The school is soon to be a centre for Welsh language teaching for adults. There are numerous examples where the locality is used as an effective teaching and learning resource; through, for example, the strong link with the local church.
145. The school has introduced some opportunities linked to the world of work and business which have contributed well to the learning. For example, pupils have talked about their work and have participated in a workshop organised by Education Business Partnership. There are developments underway in partnership with local companies and agencies in relation to re-cycling, which are beginning to contribute to pupils' experiences of sustainable development.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

146. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
147. This is a very caring school, one in which pupils feel safe and respected. The concern teachers show for their pupils is reflected in the pupils' desire to do their best for the staff. The school provides good quality personal support and guidance for pupils. Parents value the opportunity to meet with their children's teachers once a term and the school is open to parents who have particular concerns at all times.
148. New pupils are given ample opportunity to familiarise themselves with the school and every care is taken to ensure that they are confident when they begin. Parents are involved in this process and good relationships are established from the first. Very detailed and carefully constructed induction arrangements are in place for the time before children begin school. Children are very gradually introduced to the elements of more formal learning only after engaging in play activities for some time in the reception class. The school liaises well with the pre-school play group and this facilitates the process of induction.
149. Good preparations for transfer to secondary school begin when pupils visit the school and participate in the Christmas concert. This is followed by further visits and arrangements have been made for secondary pupils in Y7 to come to the school to introduce themselves to Y6 pupils.
150. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy which is effectively implemented. Members of the governing body regularly visit to carry out health and safety checks. All staff members are trained in first aid.
151. A child protection policy which is based on the "Whole-Wales Framework for Child Protection" is in place and staff have received training in this field. The acting headteacher is the designated person responsible and she is very well supported by a member of the governing body who has expertise and takes an active interest in this field.
152. The promotion of health education forms part of the PSE programme and is also addressed in subjects such as science.
153. SEN provision is generally good and complies with the Code of Practice. Early identification of individual needs is effective and begin with the analysis of the Baseline Assessments. This is also used to group children in order that their needs are best met. The success of this strategy is demonstrated by the progress of pupils. Annual, standardised tests ensure that the process of screening is continuous.

154. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for pupils with SEN contain short-term, realistic targets which are appropriately challenging and well matched to learners' particular needs. They identify suitable teaching strategies including multi-sensory approaches. There are, however, some inconsistencies in the IEPs; exit criteria are not always identified and they do not include monitoring details.
155. Pupils with SEN are well supported in class by their teachers. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that effective use is made of all the SEN resources within the school and provides teachers with information sheets which outline supportive teaching strategies which can be used to meet the special needs of pupils.
156. The school promotes high expectations in relation to behaviour and these are constantly discussed with pupils. Good behaviour is celebrated. Pupils have opportunities to discuss and decide on class rules which are clearly displayed on classroom walls. During the year a new behaviour policy has been introduced which is very thorough and comprehensive. The policy is introduced through effective in-service sessions and new strategies are consistently implemented across the school. The teachers for the most part, deal well and often very well with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
157. There are effective procedures in place to address any instances of bullying and oppressive behaviour. These issues are addressed in appropriate contexts within the classroom and are focused on with sensitivity and empathy during whole school assemblies.
158. Pupils have been given the responsibility of devising their own class rules and sanctions which promote good discipline and teachers follow a five step plan of action when pupils' behaviour affects their work and that of others. This is consistently implemented.
159. The school has an appropriate policy statement and procedures in place to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of racial equality. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' awareness and understanding of diversity.
160. While there are no disabled people in school at the moment, the building needs some adjustments in order to meet appropriately the needs of people with disabilities.
161. The school thoroughly monitors the attendance of pupils. Registers conform to statutory requirements.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

162. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
163. There are clear structures for effective and efficient management.
164. The acting headteacher, is a very good role model as a class teacher. She provides very good leadership and gives a clear sense of direction to the life and work of the school. She ensures that the school provides equality of opportunity for all and that the aims of the school are clearly reflected in its work. She is well supported by other staff members.
165. The acting head has a very clear vision for the future of the school. Working closely with staff members and governors, she has introduced a number of well defined procedures to move the school forward. She plays a key role in monitoring a number of aspects of school life including weekly planning and the quality of teaching. Good use has also been made of LEA expertise in this context. Curriculum leaders are becoming more involved in the monitoring process.
166. All staff contribute to priorities and targets. A number of beneficial initiatives are now in place. These include effective planning of teaching and learning strategies, the adoption of a consistent approach to ensuring good behaviour, the acquisition of appropriate resources and the development of an effective learning environment.
167. The school takes good account of national priorities and local partnerships and consortia agreements. The school improvement plan (SIP) is a detailed and valuable document and is based on a careful analysis of the needs of the school. The document clearly outlines priorities and targets, specific objectives, actions to be taken, time scales, monitoring and evaluation procedures and financial obligations. The whole document focuses on a three year plan. More details are provided for first year priorities where the school's aim is to focus on the development of the core areas with the emphasis on pupils' achievements. A more detailed time-scale is included for these features and procedures are in place to monitor developments.
168. Performance management is seen as an integral feature of professional and school development, and appropriate procedures are in place. Staff members have clear job descriptions which outline their roles and responsibilities. Effective procedures have enabled teachers to benefit from good opportunities

for professional development and these have had a very positive impact on the quality of the education provided.

169. There are very good links with school governors who have a very good understanding of their responsibilities. To a very marked extent, they carry out their duties conscientiously and effectively. They are very enthusiastic and hard working in their promotion of the school. They receive good quality information about aspects of school life on a half-termly basis. This generally includes an on-going evaluation of developments to date. Health and safety issues are regular features of agendas.
170. Governors play an active role in the management of the school. As individuals and as a body they carefully monitor its work and contribute to assessment and to evaluation and strategic management. They have been very much part of the recent very effective self- evaluation exercise.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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171. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report as the school judged this key question as Grade 2.
172. A culture of self evaluation has been very well established and there are strong links between the process of self evaluation and the school development plan. The school has been very successful in establishing procedures which are comprehensive, systematic and which are based on clear evidence.
173. Self-evaluation and the drive towards continuous improvement are very strong features of the school, particularly in relation to forming secure judgements about standards and the quality of education provided. A particularly notable strength is that all staff and governors are very much involved in the process of school review and the development and monitoring of whole-school priorities set out in SIP. A further significant feature is that the school involves parents in the self-evaluation process.
174. The monitoring role of the acting head is a crucial element in the process as are the contributions made by LEA advisers' reports.
175. During the current year, the process of self evaluation has led to the establishment of a wide range of important initiatives, many of which have already brought about clear improvements.
176. The school makes good use of teacher assessments, standardised tests and teacher expertise to identify specific weaknesses and to set realistic targets for pupils. The governors are made fully aware of benchmarking statistics, the main findings of the analysis of results and are involved in discussions of targets set by teachers.
177. The self-evaluation document produced by the school prior to the inspection is an outstanding feature. The document is concise and clear and offers a very good range of relevant information and a detailed analysis of all aspects of school life. There is a clear identification of priorities and areas for development as well as what has already been achieved. All aspects of the evaluation relate to specific features of supporting evidence, which was made available to the inspection team.
178. The inspection team agreed to a very marked extent with the school's identification of its achievements and areas for development.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

179. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
180. The school has sufficient qualified and experienced teachers for the numbers on roll. All have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and the headteacher deploys them efficiently in order to make the best use of time, expertise and experience.
181. The learning support assistant employed for the under fives is learning Welsh. She is well deployed outside the classroom undertaking tasks prepared for her by the Reception teacher. In addition to this, she supports the staff by preparing resources, setting up equipment and mounting displays. This makes the best use of her support. The school secretary makes a significant contribution to school administration and the school functions effectively from day to day.
182. The school has effective procedures for promoting staff development. The majority of the Inset of late has been school-based and led by the headteacher and LEA advisory staff. This has ensured, in particular, consistency in teaching strategies and other features which reflect the priorities of the SDP. Training has also included opportunities to increase staff expertise further in fields such as information technology.
183. An audit conducted during the Autumn term has led to the prioritising of the purchase of a range of appropriate resources which has enhanced the quality of work in a number of subjects. Resources have been labelled and re-sited and are accessible to all pupils. These initiatives have established a strong foundation for further development; the school has, for example, identified necessary resources for the development of information technology. The inspection team identified insufficient resources to promote learning through play, both indoors and outdoors, for children under five.
184. Accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and the curriculum provided. The condition of the main building is satisfactory. The manner in which the hall is arranged, however, does impose some restrictions on physical education activities. Staff enhance the internal appearance by mounting attractive displays of pupils' work which celebrate their achievements. The school buildings are very clean and tidy, well maintained and effectively used. The play area, which includes a grassed area, provides sufficient space for pupils, but there are shortcomings in the quality and safety of some parts of the boundary.
185. The school manages its budget to obtain optimum value for money. Spending during the current academic year has reflected the specific priorities identified. Additional funding has been successfully sought from different sources and is

well used to enhance pupils' learning. Effective use has been made of The Better Schools Fund (GEST).

186. The acting head teacher and the finance committee of the governing body, supported by the Primary Support Officer, monitor budget spending regularly. Overall, the school ensures good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

187. The children's fluency in the Welsh language is developing well. As a result of the high expectations and the constant encouragement of the teacher they speak in Welsh, both to adults and to one another while engaged in play. Stimulating teaching and appropriate first-hand experiences, such as pegging clothes on washing lines in different places around the school to discover where they dry best, ensure that they acquire rich language. They use the Welsh language to express themselves using correct syntax when they ask and answer questions, when they respond to stories and rhymes and when they speak about their experiences and feelings. They demonstrate good understanding when they follow instructions from a tape and some are able to use higher order linguistic devices such as humour. The wide range of teaching strategies used, such as puppets giving instructions and hunts for letters, ensure that the children have a good understanding of the purposes of writing. Most express opinions confidently and maintain fluency by seeking alternative ways of expressing themselves when they do not know the Welsh term. They enjoy listening to stories and actively seek opportunities to browse through the books.

Shortcomings

188. Basic mark-making is underdeveloped before children engage in formal writing activities. Children's abilities to engage in role play is underdeveloped.

Personal and Social Development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

189. The children's confidence and self-esteem are very good. They ask for information when necessary and perceive the needs of others and help them. For instance, they help one another to fasten coats and shoes without being prompted. They undress themselves competently, turning their clothes the correct way in order to make dressing easier and make every attempt to dry their feet and put on their tights, socks and shoes with minimal assistance. Children take responsibility for their own possessions such as physical education equipment, which they fetch and return to its rightful place. They welcome new experiences and participate in them with great enthusiasm. They like and value one another and behave towards adults and other children with

great courtesy and respect. They understand that they are special both in their teacher's perception and in their own right and can talk about each other's particular qualities. The children maintain their concentration well, both in class and whole school situations and contribute enthusiastically to discussions in assembly led by staff and such visitors as the local parish priest. They perform very well before an audience, wait patiently for their turn and are clearly appreciative of the efforts of others.

Mathematical Development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

190. The children are beginning to develop fundamental mathematical concepts about shape, numeracy and measurement. They demonstrate their understanding through their accurate use of appropriate mathematical language when comparing objects and when given appropriately contextualised tasks. These include: standing in a line in correct numerical order; giving out milk and engaging actively in number rhymes, songs and stories which contain mathematical concepts. Their understanding of the purpose of money and the way in which it is used are well - developed in purposeful role play contexts where the teacher scaffolds their learning very well. Children's concept of pattern is developed in this and other areas of learning by means of purposeful activities.

Shortcomings

191. Children's skills of mark-making as the basis of the symbol system of numeracy is under-developed. Children's ability to sort objects according to criteria is underdeveloped.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

192. The children have a basic understanding of how different people spend their day and the variety of places in which people live, including both rural and urban settings. They have a good understanding of the seasons and their characteristics which is developed through first-hand experiences such as going outside in the snow, exploring its properties and talking about them and keeping a record of the weather and discussing changes. Their concept of time is good and is reinforced by the interest they display when they investigate old artefacts and discuss and compare them. The responsibility they are given enables them to make decisions and to solve problems which arise with minimal adult intervention. They are actively involved in their own learning and find out information for themselves, with appropriate adult support. They are solicitous of the environment of the school and enjoy planting and watering the flowers

because they make the school look attractive. They understand the importance of re- cycling rubbish and place waste in bins, designated for this purpose.

Shortcomings

193. Children's ability to select from a range of materials is limited. Their use of a variety of information sources is underdeveloped.

Physical Development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

194. Children move their bodies confidently and demonstrate good control and co-ordination when responding to the teacher's instructions and chosen stimuli. They enjoy using their bodies to create different movements and patterns which they do un-selfconsciously, making full and imaginative use of space. Their fine and gross manipulative skills are developing well as a result of the range of opportunities in this and other areas of learning, which they enjoy, such as drawing, cutting, gluing and dance. Their ability to co-ordinate movements is enhanced by their understanding of positional language and they derive pleasure from experimenting with a variety of ways of controlling their bodies.

Shortcomings

195. Children's development of physical skills is limited because outdoor play is underdeveloped.

Creative Development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

196. The children's progress in the musical aspect of this area of learning is very good. They enunciate well when they sing, responding to the hand signals of both teachers and other pupils to make their singing expressive in terms of dynamics and sensitive in its interpretation of the words. They enjoy playing percussion and have very good musical skills, for example: they can maintain a steady beat while pupils from other classes sing to another rhythm. They are familiar with the term 'ostinato.' Children perform confidently, demonstrating evident enjoyment, and they listen appreciatively to the performances of others. They interpret music with the teacher and respond to it creatively with their bodies during dance. Children are eager to discuss their own and their friends' performances and articulate their responses effectively. They enjoy drawing, painting and modelling and have produced some observational representations of a good standard using oil pastels and charcoal. They admire and comment on one another's work with sensitivity.

Shortcomings

197. Children's ability to experimenting with a wide range of media and to make choices about which to select are limited. Pupils' creative skills when engaging in role play are under-developed.

Welsh

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

Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

198. Most KS1 pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and reach good standards. They listen very well to stories, instructions and presentations and the majority develop and use sentence patterns effectively. They ask and answer questions or contribute to discussions effectively, when they focus, for example on features of poems including rhyming words.
199. The majority of pupils across KS1 make good progress in reading and in general read accurately with good levels of understanding. They have a good awareness of the differences between fiction and non-fiction and discuss features on the covers of books with confidence. They use contents and index pages confidently.
200. Pupils throughout KS1 make good progress in writing. By the end of the key stage, the majority are developing well as independent writers. They make good progress in their use of punctuation, including capital letters and full stops as they write descriptions, imaginary diaries, advertisements, stories and letters.
201. Across KS2, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. The achievement of pupils, at the upper end of the key stage, who have only been learning Welsh for about three and a half years, is particularly good. They demonstrate their skills well when they focus, for example, on the structure and features of instructional writing. They use conjunctions well in their oral work.
202. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in reading at the lower end of KS2. The progress of a significant minority is good and they read accurately and with a good level of understanding. Achievement in reading is good at the upper end of the school. Across the key stage, pupils demonstrate a good awareness of how to gather information from factual books, and they use dictionaries and thesauruses well. The comprehension skills of most pupils develop in a satisfactory manner across the key stage and reach good levels in Y5 and Y6.
203. The writing skills of the majority of pupils across the key stage are satisfactory and in a minority of cases they are good. Pupils make progress which is at least satisfactory in their punctuation skills and by the latter part of the key stage, pupils use paragraphs appropriately in their written work. Pupils at the upper end of the key stage are developing good skills in drafting and redrafting their

stories and make good use of the word processor in this context. They demonstrate a good awareness of the structure of a story.

- 204. Across KS2, pupils write for an appropriate range of purposes which include self portraits stories, diary accounts, instructions, responses to poetry and letters.
- 205. Pupils' handwriting skills are satisfactory overall with good examples at the end of KS2

Shortcomings

- 206. The reading skills of a minority of pupils in KS1 and in the lower part of KS2 are underdeveloped.
- 207. A minority of lower KS2 pupils demonstrate a limited grasp of the conventions of writing.
- 208. Across the key stage, the majority of pupils' skills of writing in an extended manner are underdeveloped.
- 209. The handwriting and presentation skills of some younger KS2 pupils are in need of further development.

English

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

- 210. English is introduced formally at the beginning of KS2.

Good features

- 211. Pupils listen well and enjoy hearing both prose and poetry being read. They recall and recount what they have been told. Older pupils in the key stage listen carefully to each other and use well-reasoned arguments to extend their ideas in group discussions.
- 212. Pupils speak clearly and confidently. They express their ideas fluently and enjoy contributing to class discussions. Towards the end of KS2, pupils speak confidently and express themselves articulately in subjects across the curriculum. They use well-developed vocabulary which is appropriate for audience, form and purpose and are confident in their use of subject-specific vocabulary such as 'suffixes,' 'ellipses' and 'adverbs.'
- 213. Pupils read with increasing confidence as they progress through the school. Reading is generally accurate, fluent and demonstrates appropriate expression. Pupils also read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. They make sensible predictions about the outcome of a story and make good progress in using texts to infer and deduce. At the upper end of KS2, pupils are proficient

readers who have developed tastes for different authors and genres of writing including poetry.

214. Pupils' comprehension skills are well developed. They read with understanding and extract accurate information from texts and other sources, recording their findings appropriately.
215. By the end of the key stage, pupils can write at considerable length and have a very good understanding of the different conventions of writing. They organise their work into paragraphs which are correctly punctuated and use the grammatical constructions on which they have completed exercises in the course of their writing. For example, they make correct and effective use of connectives, adverbs and dialogue.
216. Older pupils make good progress in planning, drafting and re-drafting their written work and check their spellings using dictionaries. Their handwriting is good and their work is well presented and demonstrates attention to detail.

Shortcomings

217. The reading of a number of pupils at the lower end of KS2 is limited in terms of expression.
218. Some pupils at the lower end of the key stage make insufficient progress in their writing.

Mathematics

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

Good features

219. In KS1, pupils reach good standards in their understanding of number and money. They effectively differentiate between even and odd numbers and add and subtract accurately. Across the key stage, pupils develop a good facility for mental calculation. By the end of the key stage, the majority have a good grasp of 2, 5 and 10 times tables and a good understanding of halves and fractions.
220. Pupils have a good grasp of two dimensional shapes and their properties and develop a good awareness of three dimensional shapes and their properties. The majority are able to create simple graphs relating for example to personal features. Most Y2 pupils interpret graphs in an effective manner. Most pupils develop a good understanding of time in half hour intervals while many Y2 pupils focus well on quarter hours and are beginning to note the relationship between analogue and digital times.
221. In KS2, most younger pupils use hundreds tens and units effectively. They experiment with different ways of multiplying and dividing. They have a good

understanding of time in five minute intervals and are developing an awareness of the relationship between analogue and digital times.

222. Pupils develop a good understanding of regular and irregular polygrams and area and perimeter. They are beginning to use frequency tables and compass directions. They measure accurately in centimetres.
223. Y5 and Y6 demonstrate a good grasp of mathematical vocabulary. They have a good understanding of the relationship between decimals and fractions. They focus well on number problems. They create and analyse graphs effectively and have a good grasp of concepts such as median and range.
224. Across the key stage, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of two and three dimensional shapes and their properties and focus well on the concepts of reflection and symmetry. Older pupils understanding of these features is particularly well developed.
225. Pupils at the upper end of KS2 demonstrate a good understanding of the variety of triangle types and measure angles effectively.

Shortcomings

226. The multiplication skills of a minority of younger KS2 pupils are underdeveloped.

Science

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

Good features

227. Pupils in all classes demonstrate positive attitudes towards the subject.
228. Pupils in KS1 develop a good understanding of the conditions which enable plants and flowers to grow in the most effective manner.
229. They effectively categorise a range of materials according to various criteria. The majority of pupils are beginning to develop good investigative skills as they investigate which material is best for ensuring that garden furniture is kept dry. Older pupils in particular experiment well with different types of surfaces to see which restricts most effectively the speed of toy cars. They describe the experiments in an appropriate manner.
230. KS1 pupils are aware of the uses of electricity in everyday life and also of its dangers. Through experimenting, they understand that there needs to be a complete circuit before a bulb linked to a battery provides light. Pupils are aware that magnets come in different forms, sizes and strengths and that they repel as well as attract objects. They are aware of the uses of magnets in every day life.

The majority of older pupils demonstrate good skills as they investigate objects to see if they are magnetic.

231. Younger KS2 pupils demonstrate appropriate investigative skills as they focus on the contribution of light to plant and flower growth. They show appropriate prediction skills and develop a sound grasp of the concept of friction as they investigate the effects of different types of footwear on slippery surfaces. They present their findings in table form.
232. Across the key stage, pupils develop a good understanding of features relating to electricity. The majority of pupils make good use of their knowledge of circuits as they discover which objects are the best conductors of electricity. Older pupils in particular make good use of symbols in their presentation of work in this context.
233. Pupils develop a good understanding of solids liquids and gases. Older focus well on the weight of gases in different circumstances and with the manner in which water vapour is formed. They are beginning to experiment with ways of separating different solids. They present their findings effectively in graph form.
234. Across the key stage, pupils' skills of planning investigations are developing in a satisfactory manner. Younger pupils, for example, demonstrate an understanding of the importance of a fair test as they discover the time in which it takes for various food items to melt and the factors that contribute to teeth decay. Older pupils are beginning to evaluate how experiments can be improved.

Shortcomings

235. The skills of the majority of KS2 pupils in planning investigations are underdeveloped.
236. The independent investigative skills of the majority are limited.
237. They make limited use of IT equipment in their work.

Design and technology

Key Stage 1 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

238. No lessons were observed in KS2. Evidence was obtained from scrutinising pupils end products, their planning and evaluation sheets and from talking to pupils.

Good features

239. Across KS1, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the planning process in their focus on creating Christmas cards with moving parts. They

identify key features to consider and create end products of a good quality. Their skills of evaluating their work are satisfactory overall.

240. They generate interesting ideas in their preparation for making fruit salads and discuss their ideas effectively and arrive at relevant decisions. They demonstrate a good awareness of the importance of cleanliness. They follow instructions carefully and demonstrate good skills in using different utensils, for example, to extract juice from fruits. The finished products are attractively arranged and pupils discuss difficulties encountered in an appropriate manner.
241. The majority of pupils in KS2 demonstrate a satisfactory grasp of the planning process as they focus on creating packages for various purposes. They investigate various types of packages and experiment with different types of paper and card as they focus on features such as strength and suitability for purpose. They discuss reasons for their particular choice. End products are, generally, of a good quality and these are evaluated in relation to the specific purpose of the task.
242. Across the key stage, pupils have experimented with various types of levers as part of their work in creating story books with moving parts. Different groups of pupils have focused on various parts of the story and throughout the process, they have considered how to ensure that their levers are effective in moving various characters at appropriate times. The majority of finished products are of a good quality.

Shortcomings

243. In both key stages, pupils' skills of using control technology are underdeveloped.
244. Pupils in both key stages work with a limited range of tools and resources.
245. The planning and evaluating skills of the majority of pupils in both key stages are underdeveloped.

Information technology

Key Stage 1 Grade 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Key Stage 2 Grade 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

246. No information technology lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from observing individuals using computers, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of work they had produced.

Good features

247. In KS1, pupils use the word processor accurately to produce pieces of writing.
248. The majority are developing satisfactory skills of using the mouse to move items from one part of the screen to another.

249. Pupils use information technology programmes in a satisfactory manner to support their work in art, language and mathematics.
250. Pupils in both key stages use the digital camera appropriately.
251. Younger KS2, pupils demonstrate satisfactory word processing skills.
252. Older pupils demonstrate good word processing skills and make good use of these skills to draft and redraft their work.
253. When given the opportunity, pupils across the key stage make satisfactory use of the internet and CD-ROMs to gather information in different subjects.

Shortcomings

254. In both key stages, pupils use the computer for a limited range of purposes and this constrains the development of their skills.
255. The majority of KS1 pupils demonstrate limited skills in opening, editing, printing and saving text.
256. In KS1, pupils' skills of feeding data to form simple graphs are limited.
257. In both key stages, pupils' modelling skills and use of graphic programs are underdeveloped.
258. In KS2, pupils have limited skills in using simple databases to store and check information before entering it to produce graphs.
259. The majority of KS2 pupils demonstrate limited skills in editing text by varying the fonts and size of print and by copying, cutting and pasting.
260. KS2 pupils' skills of using electronic mail are limited.

History

- Key Stage 1** Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good and outstanding features

261. Pupils in KS1 have a very good sense of chronology and understand how children's lives in the past were different to their lives. They demonstrate a secure knowledge of historical terms such as 'slawer dydd' and 'amser maith yn ol' which they use correctly when speaking about the past. They are able to place both artefacts and events in accurate chronological order.

262. Pupils have explored a variety of sources of evidence and made comparisons between old and new things which they speak about with confidence and enthusiasm. They have drawn and photographed old and modern houses in the locality of the school and the language of the younger pupils and writing of the older demonstrates a secure understanding of the differences between the characteristics of each. Following a visit to a toy workshop, pupils have played with, drawn and written about old toys and can answer questions about them and form opinions about which are most effective to play with. They know the history of the teddy bear in detail and enjoy telling others about it. They compare and old teddy bear with their own contemporary Tedi Hafren.
263. Pupils have a good knowledge of historical figures and significant events in Wales. They have discussed and written about the life of Jane Pritchard, her toys, her home and the type of clothes she wore. They also develop an awareness of the lives of the servants who worked in her home. Their knowledge of Esgob William Morgan and his translation of the Bible into Welsh is outstanding. They note the year in which the task was accomplished, they are aware of the language from which the Bible was translated and they understand the significance of its impact on the Welsh language at the time and since. Their knowledge of aspects of the cultural history of Wales is good and they describe in detail, for example ways in which New Years Day was celebrated in the past.
264. Pupils' ability to communicate their knowledge and understanding of the past through a variety of ways is very well developed.
265. In KS2, pupils know that the past can be divided into distinct periods of time. They make accurate use of the terms BC and AD.
266. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of life in Wales during Roman times. They are aware of why the Romans came to Wales, where they came from and their work as road builders.
267. Pupils have developed a good awareness of the way of life of both wealthy and poor Romans through first hand experiences during a visit to the museum at Caerleon. They write about how Roman children dressed, the nature of their schooling and materials they used for writing. They understand terms such as stylus and scroll. They focus on Roman soldiers of different ranks and have examined Roman armour and labelled diagrams indicating accurately what soldiers wore. They have written about how wealthy Romans bathed themselves.
268. The majority of pupils understand why the Romans built forts and their importance to the occupiers. They are aware of why the fort was established at Isca. Pupils have examined plans of the fort and the amphitheatre and are aware of which materials were used. They accurately describe life in the barracks at the time.
269. Pupils at the end of the key stage have a good knowledge of the reasons for the emigration of Welsh people to Patagonia in 1865. They have found information

and written about “The Mimosa”, how long the journey took how many passengers she carried, and where they settled.

Shortcomings

- 270. KS2 pupils’ knowledge and understanding of features relating to other periods such the Tudor/Stuart period and in particular aspects of Welsh history during that period, are underdeveloped.
- 271. KS2 pupils’ skills of using a range of different types of historical sources are underdeveloped.
- 272. The skills of the majority of pupils in communicating their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways are limited.

<h2>Geography</h2>

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

Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

- 273. In KS1, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the location of the school. They know what kind of place Sudbrook is and they express simple opinions about local features and the use made of the land. They talk about their journey to school, identifying buildings and features on a map. They can identify Sudbrook on a map of Wales and point out the border between Wales and England. They understand the geographical significance of the name of the school, that is, ‘the border.’
- 274. Pupils have a good first hand knowledge of the locality of the school which they have explored in detail. They can identify significant landmarks on a map of the locality correctly. They are aware of why people came to live in the area and how the development of such local industries as the pumping station led to the building of houses to accommodate them. They have discussed the name of the street in which the school is located, namely ‘Sea View,’ and understand the changes which have obscured the view of the sea.
- 275. They can identify, on a map, the towns and villages in which they live in both England and Wales and many older pupils can write their addresses accurately. Pupils can trace their journey to school from home and the journey from the local church to the school on a map and they enjoy speaking about these using appropriate directional terms.
- 276. Pupils can identify the main geographical characteristics of the interior of the school from photographs and can solve contextualised geographical problems such as finding the shortest route to the secretary’s office. They have made simple maps of the school from what they have seen and speak about them confidently.

277. They understand that care for the environment is exceptionally important and are aware of the importance of re-cycling materials. They take responsibility for this daily when they place waste in appropriate bins to be re-cycled.
278. In KS2, pupils are developing their use of geographical terms. In their focus on a map of the locality, they make appropriate use of grid references and co-ordinates. They can locate a range of features on the map and can interpret symbols using a key. They are aware of the points of the compass and use them correctly when giving the position of features on the map.
279. Pupils are developing a good knowledge of the locality and can identify geographical features such as the estuary. They understand the importance of the Severn Bridge to the economy of both Wales and Sudbrook itself. They understand how geographical features attracted people to live in the area and have explored the names of the towns and villages. Having noted the number of places beginning with the word 'Caer', they have investigated the number of forts which were established in the area.
280. KS2 pupils have compared Wales with Patagonia in terms of landscape and have identified similarities and differences. They have enjoyed listening to a visitor who has spent some time in Patagonia and have written about features of the country such as food, dress, language, customs and climate. They have a good knowledge of the wildlife which inhabit the country.
281. They discovered background information about aspects of the life of a part of India where they sponsor a child.

Shortcomings

282. In both key stages pupils' knowledge of a contrasting locality in Wales or the United Kingdom is under developed.
283. KS2, pupils' mapping and fieldwork skills are underdeveloped.
284. The majority of pupils in KS2 demonstrate limited skills of recording information in a variety of ways.

Art

- Key Stage 1** Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

285. Pupils in key stage 1 have experimented with different elements of art including: line; colour; pattern and texture. They have produced oil pastel portraits of a good standard, pencil sketches of houses in the locality, old toys and fruit drawn from observation. They take care with their work.

286. They have explored the textures of different surfaces in and around the school and made rubbings of them. Having experimented with a wide selection of different materials, pupils decided which best represented these textures as they created an attractive collage of the school.
287. Pupils make preliminary sketches of their ideas before creating representational images. For example, they draw and experiment with different colours before they make individual collages.
288. Pupils know about the work and techniques of artists such as Monet and Van Gogh. They have made good use of Monet's work to create particular effects with colour in which they demonstrate how they use their developing knowledge of colour, texture and form.
289. In KS2, pupils have looked at patterns in their environment and made rubbings and sketches from observation of such features as: different surfaces both natural and man-made. They have developed these techniques to create an effective collage of a Roman mosaic.
290. They have explored pattern by using different materials for printing effectively, for example, sponges, common objects and printing tiles. They have examined the patterning techniques used by a Welsh quilter, Jen Jones and have produced designs for their own quilt patterns.
291. Pupils have made appropriate preliminary drawings of sculptures and have started to develop their three-dimensional skills by creating models from plasticine and clay. A number of attractive end products have been produced.
292. Across the key stage, KS2 pupils have produced oil pastel portraits of a good standard.

Shortcomings

293. In both key stages, pupils' three-dimensional work in art is insufficiently developed.
294. KS1 and KS2 pupils' development in relation to focusing on a broad range of representational experiences is limited.
295. In both key stages, pupils' knowledge of the work of Welsh artists is underdeveloped, as is their knowledge of art from other cultures.
296. In KS2, pupils' abilities to record from observation and to develop their art skills and techniques in sketchbooks are limited.

Music

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

Good and outstanding features

297. Pupils in KS1 sing tunefully with good diction and vary the tempo and expression of their singing according to the hand signals given by other pupils. They are enthusiastic and natural performers who enjoy listening to each other and performing for audiences.
298. Pupils respond to a range of opportunities to practise their music skills, for example, they sing in response to the teacher when answering the register and respond to hand signals in lessons. They use tuned percussion instruments to create high and low sounds and can copy and continue increasingly complex musical patterns. Most Y2 pupils participate in recorder lessons. They understand and appreciate the importance of silences and how these can enhance the performance of a piece of music. They work well in pairs following one another's signals to create music.
299. Pupils use their voices, body parts and non-percussion instruments very well to produce sound and to keep a steady beat. They demonstrate an outstanding ability to hold a tune in a simple part song and at the same time maintain a beat using percussion instruments while other pupils sing to a different beat. They know and understand the term 'ostinato.'
300. They read and play or sing simple musical notation and interpret music well. They identify some composers and make very good attempts to evaluate the music to which they listen. They enjoy and listen intently to one another's performances and make insightful comments about what they hear.
301. In KS2, following a visit to a music workshop, pupils can name a wide range of non-percussion and percussion instruments. They understand how pitch, dynamics and pace can influence the expression of a piece of music and can give and follow hand signals effectively during performances.
302. They are willing and confident performers who take pride in their presentations. They listen well to each other and evaluate their own and the work of others, describing sensitively what they like about the work.
303. Pupils sing tunefully with controlled breathing, good posture and clear diction. They sing to a good standard both with and without accompaniment. They understand pulse, rhythm, tempo, pitch and dynamics.

304. All pupils have opportunities to receive recorder and string instrument lessons, a feature which have been recently introduced. They enjoy these and participate enthusiastically in concerts and eisteddfodau. These experiences contribute positively to their musical experiences and the standards achieved in singing.

Shortcomings

305. Pupils' skills of composing in KS2 are under-developed.

Physical education

Key Stage 1 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

306. During the inspection, gymnastic lessons were observed in both key stages.
307. The school notes that pupils experience the full range of the PE programmes of study. Y3 and Y4 pupils have weekly swimming lessons throughout the year and pupils make good progress in relation to their swimming skills

Good features

308. At appropriate levels, pupils in KS1 and KS2 demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of warm up and cooling down sessions for their heart and muscles and carry out these activities appropriately. They use space appropriately and are aware of the importance of safety elements. In both key stages, pupils are developing the skills of collecting aspects of apparatus and placing them carefully in various parts of the hall.
309. In KS1, the majority of pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills of balancing on benches using different parts of their bodies. They experiment appropriately with different ways of jumping and landing. The skills of a minority are good.
310. KS2 pupils focus well as they demonstrate good skills of jumping, rolling and in taking their weight on their hands in different ways. They use benches and mats well in their floor work. They demonstrate that their skills of evaluating their own performances and those of others to further improve skills are developing well.

Shortcomings

311. Pupils in KS1 demonstrate limited skills in evaluating their own performance and that of others in order to improve their skills further.

Religious education

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

Key Stage 2 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

312. Pupils in both key stages develop a good grasp of a range of Bible stories and, at appropriate levels, are able to draw out moral messages relating to a number of them.
313. KS1 pupils make good use of a church visit to identify key features of the building and their significance. They have a good awareness of a number of Christian artefacts and record their findings well, making good use of pictures. They focus well on aspects of Christianity which deal with the less fortunate. They demonstrate a good awareness of the importance of the Bible to Christians and of William Morgan's contribution to Christianity in Wales.
314. They focus well on the story of Moses and make good use of a range of artefacts to enhance their knowledge of the Jewish religion. They are aware of the role of the Rabbi and demonstrate a good understanding of various features of a synagogue, noting, for example, where the Torah is kept and the different worshipping places of men and women.
315. Pupils in KS2 demonstrate a good knowledge of features relating to the Easter period. They are aware of the events of the Last Supper and a minority relate these events to the celebration of Holy Communion.
316. Following a church visit, they demonstrate an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the significance of key features relating to the inside of the place of worship.
317. They are beginning to develop an appropriate knowledge of features relating to the Hindu religion, including Hindu symbols and festivals. They are aware of the story of Rama and Sita and its relationship with the celebration of Divali.

Shortcomings

318. KS2 pupils' skills of using artefacts to enhance their understanding of religious features are underdeveloped.
319. The majority of KS2 pupils demonstrate a limited knowledge of a range of religious traditions and practices.
320. Their skills of communicating their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways are limited.

School's response to the inspection

321. After carefully considering the outcomes of the recent Estyn inspection, we conclude that they very fairly and accurately reflect the work and daily life of the school. Observations and judgements made by the inspection team, in relation to six of the key questions, were in accordance with those made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The team awarded a higher grade to one question.
322. Throughout, the inspection was thorough, rigorous and fair. At all times the school "nominee" was fully involved in all aspects of the process. Discussion between the inspection team and the staff offered opportunity for constructive advice and consideration of improvement strategies for the future.
323. We are pleased that the inspection team has recognised that the school's self evaluation report is of a high standard. The document was thoroughly discussed and credit was given to the process of involving all sections of the school community in the drawing up of the document. Many of the strengths of our school have been acknowledged, whilst recommendations for future developments have been clearly identified and set out. The report confirms that the school achieves one of its core values, set out in its mission statement, to create a happy school environment where the children are cared for sensitively. The inspectors recognised our pupils' good behaviour and acknowledged the valuable role parents play in the life of the school.
324. Since the inspection, the governors have addressed the question of the parents' annual meeting and the shortcomings in some parts of the boundary.
325. We are confident that we can effectively address the important areas for development that have been identified. Shortcomings identified in the report will be subsumed into the School Improvement Plan and prioritised for action. A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress we are making on the inspection recommendations.
326. The headteacher, staff and governors of Ysgol y Ffin are justly delighted with the outcomes of the inspection and feel it truly reflects the positive ethos of the school. The report clearly acknowledges the headteacher's vision and purposeful and clear management; the enthusiastic staff, the level of support given by parents, the commitment and involvement of the governors and the LEA, the support of colleagues within the county and the pupil's positive interest in all aspects of school life.
327. We believe that during the crucial early period of development of the school that the inspection was both timely and very welcome. We pride ourselves on a whole school approach. We are sure that governors, teaching and ancillary staff, pupils and parents will rise to the challenges ahead and strive to continue moving the school forward.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol y Ffin
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Address of school	Sudbrook Caldicot Monmouthshire
Post-code	NP26 5SY
Telephone number	012911 420331

Headteacher	Mrs Diane Ebo (Acting Headteacher)
Date of appointment	September 2004
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Councillor Mike Smith
Registered inspector	Mr B.W. Jones
Dates of inspection	March 14-16, 2005

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		14	9	6	10	4	1	2	46

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	4	0	4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	12.4:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	12.4:1
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection				
Term	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Term 1	92.3	96.1	90.4	94.0
Term 2	93.6	95.9	95.2	96.0
Term 3	97.3	95.9	94.12	94.12

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	16%
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 KS 1 Results 2004			Number of		10			
			pupils in Y2:					
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	27	45	27	0
		National	1	1	11	64	23	0
We: oracy	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	27	45	27	0
		National	1	2	12	63	22	0
We: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	27	64	9	0
		National	1	3	17	59	21	0
We: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	45	45	9	0
		National	1	3	20	65	10	0
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	18	82	0	0
		National	0	2	11	63	24	0
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	9	91	0	0
		National	0	2	10	66	22	0

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	72%	In Wales	80%

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

End of Key Stage 2

There were no Y6 pupils in the school in 2003 - 2004

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who spent a total of 7 inspector days at the school.

Before the inspection:

- meetings were held with the head and staff, the GB and parents;
- questionnaires were distributed to all parents and the 13 completed questionnaires were analysed; the inspection team took note of the results;
- school documentation was examined.

During the inspection:

- evidence of lessons or sessions observed was based on the inspection of classes in a total of 35 lessons or sessions across age groups;
- other observations included assemblies, registration, playtimes and lunch-time;
- discussions were held with pupils about aspects of their work and life in the school;
- an inspector listened to a representative sample of pupils read;
- inspectors scrutinised pupils' work from each year group, as well as work in the classrooms and on display around the school;
- post-inspection meetings were held with the acting headteacher, staff and the GB.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Key Questions	Subject Responsibilities
Mr B. Jones	Rgl	KQ 1, 2, 5, 6	Welsh 1 st language Mathematics Science Design and Technology Information technology Physical Education Religious Education
Mrs Branwen Jones	Team	KQ 3, 4, 7	Early Years English History Geography Art Music
Mr E. James	Lay	Contributed to KQ 1,3,4,7	

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Acknowledgement

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

Summary Report for Parents

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

**Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin
Sudbrook
Newport
Monmouthshire
NP6 4SY**

School Number:679/2318

Date of Inspection: 14th – 16th March 2005

By

**Mr Brinley Jones
W263/78379**

Date:19th May 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/183/04P

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Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin 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 the 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 Gymraeg Y Ffin took place between 14th and 16th March 2005. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Brinley 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.

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

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Context

The nature of the provider

Ysgol y Ffin is situated in Sudbrook, near Caldicot in Monmouthshire. The school was established in September 2001 and serves areas of South Monmouthshire. A minority of pupils attend from across the border with England. The school states that the majority of pupils come from areas which are neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.

Ysgol y Ffin is a designated Welsh-medium school and in the Reception class and in KS1, children are immersed in Welsh to ensure mastery of the language at a young age. English is formally introduced at the start of KS2. While the majority of pupils entering the school have experienced Nursery education, only around a third have experienced Welsh-medium Nursery education. Approximately 3% of pupils come from homes where Welsh is the main home language. 16% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are currently 46 pupils on roll. For the first time, the school has a Y6 comprising of pupils who have only received a Welsh medium education for just over three and a half years. There are 8 pupils with Special Educational needs.

Since September 2004, an acting headteacher, who was seconded from another Welsh-medium school, has been in post. The secondment was initially intended to last one term, but as the Governing Body was not successful in filling the post, the acting head agreed to stay on for one more term in order to see the school through its impending Estyn inspection. Two of the other three teachers are in their second year of teaching.

Mission Statement

The school's mission statement includes the following features. To:

- provide the opportunity through the medium of Welsh for children to develop into rounded individuals, enabling them to play a positive and constructive role in society;
- make the children fluent in Welsh and English so that they can make an active and full contribution to the social and industrial life of our bilingual society;
- create a happy school environment where children will be cared for sensitively and will enjoy life at school, work hard and achieve their full potential;
- foster a partnership in which teaching and support staff, governors, advisory colleagues, parents, future parents and friends of Ysgol y Ffin can develop and work together for the successful achievement of these aims.

School Aims

- To ensure that every child is completely literate and numerate in both Welsh and English and to promote and practise bilingualism.
- To provide a curriculum that enables children to acquire the knowledge and skills that will also serve them through adult life in accordance with national legislation.
- To help every child to be independent, creative and curious by developing the ability to process information, to reason, enquire and evaluate.
- To treat all children as individuals, to give them an equal opportunity and to encourage them to realise their full potential, regardless of gender, religion or race.
- To provide a safe, happy environment that is caring, nurturing and supportive for all in the school.
- To foster a sense of belonging, care and enjoyment in which all pupils have the opportunity to develop good social skills, self-esteem, respect for others, tolerance and self discipline, and in which high standards are encouraged and valued, both at home and in the wider world.
- To develop strong links and foster good relationships with parents and other members of the local and wider community. To work towards a partnership, in recognition that joint resources can be of mutual benefit.

The school's priorities and targets for the current year

Promote and raise literacy standards in Welsh across the school.

Review and develop strategies for language learning and teaching.

Raise awareness and understanding of the key skills and ensure that they are included in planning.

Review all curriculum policies.

Complete schemes of work and adapt curriculum maps.

Review provision for the early years.

Audit all resources and order appropriate resources where necessary.

Create a School Improvement Plan to include issues arising from the self-valuation process.

Address the next step in the process of reducing teachers' workload.

Review and adapt discipline procedures and write a discipline policy.

Summary

Ysgol y Ffin Primary school promotes a warm, caring family atmosphere where pupils feel secure and valued. Relationships within the school and pupils' behaviour are good and often very good. The school has strong links with parents and the local community. The acting head teacher, who has been in post since September 2004, provides very good leadership. The staff work hard to move the school forward.

The judgements of the inspection team, in relation to six of the key questions matched the judgements made by the school in its self evaluation report. The team awarded a higher grade to one question.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

Early Years Subjects and Areas of Learning

Language, literacy and communication	2
Personal and social development	1
Mathematical development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Creative development	2
Physical development	2

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	2	3
English	Not applicable	2
Mathematics	2	2
Science	2	3
Design and technology	3	3
Information technology	4	4
History	1	3
Geography	2	3
Art	3	3

Music	1	2
Physical education	3	2
Religious education	2	3

The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning.

While baseline assessments indicate that children entering the school display the full range of abilities, the school notes that the majority have a limited grasp of Welsh. Most pupils from all backgrounds make good progress and achieve standards which are good or where good features outweigh shortcomings in the majority of subjects. There are however important shortcomings in progress and standards achieved in information technology.

The majority of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress.

The under fives make good progress in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology. Overall, good features outweigh shortcomings in progress and standards achieved in key skills in KS1 and KS2.

Progress and standards in bilingual skills are good. Pupils achieve well in relation to age and ability.

The majority of pupils are developing a good awareness of their strengths and areas for further development. Most make progress which is at least satisfactory in acquiring new knowledge and skills in the majority of subjects. A significant number make good progress.

KS1 teacher assessment results in the core subjects for 2004 show a consistent improvement over the last three years although the Core Stage Indicator (pupils achieving at least level 2 in the three subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science) is below local and national figures. This is the first year that the school has pupils in Y6 and therefore there are no available National Curriculum test results for end of KS2 pupils.

The great majority of pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their work and school life in general.

Pupils' personal and social development is good and often very good.

While most work independently in an appropriate manner, the school has noted this as an area for development.

Pupils have a good understanding of equal opportunities and respect diversity.

While a very small number of examples of pupils displaying a lack of attention and appropriate responses to teachers were seen, the behaviour of the great majority in the classrooms and around the school is good and, for the most part, very good. The

behaviour of children in the reception class is very good. No instances of bullying or aggressive behaviour were observed during the inspection.

Although average attendance is good, at above 94% over the last three terms, family holidays during term time, does have an impact on attendance levels during certain periods of the year. Punctuality is good.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	49%	43%	0%	0%

The school exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government target of 50 per cent for good or better teaching.

Relationships with pupils are good and often very good and consistent encouragement helps pupils' progress. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring equality of opportunity.

Teachers, overall, have a good subject knowledge in the majority of subjects.

During the current year there has been a heavy emphasis on ensuring that lessons are well planned, structured and organised. These factors have made significant contributions to the overall quality of the teaching.

The more effective lessons develop at a good pace. Teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies and focus effectively on differentiated activities. These lessons meet the linguistic needs of pupils very effectively.

In less effective lessons, differentiation is not always sufficient, the pace of lessons is not as effective, teacher pupil interaction is not as well developed and best use is not made of resources.

Good use is made of a range of tests, including, the baseline test to identify pupil strengths and areas for development.

Good records of pupils' achievements are kept in the core areas and appropriate use is made of pupils' records of achievement folders. Portfolios of levelled work are being developed in some core subjects.

In foundation subjects, assessment procedures are at an early stage of development.

Evidence gained from on-going assessment does not consistently inform planning in a rigorous enough manner. Marking is generally consistent but it does not always identify ways forward for pupils.

Annual reports to parents conform to statutory requirements and are of a good quality.

The school, for the most part, provides a broad and balanced curriculum which generally meets legal and course requirements. Children under-five receive stimulating and purposeful learning experiences and are often actively involved in their own learning. Underdevelopment of the outdoor curriculum, however, limits their full learning potential.

The recent revision of schemes of work and the head's monitoring have helped ensure that longer term planning ensures opportunities for progression in most subjects. Long term curriculum planning, however, does not always ensure full coverage of the programmes of study in a minority of areas. A scheme of work for information technology (IT) is in the process of being developed.

The key skills policy and procedures have secured a more focused attention on their development. Short term planning is very well focused. Lesson aims are clearly identified, key skills are incorporated and differentiated activities noted in detail.

The school effectively promotes learners' bilingual skills.

The recording and presentation of work in some areas are, however, underdeveloped.

There are good opportunities for the development of creative skills in music but these are less well-developed in art. Planning for the development of problem solving skills is satisfactory.

The focus on equal opportunity underpins all aspects of school life.

Provision is enhanced by rich, first hand experiences and by the good use made of visitors to the school. The school offers a range of extra curricular activities which help enhance the use of Welsh. KS2 pupils learn French. Homework for the most part is appropriately targeted,

The focus on personal and social education (PSE) is developing well and acts of collective worship make important contributions to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Pupils have a good awareness of those less fortunate and the school council has decided to sponsor a child in India.

Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility for their own actions and help determine school aims and class rules.

The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is well developed overall and pupils also develop an awareness of other cultures. Good progress is being made in promoting pupils understanding of global citizenship and sustainable development.

Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents receive detailed information. The school is interested in parents' views and they seek these as part of the process of self evaluation. Parents are prepared to help and engage in numerous activities.

The home -school agreement document meets requirements. While the school prospectus fully conforms with statutory requirements, the governing body (GB) has not presented its annual report to parents for the year 2003-2004.

Formal and supportive meetings are held regularly with some nearby schools, Welsh medium schools and the comprehensive school (Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw) to which pupils will transfer.

There are a number of opportunities to develop pupils' awareness and respect for their community. Some opportunities linked to the world of work and business have been developed and these have contributed well to learning experiences.

This is a very caring school, one in which pupils feel safe, respected and valued. There are very effective and carefully constructed induction arrangements in place. Plans for transferring pupils to the comprehensive school are well developed.

An appropriate health and safety policy is effectively implemented. Governors regularly carry out health and safety checks. All staff members are trained in first aid.

An appropriate child protection policy is in place and staff have received training in this field. The acting headteacher is the designated responsible person and she is very well supported by a member of the governing body who has expertise in this field.

Health education forms part of the PSE programme and is also addressed in science.

SEN provision is generally good and complies with the Code of Practice. Early identification of individual need commences with the analysis of the Baseline. While Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are for the most part good, they do contain some inconsistencies.

The school promotes high expectations in relation to behaviour and these are constantly discussed. Pupils have been given the responsibility of devising class rules and teachers follow a five step plan of action when pupils' behaviour affects their work and that of others. This is consistently implemented and is very effective. Good behaviour is celebrated.

There are effective procedures to address any instances of bullying and oppressive behaviour.

The school has an appropriate policy statement and procedures in place to develop pupils understanding of racial equality and diversity.

The building needs some adjustments to meet the needs of people, including pupils, with disabilities.

Attendance is thoroughly monitored and registers conform with statutory requirements.

Leadership and management

There are clear structures for effective and efficient management.

The acting head, who is a very good role model as a class teacher, provides very good leadership and gives a clear sense of direction to the life and work of the school. She is well supported by other staff members.

Working closely with staff members, she has introduced a number of well- defined procedures to move the school forward. She plays a key role in monitoring. Good use has also been made of LEA support, and plans are in place for curriculum leaders to become more involved in the monitoring process.

All staff contribute to priorities and targets. A number of beneficial initiatives are now in place.

The school takes good account of national priorities and local partnerships and consortia agreements. The school improvement plan (SIP) is a three-year plan and in the first year the school's aim is to focus on the development of the core areas with the emphasis on pupils' achievements.

Performance management is seen as an integral feature of professional and school development. Effective procedures have enabled teachers to benefit from good opportunities for professional development and these have had a positive impact.

There are very good links with school governors, who, to a very marked degree, carry out their duties conscientiously and effectively. School governors have a very good understanding of their responsibilities, they carefully monitor the work of the school and contribute to evaluation and strategic management.

Day to day routines are effective. The school secretary carries out her duties efficiently.

A culture of self- evaluation is well established and there are strong links between the process of self- evaluation and the school improvement plan.

A notable strength is that all staff and governors are very much involved in the process of school review. A further important feature is that the school involves parents in the self- evaluation process.

During the current year the process of self-evaluation has led to the establishment of a wide range of important initiatives, many of which have already brought about clear improvements.

The school makes good use of a range of tests to set realistic targets for pupils. Governors are involved in discussions on target set for pupils.

The self-evaluation document produced by the school, prior to the inspection, is an outstanding feature. The document is based on a wide range of evidence. The inspection team agreed, to a very marked extent, with the judgements made by the school in relation to its achievements and areas for development.

The school has sufficient qualified teachers for the numbers on roll. All have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and are deployed efficiently and effectively. The learning support assistant, who is a Welsh learner is appropriately deployed.

The school has effective procedures for promoting staff development. These experiences have ensured consistency in teaching strategies and contributed to professional development, which reflects the priorities of the SIP.

An audit undertaken has led to the acquisition of further resources which has enhanced learning in a number of areas. There are insufficient resources to promote learning through play, both indoors and outdoors, for children under five and for the development of information technology.

The size of the classrooms is adequate for the number of pupils, and teachers, for the most part, make good use of the space available. The play area, which includes a grassed area, provides sufficient space for pupils but there are shortcomings in the quality and safety of some parts of the boundary.

The school makes optimum use of the funds at its disposal and overall ensures good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to move the school forward, the acting head, staff and governing body need to:

- R1 Raise standards in information technology in both key stages and address identified shortcomings in subjects;
- R2 Extend the examples of good and very good teaching;
- R3 Further develop procedures for assessment;
- R4 Further refine long-term curriculum planning;
- R5 Adopt a more consistent approach to the presentation of work;
- R6 Ensure that the annual GB report to parents is distributed as soon as possible and that it complies with statutory requirements.

The self-evaluation document and school improvement plan include a number of features relating to recommendations 1, 3 and 4 in particular.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current improvement plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this 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 visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, the head and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.