

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Ysgol Brynaerau
Pontllyfni
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL54 5BU**

School Number: 6612017

Date of Inspection: 08/05/07

by

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

The inspection of Ysgol Brynaerau took place between 08/05/07 and 10/05/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Len 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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Contents	Page
Context	1
Summary	2
Recommendations	8
Standards	9
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	9
The quality of education and training	12
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	12
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	14
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	16
Leadership and management	18
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	18
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	20
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	21
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	22
Welsh first language	22
Science	23
Information technology	24
Geography	25
Art	26
Physical education	27
School's response to the inspection	28
Appendices	29
1 Basic information about the school	29
2 School data and indicators	30
3 National Curriculum assessments results	31
4 Evidence base of the inspection	33
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	34

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Brynaerau Community School is located in a rural area, approximately half a mile from the village of Pontllyfni, on the main road between Caernarfon and Pwllheli. The school is maintained by Gwynedd Education Authority.
2. The school serves the small villages of Pontllyfni, Clynnog Fawr, Brynaerau and Capel Ucha, in addition to the agricultural catchment area which surrounds it. In addition, a small percentage of the pupils come from places which are outside the school's natural catchment area.
3. To a very large extent, the background of the area is Welsh, although only 57% of the pupils come from homes where Welsh is spoken as the main language.
4. The school describes the area from which the pupils come as one that is neither especially prosperous nor economically deprived.
5. Pupils are admitted to the school on a part-time basis after their third birthday and on a full-time basis on the September following their fourth birthday. During the inspection, there were 74 pupils on the school register, including nine children of nursery age who attend school during the afternoon session only.
6. 18% of the pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, a percentage which is higher than the county percentage (13.8%) and slightly higher than the national percentage. (19.7%)
7. 7% of the pupils are included in the additional learning needs (AEN) register, a percentage which is significantly lower than the county and national percentages.
8. The school was last inspected in May, 2001, when there were 47 pupils on the register.
9. The current head was appointed to her post in January 2007.

The school's priorities and targets

10. The school's development priorities for the current year (2006-07) include the following:
 - ensuring that physical education modules are firmly established;
 - that effective use is made of information technology and communication (ICT) throughout the school;
 - that standards in the humanities are improved in Key Stage [KS] 1;
 - that the community makes increasing use of the school.

Summary

11. Ysgol Brynaerau is an area school which has a substantial number of good features. Its close relationship with parents and the community and the enriching experiences it provides for pupils are prominent among these.
12. The findings of the inspection team match those of the school in relation to six of the seven key questions. In the one instance where there was disagreement the team's findings were lower than those of the school.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

13. The standards achieved by pupils in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	68%	21%	0%	0%

Grades awarded in the subjects which were inspected

14. Standards of achievement, in the subjects inspected, are as follows:

Area of learning	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Welsh	Grade 3	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 1	Grade 1
Physical education	Grade 3	Grade 2

15. The general quality of the educational provision for the Children under Five is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Pupils' Learning.
16. The children achieve well in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills. Nevertheless, the standard of pupils' handwriting is inconsistent and underdeveloped throughout the school.
17. The Children under Five make good progress in their key skills across the curriculum. They benefit from the variety of opportunities provided for them to produce appropriate pieces of writing. They complete work based on the matching of numbers as they develop their numeracy skills and demonstrate increasing confidence in their use of ICT skills as they produce patterns based on lines.
18. The key skills of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are developing well. They are making good progress in their ability to produce pieces of writing in a variety of forms in Welsh and English. They deal regularly and intelligently with aspects of numeracy, such as when they are measuring and improving their performance in physical education lessons and when discussing co-ordinates in geography lessons.
19. Their ICT skills develop effectively as they use a computer based painting package to draw objects in the environment and as they show an awareness of patterning and tiling.
20. Pupils make increasing use of English from Year 2 on. As they mature, they demonstrate increasing confidence in their regular use of both languages when speaking, reading and writing.
21. The school's results over the three years preceding the inspection show that KS1 pupils' performance in Welsh, mathematics and science has been varied, but, in general, they are lower than national percentages for schools of a similar kind. The performance of KS2 pupils in Welsh, English, mathematics and science has been consistently good over the past three years and compares favourably with national averages.
22. Pupils work productively, persevering with their tasks and activities. This is at its best in KS2. In general, their ability to co-operate in pairs or in groups is good.
23. Attendance levels in the school over the past three full terms are slightly below 95%, a figure that compares favourably with the statistics for similar schools. Pupils arrive at school punctually.
24. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. They have a good awareness of the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves, such as those who have been victimised and those who can be helped through 'fair trade' policies. The pupils make a good contribution to the local community by participating in functions such as Eisteddfod Clynnog Fawr.

The quality of education and training

25. The teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
15%	60%	25%	0%	0%

26. The working relationships in the classes is good. All the pupils are dealt with fairly to ensure equal opportunities for all. The teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach is good. They plan appropriate opportunities to develop pupils' bilingual skills across the curriculum.
27. When the teaching is good, or when it includes excellent features, the teachers have high expectations for pupils' achievements and use effective questioning skills to reinforce the learning. The pace of lessons is appropriate and ample opportunities are provided for pupils to play an active role in them.
28. Where there are shortcomings in the teaching, the tasks provided for pupils lack sufficient challenge and the teachers' interventions do not provide effective support for individual pupils.
29. The teachers use a detailed and accurate method of assessing pupils' progress. They maintain detailed and useful records for each of the pupils. A useful analysis of the assessment outcomes is carried out annually and the information used to plan the next steps in the learning.
30. Parents are invited to the school on two occasions during the year to discuss progress and to examine their children's work. Annual reports about their children's progress and development are provided for the parents, who appreciate the useful comments about the personal attributes of their children made in these reports. However, the reports do not place sufficiently consistent emphasis on pupils' achievements and progress in the areas of study and the subjects in the curriculum.
31. Portfolios containing exemplars of pupils' work have been produced, but to date these do not contain comments which would provide useful guidance for the teachers as they standardize pupils' work.
32. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements. Pupils benefit significantly from the rich experiences provided for them in subjects such as history, geography and science, and this is an excellent feature of the school's provision.
33. The long term schemes of work provide clear guidelines for the teachers and ensure that there is continuity and progression in the pupils' work. The teachers' termly plans provide appropriate detail about the aims of the teaching and the strategies to be used in their presentation.
34. The termly plans show how the key skills and basic skills can be woven into the provision; they also provide good support for the teachers as they plan the learning experiences. The provision for developing pupils' bilingual abilities is good.

35. A good number of activities which complement and enrich the school's curricular provision are planned. Among these are educational visits, the opportunities provided for pupils to work alongside specialists in art and poetry in addition to the opportunities planned for pupils to participate in community functions.
36. The provision the school makes for personal and social education, by arranging a combination of activities across the curriculum, specific provision [such as circle time], and whole school activities [such as supporting humanitarian charities], is good. The School Council is active and is an effective method of enabling pupils to discuss issues pertaining to their school.
37. The school's partnership with parents is good. Communication with the parents is good and they are very appreciative of the newsletter provided for them. The Friends of the School raise substantial sums of money to support the work of the school.
38. Good links have been established with the other primary schools in the area. The arrangements made to transfer Year 6 pupils to Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle are also good, and include visits to the school by teachers from the secondary school.
39. The provision for promoting sustainable development and world citizenship is an excellent feature of the school's work. Prominent attention is given to the environment in the school's curriculum and the experiences based on recycling, planting trees and studying the school garden, complement this work.
40. The personal guidance and support provided for pupils is good. The school is a happy and caring community where the pupils feel appreciated and supported. The provision for personal and social education and the School Council provide pupils with a means of expressing their opinions about issues which are of importance to them. The children settle in quickly in the nursery class and soon feel secure in the school.
41. The quality of the provision made for pupils with ALN is good and conforms with the requirements of the Code of Practice. The pupils' needs are identified promptly. The vast majority of the pupils make good progress against the targets set for them.
42. Values such as fairness and equal opportunities are sound features in the life of the school. Arrangements are made to ensure that all the pupils, irrespective of their ability, their background or gender, are given equal access and opportunities to all the school's activities.

Leadership and management

43. The head, who was appointed to her post a few months ago, has a positive vision and provides enthusiastic leadership for the school. She has established a positive relationship with her colleagues, thus ensuring that the pupils and the school will continue to develop.

44. Current initiatives promoted by the National Assembly are given a prominent role in the school's work. The Green Schools project has been implemented for some time; the school has recently gained the Quality Mark of the Basic Skills Agency accreditation and has recently joined the 'A Million Words' project promoted by the same agency to foster the pupils' interest in books. The school's work develops pupils' understanding of 'fair trade' in addition to fostering healthy eating. Developing fitness is also a prominent element in the provision.
45. The head is supported by the conscientious members of the governing body who have demonstrated their commitment to the school and who contribute effectively to setting a direction for the school and to monitoring its educational provision. However, they have only recently implemented a programme of reviewing management policies.
46. The school has established a self evaluation procedure which enables it to effectively identify the quality and nature of its provision. This is based on a timetable and is dependent upon contributions by the subject co-ordinators and the governing body. Evidence was seen of the monitoring of quality in areas of the curriculum, as well as reports based on lesson observation. Effective reports have also been prepared by members of the governing body who visit lessons from time to time. All these elements are evidence of good practice.
47. The school does not seek the formal opinion of parents and pupils about its educational provision. Neither has the school fully implemented its plans to allocate curricular responsibilities fairly among staff members.
48. The School Development Plan is an effective document for recording data and for setting the school's own data in context. The school's development priorities for the year are noted, together with time limits for their implementation, the staff members responsible and the financial implications. However, there are inconsistencies in the document due to the inclusion of some development priorities which appertain to an earlier period.
49. The number of teachers employed is adequate to meet the needs of the pupils on the register. The teachers are experienced and their qualifications match their responsibilities. The contribution made by the nursery assistant is valuable in terms of supporting activities in the classroom and in contributing to the development of Early Years children.
50. The condition of the school building is acceptable and it is maintained in a clean and tidy condition. Although its surface is rough in some places, the playground is spacious and of an acceptable quality. The condition of the playing field is also good and the school garden, used by pupils to relax and to talk to each other, is a pleasant location.
51. The school's resources are adequate for all areas of the curriculum and pupils are given ready access to them during lessons. Additional resources for ICT have been acquired recently and the book provision has been enhanced. The funds donated by the Friends of the School are valuable for meeting the school's resource needs.

52. There are some good features to the progress made by the school in relation to the five key issues noted in the 2001 report. The good standards established in KS2 are being maintained; standards in science and geography have been improved in KS1 as have standards in physical education in both key stages. A self-evaluation programme has been developed and the governing body's annual report to parents now conforms with the statutory requirements.
53. However, the school has not succeeded in raising standards in Welsh in KS1 and the allocation of curricular responsibilities among staff members is not yet appropriately balanced. These issues continue to be recommendations in the current report.

Recommendations

In order to ensure its further development, the school needs to:

- R1 raise standards of achievement in Welsh and physical education in Key Stage 1;
- R2 ensure that the annual reports to parents consistently refer to their children's standards of achievement;
- R3 allocate curricular responsibilities in a more balanced manner between the staff;
- R4 adopt a strategy which will ensure consistency and development in the quality of pupils' handwriting;
- R5 further develop the portfolios of work at the varying levels of the National Curriculum so that they provide guidance for teachers on the moderation of attainment and on the assessment of pupils' achievement.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 1: Good features and no important shortcomings

54. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement of the school in its self evaluation report.

55. Standards in the lessons and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	68%	21%	0%	0%

56. The standards achieved in the lessons observed are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government targets for the whole of Wales, namely that 98% of standards are grade 3 or better, including 65% that are grade 2 or better.

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

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

58. In the subjects inspected in KS1 and KS2, standards of achievement are as follows:

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	Grade 3	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 1
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 1	Grade 1
Physical education	Grade 3	Grade 2

59. The pupils achieve well in terms of the development of their knowledge, their understanding and skills. Most specifically in KS2, pupils have a good understanding of their personal targets and how to strive for them during lessons. It is also in Key Stage 2 that pupils make the most significant progress towards reaching their potential. However, the quality of pupils' handwriting is inconsistent and under-developed throughout the school.

60. The Children under Five make good progress in their key skills across the curriculum. They benefit from being given a variety of opportunities in their thematic work to produce relevant pieces of writing. They complete work based on the matching of numbers as they develop their numeracy skills, and demonstrate increasing confidence in their use of ICT skills as they produce patterns based on lines.

61. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' key skills are developing well. They make good progress in their ability to produce pieces of writing in a variety of forms in both Welsh and English. Their factual and imaginative writing develops well. They deal regularly and intelligently with aspects of numeracy, as when they are measuring and improving their performance in physical education lessons, and when discussing co-ordinates in geography lessons.
62. They make use of a computer based painting package to draw objects and to demonstrate an awareness of patterns and tiling.
63. Pupils make increasing use of English from Year 2 on. As they mature, they demonstrate increasing confidence as they make regular use of both languages in their speaking, reading and writing.
64. In the end of KS1 assessments in 2006, pupils' achievements were in the upper quartile in science and higher than the median in Welsh and mathematics. However, the Core Subjects Indicator [CSI] was lower than the median when a comparison is made with other schools which have a similar number of pupils eligible to receive free school meals.
65. In the end of KS2 assessments in 2006, pupils' achievements were outstanding, with every pupil achieving Level 4 or better in the four key subjects, namely Welsh, English, mathematics and science. This places the school in the upper quartile when its results are compared with those of similar schools, judged on the basis of the number of pupils eligible to receive free school meals.
66. When trends over a three year period are considered, there is some inconsistency in the results in KS1, as the CSI appeared in the upper quartile and in the third and fourth quartile. In KS2, the school's results in 2004 placed it in the second quartile; since then the school's CSI has been in the upper quartile.
67. In the key subjects, there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
68. In general, pupils have a good understanding of how their work can be improved and how they can reach their learning targets. They respond effectively to the comments and encouragement of their teachers.
69. Pupils, throughout the school, work productively, and persevere with their tasks and activities. This aspect is at its best in KS2. In general they work well in pairs and in groups.
70. Pupils' behaviour is good. They show respect for their teachers and visitors. They are aware that oppressive and unkind behaviour are not acceptable in any way. Social inclusiveness and divergence are well promoted. These aspects provide firm foundations for pupils to develop as responsible members of society.

71. Attendance levels in the school over the past three full terms are slightly below 95%, a figure that compares favourably with the statistics for similar schools. Punctuality is good at the beginning of the school day and during the day's activities.
72. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They discuss issues such as injustice and the importance of 'fair trade' and contribute regularly to charities. They meditate quietly during sessions of joint worship and sympathise with those less fortunate than themselves. In curricular terms, they co-operate with artists and poets on specific projects, and KS2 pupils have recently learnt about aspects of persecution in connection with their work on Anne Frank.
73. Pupils' awareness of world citizenship is good, and this is fostered through their work on 'fair trade' and through the emphasis placed on the essential role of water in less developed communities.
74. Pupils develop a good awareness of their local community. The school contributes annually to the activities of Eisteddfod Clynnog Fawr and the parish priest visits the school occasionally. In addition, other members of the community are invited to the school to share their experiences with pupils or to express their appreciation for the activities in which the pupils participate. Reports about pupils' activities are published in the local 'papur bro' every month.
75. Recent developments have contributed effectively to pupils' awareness of the world of work, including occupational aspects and entrepreneurial skills. Specific plans have been produced to ensure that these aspects continue to be developed.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

76. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement of the school in its self-evaluation report.
77. The quality of the teaching was judged to be as follows

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
15%	60%	25%	0%	0%

78. The above statistics are slightly lower than the national percentages for primary schools as published in the Report of the Chief Inspector of Schools for Wales for 2005-06.
79. The quality of working relationships in the classes is good. All pupils are dealt with fairly and steps taken to ensure that all are treated equally.
80. The teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach is good. They plan suitable opportunities to develop pupils' bilingual ability across the curriculum.
81. Excellent features of the teaching include:
- high expectations of pupils' achievements;
 - the use of a wide range of teaching strategies which maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm;
 - effective use of questioning skills to reinforce the learning and to move the learning on.
82. The features of the good teaching include:
- careful planning of lessons while ensuring that they build on previous learning;
 - the sharing of the aims of lessons with pupils;
 - the presentation of lessons at an appropriate pace;
 - providing opportunities for pupils to take an active role in their learning and to develop independence;
 - effective use of the interactive whiteboard and ICT in support of presentations;
 - the effective use of praise and encouragement.
83. In the minority of lessons where there were shortcomings in the teaching:
- expectations of pupils' achievements are not sufficiently high and the tasks provided for them are not sufficiently challenging;
 - teachers' interventions in support of pupils are not effective enough;
 - there is insufficient focus on the aims of the teaching.

84. The teachers operate a detailed and accurate method of assessing pupils' progress. They maintain detailed and useful records about every pupil. Useful analysis of the assessment outcomes are carried out annually and the information obtained is used to plan the next stage in the learning.
85. Effective tracking methods have been adopted to oversee the patterns in the progress made over a period of time and to enable the teachers to identify learners' needs at an early stage.
86. Portfolios of pupils' work have been compiled, but, to date, they do not contain comments which would provide the teachers with useful guidance for standardizing pupils' work effectively.
87. Pupils' work is marked regularly and pertinent comments are often added. At its best, this procedure offers guidance for further improvement. The older pupils consistently record their own response to these comments and this encourages their engagement in the process of responding to their work.
88. The individual targets set for the older pupils are discussed with them and they pay attention to these targets when trying to improve their work. This contributes well to their understanding of the purpose of the assessment process.
89. Parents are invited to school twice a year to discuss progress and to observe their children's work. Reports are provided for parents on their children's progress and development. The parents appreciate the personal tone of the comments about their children in these reports. However, the reports contain insufficient emphasis on the achievements and progress of pupils in the areas of study and in the subjects of the curriculum.
90. The quality of the school's procedures for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' progress meets the statutory requirements.

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

91. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement of the school in its self evaluation report.
92. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements. Pupils benefit significantly from the rich experiences provided for them in subjects such as history, geography and science, and this is an outstanding feature of the school's provision. The provision ensures that all pupils are given full access and equal opportunities in all the areas of the curriculum.
93. The long term schemes of work provide the teachers with clear guidelines and ensure that there is progression and continuity in pupils' learning. The teachers' termly plans provide appropriate detail about the aims of the teaching and about the activities to be introduced. These plans also show how the basic skills and key skills are to be woven into the provision and provide useful support for the teachers as they plan the learning experiences.
94. The learning experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The sessions of joint worship are good and meet the statutory requirements. During these sessions, pupils are given opportunities to contribute and to meditate and this effectively promotes their spiritual and moral development.
95. The school's provision for pupils' personal and social education is good, and includes a combination of activities across the curriculum, specific provision [such as circle time] and whole school activities [such as supporting humanitarian charities]. The School Council is operative and is an effective means of enabling pupils to discuss issues relating to their school. Matters such as entrepreneurship and the role of the older pupils in caring for their younger children on the school playground have been discussed recently.
96. The provision made to develop pupils' bilingual competence is good. Careful planning ensures that their bilingual skills are developed progressively throughout the key stages. The quality of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is good and features in the classwork and in the life of the school. Appropriate attention is given to studying the heritage and culture of Wales.
97. A good number of activities are planned, which complement and enrich the school's curricular provision. The visits away from the school, the visitors who come to the school to share their specialisms and experiences with the pupils in art and poetry, the opportunities provided for pupils to participate in community functions and the reports they provide for the 'papur bro', all contribute well to the standards achieved by the pupils and to their personal and social education.

98. The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents' comments in the pre-inspection meeting and their responses to the questionnaire were very supportive of the school. Communication with parents is good and they much appreciate the newsletter that is prepared for them. The home-school agreement is operative and the Parents' Handbook conforms with the statutory requirements. The parents and other members of the community support the school well and the Friends of the School raise substantial sums of money to support the school's work.
99. Good links have been established with the other primary schools in the area. The arrangements for transferring Year 6 pupils to Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle are also good, and include visits to the school by teachers from the secondary school. Opportunities are provided for pupils on work experience, for students from Coleg Meirion Dwyfor, and also for student teachers from the University of Wales, Bangor.
100. Education in connection with the world of work has been well promoted by the school. Good links have been established with local businesses such as a fish farm and garage, and visitors come to discuss their work with the pupils. The school effectively links these studies with the development of pupils' enterprise skills.
101. The school promotes equal access and opportunity for all pupils. The parents praise the manner in which all students are given the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of the school's work.
102. The provision for promoting sustainable development and world citizenship is an outstanding feature of the school's work. The environment features prominently in the school's curricular provision and experiences involving activities such as recycling, planting trees and studying the school garden enhance the work. The school is working towards achieving the Local Authority's gold award for being a 'green school'. There is an emphasis on 'fair trade' and the older pupils understand the principles on which it is based.
103. The school's provision establishes firm foundations for promoting lifelong learning.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

104. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The team could not identify sufficient outstanding features in this key question.
105. The school plans and manages its arrangements for caring for and supporting pupils well. There is close co-operation between the school and the parents, and where necessary effective use is made of the services of relevant external agencies.
106. New children quickly settle in to the nursery class and feel secure in the school.
107. The support and personal guidance provided for pupils is good. The school is a happy and caring community where pupils feel they are appreciated and supported. They feel they can seek advice and guidance from the staff. The personal and social education provision and the School Council enable pupils to express opinions about matters which are of importance to them.
108. Good arrangements have been made for monitoring attendance and punctuality. The registers are maintained electronically and enquiries are made about any instances of absence which are causing concern. Detailed records, which include letters from parents explaining their child's absence, are included. The school is currently discussing the setting of targets for improving attendance levels with the governing body.
109. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure that safety is paramount in every aspect of the school's activities. Risk assessments are carried out appropriately. Safety measures in the building are effective. The arrangements for transport and for accompanying pupils at the beginning and end of the school day are effective, this despite the difficulties encountered because of a lack of space for buses to turn in from a narrow minor road. The staff supervise the pupils well. Specific members of staff are responsible for Child Protection and all staff members are aware of the relevant procedures.
110. The quality of the provision for pupils with ALN is good and conforms with the Code of Practice. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage. The individual learning plans, which are produced under the leadership of the school co-ordinator, are of good quality and include appropriate learning targets for every pupil.
111. Provision is made to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, mainly through differentiating the provision in each class. There is some inconsistency in the additional support that is provided while the pupils are engaged with their tasks. The vast majority of pupils make good progress in relation to the targets set for them.

112. Values such as fairness and equal opportunities for all are firmly established in the life of the school. The school ensures that all the pupils, whatever their ability, background and gender, are given access and equal opportunities in all the school's activities.
113. The school's policies and procedures for maintaining good behaviour, for eliminating oppressive behaviour and for promoting good relationships between the races, are implemented and have a positive effect on school life and work.
114. The school has responded effectively to ensure that pupils with physical disabilities are treated just as fairly as the other pupils, in terms of the opportunities and support they are given.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

115. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement of the school in its self-evaluation report.
116. The head, who was appointed a few months ago, provides enthusiastic leadership for the school. She has a positive vision and, in a short space of time, has established a constructive relationship with her colleagues which will enable the school and the pupils to develop further.
117. The head is supported by the conscientious members of the governing body who have demonstrated their commitment to the school and who contribute effectively in setting a direction for the school and in monitoring its educational provision. However, they have only recently begun to implement a programme of reviewing management policies.
118. The performance management system is operated in accordance with the guidelines in the official policy and the teachers and head achieve the aims which are relevant to their professional needs and to those of the school.
119. Staff meetings are held regularly on Monday evenings when specific aspects are discussed under the leadership of the head. Elements of the teachers' professional development, which are prioritised during these meetings, are then addressed through in-service training.
120. The school sets targets annually for pupils' achievements in the key subjects. These targets are reviewed in the light of pupils' results in the end of key stage tests. The governors' awareness of this statutory procedure is satisfactory.
121. Job descriptions have been produced for all members of staff; these are current and note individual responsibilities.
122. In conjunction with the wide range of experiences provided, the school places a good deal of emphasis on a number of current initiatives which are promoted by the National Assembly or by other agencies. The Green Schools project has been implemented for some time, the school has gained the Quality Mark of the Basic Skills Agency and has recently joined the 'A Million Words' project, promoted by the same agency, to foster pupils' interest in books. A prominent feature of the school's efforts in the context of sustainability is the work undertaken to develop pupils' understanding of 'Fair Trade'. Fostering healthy eating patterns and developing fitness are also key elements in the provision.

123. The contribution of the governing body to the school is apparent in the way in which some members, by being involved in a specific area of the curriculum, visit lessons and produce reports to inform their fellow members. They are also effective in the manner in which they make serious efforts to improve and develop the school's facilities, such as the parking ground.
124. The governing body meets regularly and the School Handbook and the annual report provided for parents meet the statutory requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

125. The findings of the inspection team match those of the school in its self-evaluation report.
126. The inspection team agreed with the findings of the school in six of the seven key questions. In the one instance where the judgements were different, the inspection team awarded one grade lower than that which the school awarded itself.
127. The school has established a self-evaluation procedure which enables it to effectively identify the quality and nature of its provision. This is based on a monitoring timetable and is dependent on the contributions of the curriculum co-ordinators and the governing body. Evidence was seen of reports on the quality of provision in some areas of the curriculum as well as reports written as a result of lesson observation. Effective reports have also been prepared by members of the governing body who have visited lessons from time to time. This is good practice.
128. To date, the school does not seek, in a formal manner, the opinions of pupils and parents about the educational provision.
129. The self-evaluation report provided for the inspection team is effective, reflects a good awareness of the situation and attends to strengths as well as shortcomings which are to be addressed.
130. The School Development Plan is an effective document which records intentions as well as setting the school's data in context. The development priorities for the year are noted, together with time limits for their implementation, the persons responsible and the financial implications. However, there are inconsistencies in the document relating to the inclusion of some development priorities which appertain to an earlier period.
131. There are some good features to the progress made by the school in relation to the five key issues noted in the 2001 report. According to the school's own evaluation and the evidence from the present inspection, the good standards established in KS2 are being maintained; standards in science and geography have been improved in KS1 as have standards in physical education in both key stages.
132. A self-evaluation programme has been developed and the governors' annual report to parents conforms with the statutory requirements. However, there are also some shortcomings. The school has not succeeded in raising standards of achievement in Welsh in KS1 and the allocation of curriculum responsibilities among staff members is not yet appropriately balanced; the current head has already identified the need to develop this latter aspect. These matters are again included in the recommendations of the present report.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

133. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement of the school in its self-evaluation report.
134. The number of teachers employed is adequate to meet the needs of the pupils on the register. The teachers are experienced and their qualifications match their responsibilities. They update their knowledge and their awareness of current initiatives by attending in-service training courses.
135. The contribution of the nursery assistant is valuable in maintaining activities in the class and in promoting the development of the Early Years children.
136. The condition of the school building is acceptable and it is maintained in a clean and tidy condition. The space available is sufficient and its use was enhanced recently when the classes were reorganised. Although its surface is rough in some places, the playground is spacious and its quality acceptable. The condition of the playing field is also good and the school garden, used by pupils to relax in and to talk to each other, is a pleasant location.
137. The resources available in the school are adequate for all areas of the curriculum and pupils are given ready access to them during lessons. Additional resources for ICT have been acquired recently and the stock of reading books supplemented. The money made available by the Friends of the School makes a valuable contribution to enabling the school to acquire resources to meet its needs.
138. The school acts in accordance with the statutory requirements to provide teachers with non-contact time to plan, prepare and assess. The teachers use their non-contact time to good effect, completing specific tasks which promote pupils' standards of achievement. During these periods, every effort is made to employ part-time teachers who offer specialisms which will enrich the educational provision.
139. The school ensures that there is no under-spend at a level that is in excess of that recommended by the Audit Commission and finances are used effectively to implement development priorities. One member of the governing body meets with the local authority finance officer and then reports to the full body. The school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Welsh first language

Key stage 1: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Good features

140. A good number of KS1 pupils listen attentively to presentations in lessons and respond intelligently, making extended comments. They perform impromptu dialogues when responding to events in a story. A minority of them are very confident and talk enthusiastically with visitors.
141. A small minority of pupils read effortlessly from works of fiction, expressing meaning by using intonation and pause. They know about some authors from the world of children's books.
142. A small number produce extended, effective and coherent pieces of writing in a variety of forms, such as reports of visits and portrayals. They emulate the pattern of a specific poem as they co-operate to produce their own poem on a specific theme.
143. In KS2, pupils respond effectively to questions and stimuli during lessons. A minority of them are very willing to contribute, often making interesting comments which promote further discussion.
144. The vast majority read with increasing fluency; a very small minority read with excellent fluency and expression. They read challenging texts accurately and with expression, identifying themselves with the event they encounter in the story. They understand how factual works are different from fiction and know how to access information readily. They are familiar with the terminology of the world of books, such as *blurb*, *adaptation* and an *original work*.
145. The most able pupils in the KS2 produce effective pieces of writing, by varying their sentence patterns and using a register which is appropriate to the context. They are aware of oral and literary forms and use them effectively. They benefit from regular cross-curricular opportunities to record in diary form, to express their thoughts and to produce dialogues.

Shortcomings

146. In both key stages, a significant number of pupils encounter difficulties in expressing themselves; they use erroneous verb forms and grammatical structures.
147. A good number of KS1 pupils lack confidence when reading expressively; they do not use intonation or pauses appropriately to extract meaning from the text.
148. Errors in punctuation and spelling, and the use of incorrect verb forms hinder the written expression of a good number of KS1 pupils.

Science

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

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

Good features

149. KS1 pupils access scientific information from a variety of sources and use appropriate terminology to describe their work. They respond well to suggestions as to how they can discover things and put forward their own suggestions.
150. They carry out a good number of investigations and inquiries. With the assistance of the teacher, they discuss the basic requirements of a fair test and make sensible predictions about the likely outcomes of their investigations. By Year 2 they use standard units to measure a variety of dimensions and record their observations in the form of tables and graphs.
151. A good number of pupils have an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study. They construct basic electrical circuits and offer good explanations of how an electrical circuit operates to light a bulb.
152. KS2 pupils discuss aspects of their work in science and put forward their own suggestions as to how a scientific investigation can be carried out appropriately. They are aware of the requirements of a fair test. Pupils at the upper end of the school understand the importance of repeating measurements in order to improve their reliability. They record the results of their investigations systematically.
153. They gather information from a range of sources, such as texts and information technology, and record their work in a variety of form, using appropriate scientific terminology. They record direct observations using detailed drawings.
154. Their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study is good. In their study of human beings they name and describe the function of various parts of the human skeleton. They are aware of the foods they should eat regularly and those which should only be eaten occasionally. They know of the harmful effects of smoking, and when producing relevant posters, they show that they have a good understanding of healthy eating and of the importance of fitness.
155. When discussing their previous learning, pupils at the upper end of the school show that they have a good understanding of vibration and that sound travels in wave form, of the sources of light and the manner in which light travels into the eye.

Shortcomings

156. There are no important shortcomings.

Information technology

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

Key Stage 2: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

157. In KS2, pupils use information technology hardware and software confidently and with increasing independence to communicate and to exchange information in a variety of forms, including texts, graphs and pictures. Their competence is an excellent feature.
158. The most able pupils in KS2 discuss meaningfully their contribution to the editing of a video film from a news programme. This is an excellent feature.

Good features

159. KS1 pupils use information technology hardware and software with increasing skill in a variety of appropriate contexts. They produce good pieces of writing on screen and use simple painting packages to produce good quality pictures and patterns which are linked to their work.
160. They make effective use of suitable software to compose pieces of simple music.
161. They have good control of the mouse as they move images on the screen. They use the interactive whiteboard confidently.
162. They make good use of a database to record and organise information and to draw graphs. They programme the floor turtle and predict its movements accurately.
163. With assistance, they make appropriate use of a digital camera to record evidence of their own work.
164. KS2 pupils collect, organise and interrogate data as they make confident and purposeful use of a database. They model for a variety of purposes, and at the upper end of the school produce good procedures.
165. They make good use of compact discs and the Internet to collect information to reinforce their work across the curriculum.
166. They confidently produce multimedia presentations of good quality.

Shortcomings

167. There are no important shortcomings.

Geography

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

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

Good features

168. Pupils' knowledge of their own locality is good. They describe the physical and human features of the area, using appropriate terminology.
169. They produce simple maps which include a key and suitable symbols to effectively describe their journey to school and to Pont y Cim. They identify the location of Pontllyfni on a map of Wales and understand that an atlas can be of assistance when they search for places.
170. They make good use of simple co-ordinates when locating places on a plan of a park.
171. Following their visit to Parc Glynllifon, they confidently use the four points of the compass to note particular locations on a map.
172. KS1 pupils' previous work shows that they make good use of their knowledge of their own area when comparing its features with those of another locality.
173. KS2 pupils make effective use of a good range of geographical skills in support of their studies. They draw detailed and neat maps. They work confidently with maps on various scales, including Ordnance Survey maps. The vast majority have an understanding of four figure co-ordinates and the most able use six figure co-ordinates. They use mapping keys and symbols confidently to interpret information.
174. KS2 pupils use geographical terms and vocabulary to describe physical and human features when studying photographs and aerial photographs, and when comparing their own area with another.
175. The pupils make good use of ICT to search for additional information when handling, organising and presenting evidence.
176. They use atlases confidently and identify continents and oceans on a map of the world; they know how to find information about individual countries.
177. KS2 pupils' knowledge about some of the ways in which people try to protect the environment through sustainable development is good.

Shortcomings

178. There are no important shortcomings.

Art

Key stage 1: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

Key stage 2: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

- 179. KS1 pupils produce striking pencil drawings based on their direct observation of still life objects in the environment.
- 180. KS2 pupils produce fresh and imaginative work in response to a passage from literature, combining paint and words with specific phrases from a text.

Good features

- 181. KS1 pupils experiment successfully with paint, showing that they have awareness of tone and of the techniques involved in mixing colours.
- 182. They make confident use of an information technology programme to produce colourful patterns based on lines, and they develop a good awareness of pattern work as they produce prints based on tiling.
- 183. They name a famous British painter from the eighteenth century and know about specific examples of his work. They benefit from local connections to emulate some of his portraits.
- 184. They use chalk and coloured pencils with increasing confidence to draw objects from the environment.
- 185. They produce three-dimensional models in clay and discuss their work in detail.
- 186. In KS2, pupils' ability to observe the work of a famous artist is good, and they go into detail about the use of line and tone when drawing landscapes. Their grasp of the terminology of art is good and they reason about some of the main elements of art such as texture, tone and shape.
- 187. They produce extremely effective silhouettes in paint to convey their feelings about the horrors of war.
- 188. They make creative use of aspects of their own environment, producing three-dimensional models of *cromlechi* and *meini hirion*.

Shortcomings

- 189. There are no significant shortcomings.

Physical education

Key stage 1: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Lessons involving the use of small apparatus were observed in KS1 and a hockey skills lesson in Year 4/5/6.

Good features

190. KS1 pupils make good use of space when warming up their bodies.
191. A small minority of pupils respond promptly to instructions and apply themselves to the requirements of the task. They make appropriate progress in their skills of controlling bean bags and as they throw and catch a ball.
192. A minority of pupils co-operate effectively in pair work, concentrating on the aim of the activity.
193. In KS2, pupils know how work which is physically demanding improves their fitness.
194. They develop their skills well when controlling a ball with a stick, and their ability to involve themselves in their tasks and to persevere further enhances their skills.
195. They understand how team activity depends on their ability to co-operate.

Shortcomings

196. In neither of the key stages do pupils evaluate the performance of their peers by drawing attention to its more successful features.
197. KS1 pupils' lack of discipline impairs the progress they make in lessons.
198. The 'timing aspect' or need to speed-up some performances, cause some KS2 pupils to ignore the techniques which are taught to them.

School's response to the inspection

The findings of the Inspection acknowledge that Ysgol Brynaerau has numerous good features. There is a good relationship between the parents, the community and the school and enriching experiences for the pupils are provided across the curriculum. The school involves itself with current national initiatives, while at the same time fostering local and community objectives. Furthermore, it is recognised that the school succeeds in ensuring that Ysgol Brynaerau is a happy and caring community, within which the pupils are valued and supported.

The judgements and comments of the inspection team correspond closely with the school's current self-evaluation report. Further development and improvement will ensue as the school implements the recommendations.

We wish to thank the inspection team for the fair, thorough and professional manner in which the inspection was held. In her role as nominee, the head feels that the inspection process was wholly honest and transparent.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Brynaerau
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Pontllyfni, CAERNARFON Gwynedd
Postcode	LL54 5BU
Telephone number	01286 660428
Headteacher	Mrs Nia Puw
Date of appointment	January 2007
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Mari P. Jones
Registered inspector	Len Jones
Dates of inspection	8-11 May, 2007

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	4.5	12	5	13	12	10	4	9	69.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	3	0	3

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	21:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	-
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	22
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2006	76.4	95.3	92.7
Autumn 2006	92.7	95.2	95
Spring 2007	89.7	94.2	95.8

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	18%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	-

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2006			Number of pupils in Y2:		12		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	8	92	0
		National	0	2	8	64	26
We: oracy	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	8	92	0
		National	0	1	0	64	25
We: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	17	75	8
		National	0	2	15	60	22
We: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	25	67	8
		National	0	2	18	66	13
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	8	75	17
		National	0	2	10	63	24
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	100	0
		National	0	2	9	65	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	83%	In Wales	80.9%

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

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006	Number of pupils in Y6	7
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of key stage 2 in was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included		

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by teacher assessment		by test	
In the school	100%	In the school	-
In Wales	74%	In Wales	-

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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

- The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors who were in the school for six 'inspection days'.
- A pre-inspection meeting was held with the parents, which was attended by 13 parents, and with the governing body, to discuss the life and work of the school.
- 24 completed questionnaires were returned, along with one supplementary note, and these were analysed carefully.
- Discussions were held with the head and the teachers.
- The school's documentation was inspected.
- 20 lessons or part lessons were observed.
- Samples of pupils' work from each year group were inspected.
- Pupils, representing a cross section of both key stages, were heard reading.
- Discussions were held with pupils about aspects of the life of the school and about their work.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during break times, the lunch hour and at the beginning and end of the school day.
- The inspectors attended school services.
- Post-inspection meetings were held with the staff and governing body.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Len Jones (Registered Inspector)	The school's context and priorities; Key questions 1,5,6 and 7 Welsh, art, physical education
Trebor Roberts (Team Inspector)	Key questions 2, 3, and 4; Science; information technology; geography
William Owen (Lay Inspector)	Contributions to key questions 1, 3, 4, and 7
Mrs Nia Puw	Nominee

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Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to thank the governors, head, staff, pupils and parents of the school for their willing cooperation during the inspection.