

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

**Ysgol Gynradd Dolwyddelan  
Ffordd Tŷ Isaf  
Dolwyddelan  
Conwy  
LL25 0SZ**

**School Number: 6622043**

**Date of Inspection: 26/02/07**

**by**

**Wil Williams  
67644**

**Date of Publication: 30/03/07**

**Under Estyn contract number: 1110206**

**© Crown Copyright 2007: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

Ysgol Gynradd Dolwyddelan 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 Gynradd Dolwyddelan took place between 26/02/07 and 28/02/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Wil Williams 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:

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a standard inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Context</b>	1
<b>Summary</b>	2
<b>Recommendations</b>	5
<b>Standards</b>	6
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	6
<b>The quality of education and training</b>	8
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	8
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	9
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	11
<b>Leadership and management</b>	12
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	12
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	13
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	13
<b>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</b>	14
Welsh	14
Design technology	15
Geography	16
Music	17
Physical education	17
Religious education	18
<b>School's response to the inspection</b>	19
<b>Appendices</b>	20
1 Basic information about the school	20
2 School data and indicators	20
3 National Curriculum assessments results	21
4 Evidence base of the inspection	21
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	22



## **Context**

### **The nature of the provider**

- 1 Ysgol Dolwyddelan is a small rural school that serves the village of Dolwyddelan and its rural hinterland. There are currently 35 full-time pupils on the school register, together with two part-time nursery children. The children are admitted to school on a full-time basis following their fourth birthday.
- 2 Welsh is the language spoken in the homes of approximately 30% of pupils. The school believes that approximately 70% of pupils now speak Welsh to first language standard.
- 3 The school considers that the area it serves is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Twenty-three per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, a percentage that is slightly lower than county and national averages.
- 4 The school is of the view that the pupils' attainment levels vary considerably when they are first admitted to school. Approximately 9% of pupils have additional learning needs, and this is considerably lower than county and national averages. One pupil has a statement of additional learning needs.
- 5 The school was last inspected in the Spring term of 2001. The headteacher was appointed to his post in January 1980.

### **The school's priorities and targets**

- 6 The school's priorities and targets for 2006 – 2007 include:
  - developing a clear structure that pupils can use when recording investigations;
  - further developing the role of subject co-ordinators in the school's self-evaluation arrangements;
  - raising standards of spelling and writing in English;
  - establishing a system for tracking pupils' progress in the core subjects;
  - making effective use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

## Summary

- 7 The headteacher, governors and staff are knowledgeable of the school's performance and they use the information effectively to improve the educational provision and to raise the standards achieved by pupils.
- 8 The concise self-evaluation report presented to the inspection team prior to the inspection is clear, readable and of good quality. It matches the findings of the inspection team in five of the seven Key Questions.
- 9 The school has made good progress in addressing the five Key Issues highlighted in the 2001 Report.

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

- 10 Standards achieved in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
17%	58%	25%	0%	0%

- 11 The standards achieved by pupils in the lessons inspected are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government [WAG] target for 2007 that 65% should be good or better (Grades 1 and 2) and that 98% of lessons should be at satisfactory or better (Grade 3+).
- 12 The standards achieved in the subjects and areas of learning inspected are as follows:

Areas of learning	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 3	Grade 3
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 1
Religious education	Grade 1	Grade 2

- 13 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 14 The communication and mathematical skills of pupils of all ages are good but they do not make sufficiently purposeful use of information and communication technology in their work.
- 15 The bilingual competence of pupils of all ages is good. Welsh learners make considerable progress in their ability to speak and use the language in their learning and by the beginning of key stage 2 the vast majority are proficient in Welsh and English.
- 16 During the period 2004 - 2006, the performance of key stage 1 pupils in National Curriculum assessments are in the main amongst the lower 25% of schools with a comparable percentage of pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals. During the same period, the performance of key stage 2 pupils was without exception amongst the upper 25% of similar schools.
- 17 The under-fives and pupils in both key stages make good progress in their learning and in their personal and social skills. They are clearly interested in their work and they work productively at their tasks over extended periods.
- 18 The standard of behaviour of pupils of all ages is good. They have a clear understanding of the school's expectations and they are courteous and considerate towards each other and to visitors.
- 19 Whole-school attendance levels for the three terms prior to the inspection were 93%, which is comparable to county and national averages. Pupil punctuality is good and the school conforms fully to legal requirements in terms of administering attendance registers.
- 20 The pupils' awareness of equal opportunity issues is good and they respect diversity in society.

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

- 21 In the lessons inspected, the quality of teaching was adjudged to be as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
17%	58%	25%	0%	0%

- 22 This is slightly lower than the national average reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in her annual report for 2005-2006.
- 23 There is a good working relationship between teachers and pupils; everyone is treated fairly and there are high expectations in terms of self-discipline. The teachers are knowledgeable of the subjects they teach and they plan appropriately for all ages and ability ranges.

- 24 Where there are outstanding features to the teaching, the teachers' expectations are high, very effective use is made of resources and there is a clear focus on teaching specific techniques and skills.
- 25 In a small number of lessons, the tasks are not sufficiently extensive to challenge the pupils and the resources provided are not suitable for the work in question. Few opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own work.
- 26 There are good features to assessment and recording of work in both key stages, but there are some shortcomings in the arrangements in key stage 2.
- 27 The pupils' work is marked regularly and at times there are useful suggestions for improving the content, but this is not done consistently enough in key stage 2.
- 28 The quality of reporting to parents is good and it conforms to statutory requirements.
- 29 The school provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that conforms to statutory requirements. With the exception of information and communication technology, there are appropriate schemes of work for all curriculum subjects.
- 30 The school promotes the pupils' bilingual skills effectively and due prominence is given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig in a good number of subjects such as music and art.
- 31 The wide variety of activities provided outside school hours enhance the pupils' learning experiences and they make a major contribution towards their educational and personal development.
- 32 The pupils receive regular access to a high quality programme of personal and social education. A great deal of good work was completed in the context of the Healthy Schools scheme and the Comenius project.
- 33 There is a good partnership with parents, but the school Prospectus and the Annual Report of the Governing Body to parents do not contain the required information about disabled access.
- 34 Strong links have been forged between the school and the local community and there is a good partnership with catchment primary schools and with the local secondary school.
- 35 The provision of work-related education is good, but little attention is given to the development of the pupils' enterprise skills. The learning experiences effectively promote sustainable development and global citizenship education.
- 36 The care, support and guidance provided to pupils are good. The staff know the pupils well and the pupils are happy to approach them for educational and personal support.
- 37 There are effective arrangements for safeguarding the pupils' safety during their time at school and there are clear procedures for child protection.

- 38 There is good provision for pupils with additional learning needs and it fulfils the requirements of the Code of Practice. The school identifies the pupils' learning needs at an early stage and it intervenes when required.
- 39 A wide range of policies are effectively implemented in relation to gender equality, racial inter-relationships and acknowledging and respecting diversity. Reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that no disabled pupils would suffer from being treated less favourably.

### **Leadership and management**

- 40 The headteacher effectively co-ordinates the work of the governing body and the teaching team in order to provide the best possible education for pupils. The teaching staff shoulder a good measure of responsibilities, but there is room to further develop their monitoring and evaluation roles.
- 41 The governors are very supportive of the work of the school and they work effectively with the headteacher in setting the strategic direction of the school. They undertake their responsibilities effectively, but their monitoring and evaluation role has not been fully developed.
- 42 There are effective self-evaluation arrangements but there are no formal arrangements for gathering parents' views on the educational provision. The School Development Plan is of good quality and it gives a clear sense of direction to the work of the school over the next three years.
- 43 Staffing levels at the school are good and there is an adequate supply of resources for the under-fives and for teaching all curriculum subjects. The condition and size of the building are good.
- 44 The school's resources are managed effectively by the headteacher and the governing body, and it gives good value for money.

### **Recommendations**

- R1 Raise Welsh writing standards in key stage 2 and design and technology standards across the school.
- R2 \*More purposeful planning for the key skills, and particularly so for information and communication technology.
- R3 \*Further develop the role of the subject co-ordinators and the governing body in the school's self-evaluation arrangements.
- R4 Continue to improve teaching and assessment by addressing the shortcomings identified.

R5 Ensure that the school Prospectus and the Annual Report of the Governing Body to Parents contain all the required information.

\*priorities in the School Development Plan 2007 - 2008

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

## Standards

### Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

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

- 45 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 46 Standards achieved in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
17%	58%	25%	0%	0%

- 47 The standards achieved by pupils in the lessons inspected are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government [WAG] target for 2007 that 65% should be good or better (Grades 1 and 2) and that 98% of lessons should be at satisfactory or better (Grade 3+).
- 48 The standards achieved in the subjects and areas of learning inspected are as follows:

Areas of learning	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 3	Grade 3
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 1
Religious education	Grade 1	Grade 2

- 49 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 50 The pupils succeed in their work, regardless of their social or linguistic background. The pupils with additional learning needs make good progress towards achieving the targets set for them.

- 51 The communication skills of the under-fives and of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are good. The pupils listen attentively, they are eager to contribute in class discussions and their reading skills are generally good. The majority of pupils in both key stages are confident writers, but the range of written work produced by a minority of pupils in key stage 2 is limited.
- 52 The mathematical skills of pupils of all ages are good. They are confident in dealing with mathematical problems and are able to apply their abilities in different situations.
- 53 The pupils in both key stages do not make sufficiently purposeful use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning.
- 54 The bilingual competence of pupils of all ages is good. They make good progress in their ability to use Welsh in their learning during the key stage, and by the beginning of key stage 2 many are proficient enough to be able to speak, read and write in both Welsh and English.
- 55 The number of pupils assessed in the core subjects of the National Curriculum at the end of both key stages has been fewer than ten in the last three years. During the period 2004 - 2006, pupil performance in key stage 1 has in the main been amongst the 25% lower group of schools with a comparable percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals. There was a sizeable number of pupils with additional learning needs in the groups assessed during this key stage.
- 56 During the same period, the performance of pupils in key stage 2 was without exception in the upper 25% group of schools, with every pupil attaining level 4 or above and a high percentage attaining level 5 in the four subjects.
- 57 There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls in either key stage over the last three years.
- 58 Pupils make good progress in their learning. They are alert to asking questions, and can effectively recall prior learning. The practice of setting individual targets for pupils makes a good contribution towards developing their ability to evaluate their own work.
- 59 The under-fives and pupils in both key stages make good progress in their personal and social skills. They are clearly interested in their work and they work productively at their tasks over extended periods. They work together effectively in a group situation, listening attentively and respecting each other's views.
- 60 Pupils of all ages make good use of their creative skills to investigate situations, play imaginatively and to develop and express their ideas.
- 61 The standard of behaviour of pupils of all ages is good. They have a clear understanding of the school's expectations and they are courteous and considerate towards each other and to visitors. This has a positive impact on the progress they make in their learning.
- 62 Whole-school attendance levels for the three terms prior to the inspection were 93%, which is comparable to county and national averages. During the period 2002 –

2005, the school's attendance levels were in the upper 25% of similar schools in terms of the percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals.

- 63 Pupil punctuality is good and the school conforms fully to the legal requirements in terms of administering attendance registers.
- 64 When they are given opportunities, pupils undertake responsibilities confidently and they work independently at their tasks.
- 65 The pupils' awareness of equal opportunity issues is good. They respect diversity in society and have an appropriate awareness of other religions and cultures.
- 66 Pupils have a good understanding of their community and of their own responsibilities towards it. They are aware of the world of work and of local businesses and industries.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

- 67 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 68 In the lessons inspected, the quality of teaching was adjudged to be as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
17%	58%	25%	0%	0%

- 69 This is slightly lower than the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in her annual report for 2005-2006. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good or better (grades 1 and 2) in 79% of lessons and outstanding (grade 1) in 18% of lessons.
- 70 Where there are outstanding features to the teaching, the teachers' expectations are high in terms of pupil achievement and there is a clear focus on teaching techniques and skills that are specific to the subject in question.
- 71 Outstanding use is made of artefacts in religious education lessons in key stage 1 in order to secure pupils' engagement in the lesson and to promote their understanding. In physical education lessons in key stage 2, pupils are encouraged to nurture a self-critical attitude towards their performance and to investigate ways of improving their work.
- 72 There are a number of good features that are common to all lessons. There is a good working relationship between teachers and pupils; everyone is treated fairly and there are high expectations in terms of self-discipline. The teachers successfully motivate and sustain pupils' interest. Class control is effective and

pupils receive good support to complete their tasks. Appropriate intervention challenges pupils' ideas and improves the quality of their learning.

- 73 The teachers are knowledgeable of the subjects they teach. They plan appropriately for all ages and ability ranges, including the under-fives.
- 74 Lessons are presented in a knowledgeable manner and an appropriate range of teaching and learning strategies are used, including group and whole-class work. Equal opportunities are promoted and a high priority is given to developing the pupils' bilingual competence.
- 75 In a small number of lessons, the tasks are not sufficiently extensive to challenge the pupils, little is achieved within the period in question and the resources provided are not suitable for the work in question. Few opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and to make their own decisions.
- 76 There are good features to assessment and recording in both key stages, but there are some shortcomings in the arrangements in key stage 2.
- 77 The teachers carefully observe the pupils at work and they provide appropriate support and guidance. Written work is marked regularly and at times there are useful suggestions for improving the content and the accuracy of the language used, but this is not done consistently enough in key stage 2.
- 78 The termly targets set for pupils give them clear improvement aims and they make a good contribution to improving their ability to be self-critical. The school has recently developed self-assessment procedures, with particular reference to key stage 1, but to date these have not led to an improvement in pupils' work.
- 79 Comprehensive records are kept of the achievements of pupils of all ages. These include the Baseline Assessment, National Curriculum assessment results and other standardised tests.
- 80 There are appropriate procedures for assessing the core subjects and the majority of foundation subjects. However, the assessments are not analysed in sufficient depth in order to raise standards, particularly so in key stage 2.
- 81 The quality of the annual reports to parents is good and they conform to statutory requirements. They provide appropriate information about pupils' achievements and about their personal and social development. The target booklets sent to parents with the pupils' homework give useful guidance on how to make further improvements.

**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**

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

- 83 The school responds well to pupils' needs and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that conforms to statutory requirements.
- 84 There are appropriate schemes of work that provide continuity and progress in pupils' learning in all curriculum subjects, but the planning for teaching the key skills is not as detailed. There are shortcomings in the planning for information and communication technology.
- 85 The school promotes the pupils' bilingual skills effectively and due prominence is given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, particularly so in the humanities subjects, art and music.
- 86 The pupils' learning experiences are enhanced through a wide variety of out of school hours activities. These include competitions and sports, residential and educational visits. These activities make a major contribution towards the standards achieved by pupils and towards their educational and personal development.
- 87 There is good provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to differentiate between good and bad and during the periods of collective worship they are given good opportunities to reflect and to consider their own lives and those of others. Socially responsible attitudes are nurtured in the pupils and they teach them to relate to others in a caring and sensitive manner. The Comenius Project has made a major contribution to developing pupils' awareness and understanding of their own culture and of other cultures.
- 88 There is a good partnership with parents and this was reflected in the positive response received from parents through the questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting. Parents appreciate the work of the school and they are active in raising considerable sums of money for school funds.
- 89 There are effective arrangements for communicating with parents, but the school Prospectus and the Annual Report of the Governing Body to parents do not contain the required information about provision for disabled pupils.
- 90 There are strong links between the school and the local community. Village residents respond well to school events and celebrations.
- 91 There are productive links with other local primary schools and with the catchment secondary school.
- 92 The local visits and the close co-operation with various agencies deepen pupils' knowledge of the world of work, but little attention is given to the development of pupils' enterprise skills.
- 93 The learning experiences effectively promote sustainable development education. There are effective paper recycling and waste reduction arrangements, and through specific activities and visits, pupils' understanding of the importance of protecting the environment is reinforced. Due prominence is given to raising pupils' awareness of global citizenship in the school curriculum.
- 94 The pupils' experiences across the curriculum enable them to gain a range of skills that are valuable in terms of lifelong learning. The pupils display good problem-

solving and co-operational skills but they do not receive sufficient opportunities to develop into independent learners and to manage their own learning.

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

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

- 95 The findings of the inspection team differ from the grade 1 judgement in the school's self-evaluation report. The team was of the view that there are no outstanding features in the quality of provision.
- 96 The care, support and guidance provided to pupils are good. By providing a wide range of educational and social opportunities, the school effectively prepares its pupils to be rounded and confident citizens.
- 97 The staff know the pupils well and they are caring of and sensitive towards them. The pupils are happy to approach them for educational and personal support.
- 98 There is good co-operation with parents, Local Education Authority agencies and external agencies in issues related to the welfare and care of pupils.
- 99 The under-fives settle in quickly at school and they are confident in their involvement with other children and adults.
- 100 Pupils have access to a high quality programme of personal and social education and health education. The school focuses on developing in pupils an increasing physical and emotional awareness in the context of their relationships with friends, family and their immediate environment. A great deal of good work has been done in the context of 'The Healthy School'.
- 101 The School Council is an effective means for pupils to influence decisions taken about their welfare and wellbeing at the school.
- 102 The school takes effective action to monitor attendance and punctuality.
- 103 The pupils are carefully supervised and care is taken to ensure that they are safe during their time at school. There are well-established and appropriate policies for securing pupils' health and safety and there are sound procedures for conducting risk assessments.
- 104 There are effective arrangements for child protection and they are known to all staff.
- 105 There is good provision for pupils with additional learning needs and it fulfils the requirements of the Code of Practice. The school identifies the pupils' learning needs at an early stage and intervenes when required.
- 106 The individual education plans are detailed and they contain achievable targets. Pupil progress is effectively monitored.
- 107 The school receives very effective professional support from Local Education Authority staff and external agencies in assessing, reviewing and supporting pupils' progress.

- 108 Effective strategies are implemented to promote good behaviour and to ensure that the behaviour of individual pupils does not have an adverse effect on their own progress or that of others.
- 109 A wide range of policies are effectively implemented in relation to gender equality, racial inter-relationships and acknowledging and respecting diversity. They are effectively implemented.
- 110 Reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that no disabled pupils would suffer from being treated less favourably.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

- 111 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 112 The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction to the work of the school and effectively co-ordinates the work of the governing body and the teaching team in order to provide the best possible education for pupils.
- 113 The school's day-to-day procedures are based on sound principles and agreed values. Equality for all is promoted and the contribution of each individual is valued.
- 114 The headteacher is well supported by the teaching staff. They shoulder a good measure of responsibilities, but there is room to further develop their monitoring and evaluation role.
- 115 Appropriate consideration is given to national and local priorities in the planning of developments. The school has gained external accreditation through The Healthy School, the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and Investors in People.
- 116 The school has responded purposefully to workforce remodelling requirements by producing a detailed action plan. The plan contains a clear timescale for action together with the financial implications of the development in question.
- 117 The whole-school targets and the targets and priorities outlined in the School Development Plan are challenging, realistic and achievable.
- 118 The staff are managed effectively by the headteacher. There are appropriate performance management arrangements for improving the skills and competence of individual staff and achieving the school's priorities. There are also good arrangements for providing support and training for the newly qualified teacher.
- 119 The governors are very supportive of the work of the school and they work effectively with the headteacher in setting the strategic direction of the school. They meet regularly and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They regularly attend the training

sessions arranged for them by the Local Education Authority and have a clear understanding of the school's development needs. They undertake their legal responsibilities in full and have a clear understanding of their responsibility as a 'critical friend' to the headteacher.

120 The governing body's monitoring and evaluation role has not been fully developed.

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

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

121 The findings of the inspection team differ from the grade 3 judgement in the school's self-evaluation report. Although there is room to further develop the self-evaluation arrangements, the shortcomings in the present system are not important ones.

122 The headteacher, governors and staff are knowledgeable of the school's performance and they use the information effectively to make improvements in the educational provision and to raise pupils' standards of achievement. The school's judgement matches the findings of the inspection team in five of the seven Key Questions.

123 The self-evaluation arrangements established during the last three years ensure that all curriculum areas are evaluated in turn. Appropriate strategies are used to collect evidence, including scrutinising pupils' work and analysing teachers' assessments. Effective use is made of Local Education Authority criteria when coming to a view on standards achieved in subjects.

124 Pupils are given good opportunities to influence the school's development through the School Council, but there are no arrangements for gathering parents' views on the educational provision.

125 The concise self-evaluation report presented to the inspection team prior to the inspection is clear, readable and of good quality. It identifies the school's strengths and notes the areas and aspects that require further development.

126 Effective use is made of the information resulting from the self-evaluation in determining the priorities in the School Development Plan. The plan is of good quality and is a useful document in giving a sense of direction to the work of the school. Adequate resources are allocated for implementing the plan and there are effective arrangements in place to evaluate the impact of implementing the priorities on the school's development.

127 The school has made good progress in addressing the five Key Issues highlighted in the 2001 Report.

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

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

- 128 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 129 Staffing levels at the school are good and class sizes are comparatively small. Teachers have enough expertise to teach all aspects of the curriculum effectively and they regularly update their teaching skills through training.
- 130 A part-time teacher has been employed to ensure that teachers receive planning, preparation and assessment time. This has led to an overall improvement in educational provision and to strengthening information technology and design and technology throughout the school.
- 131 There is an adequate supply of resources for the under-fives and for teaching all curriculum subjects. They are in good condition and are conveniently located.
- 132 There is sufficient accommodation for fulfilling all the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is in good condition and is used effectively by teachers and kept particularly clean by the cleaning staff.
- 133 The school is aware of any adaptations it would have to make to provide disabled access.
- 134 The use of resources is regularly reviewed in order to achieve value for money. The subject co-ordinators and the class teachers order resources according to the priorities of the School Development Plan and the annual self-evaluation timetable. The good use made of teacher expertise and the practice of exchanging classes to teach subjects such as physical education and music has led to higher standards.
- 135 The school gives good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Welsh

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

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

#### **Good features**

- 136 The pupils listen well to their teachers and to the contributions of other pupils and the majority are happy to answer questions, showing appropriate interest and understanding.
- 137 Pupils in key stage 1 talk confidently to each other and with adults and they follow instructions well. They read confidently and with appropriate expression and they use different strategies to deal with unfamiliar words. They exhibit good understanding when discussing the contents of books.
- 138 Pupils in key stage 1 show an increasing understanding of sentences and punctuation as they write independently for various purposes. They develop their

ideas sensibly and make good progress in their spelling, use of linkwords and in their variation of sentence patterns.

- 139 A clear majority of pupils in key stage 2 speak clearly and communicate freely and in an extended manner. Many are independent readers and they read with accuracy and with sensible expression. They discuss the authors and characters of books intelligently.
- 140 Pupils in key stage 2 write in a good range of different forms. The written work of a minority of pupils is interesting and lively and it contains a variety of sentence patterns.

### **Shortcomings**

- 141 A lack of fluency and understanding hampers the reading of a minority of pupils in key stage 2.
- 142 There are errors of syntax in the written work of key stage 2 pupils and the punctuation of the majority of older pupils is not accurate enough.

## **Design and technology**

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

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

### **Good features**

- 143 Pupils in both key stages use an appropriate range of media such as paper, cardboard, stiff material and textiles when undertaking their activities. The tasks reflect an appropriate range of measuring, marking, cutting and shaping skills.
- 144 Pupils in key stage 1 make good use of mechanisms such as hinges to create movement and they use electrical circuits to create light in a model of a lighthouse. They have a good understanding of the requirements of the tasks and they follow instructions in detail.
- 145 Pupils in key stage 2 give good consideration to the requirements of the task in question as they embark upon their design and make activity. They follow specific design stages, giving appropriate attention to different ideas before selecting the best idea. They label their drawings appropriately in order to highlight detail or note a specific measurement.
- 146 Pupils in key stage 2 make appropriate use of simple mechanisms and electrical components in their products. They show good understanding of the way in which timber frames can be built and of how they can be reinforced and strengthened.
- 147 Pupils in both key stages give good attention to the finish of their products and by conducting an objective evaluation of them; they identify methods of improving their work.

### **Shortcomings**

- 148 Pupils in both key stages do not make sufficient use of information technology to control devices.
- 149 Pupils in both key stages are too dependent on the teacher's guidance and they do not think of their own ideas for creating objects.
- 150 The specification for creating products in key stage 2 is too generalised, and as a result the work that is produced is too superficial.
- 151 The work on mechanisms in key stage 2 is too elementary.

## 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

- 152 The geographical investigative skills of key stage 1 pupils are good. They can describe and draw a detailed map of their journey to school, giving clear directions by using terms such as to the right, to the left and straight on. They use simple co-ordinates and a key correctly to identify the location of objects on a map. They can locate Dolwyddelan on a map of Wales and they know about the nations of the United Kingdom.
- 153 When discussing the local area, pupils in key stage 1 can refer to a good number of geographical features and use the appropriate technical terms. They are well-informed about the differences between human and physical features in the area and about the way in which human beings have made their mark on the environment. They can compare the characteristics of their village with those of a holiday resort in detail. They discuss the characteristics of the weather and its effects in great detail.
- 154 Pupils in key stage 2 describe the geographical features of their area in detail, displaying a good awareness of the comparative distances of nearby villages. They can locate the main towns in Wales on a map and are well-informed about countries, capital cities, oceans and seas throughout the world. They read maps that are appropriate to their ability and use grid references when reading locations on an ordnance survey map.
- 155 When studying maps and photographs from an economically developing country, pupils in key stage 2 get a clear picture of the quality and features of the lives of its people. They compare the weather, temperature and seasons of the area with those of their own area and they show a good awareness of the impact of climate on people's lives and lifestyles.

### Shortcomings

- 156 There are no important shortcomings.

## Music

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

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

### Good features

- 157 Pupils in both key stages know a considerable number of songs, including folk songs, cerdd dant and popular music. They sing them tunefully, displaying control of breathing, dynamics and pitch.
- 158 They are familiar with many of the musical elements, and by key stage 2, the pupils are able to change from one element to another with ease when clapping or singing.
- 159 In key stage 1, the majority of pupils know the names of a range of instruments. They can select suitable instruments to create different sound effects in order to present a story and follow a graphic score. The finished presentation is well-produced and exhibits good development in the pupils' understanding of musical elements.
- 160 In key stage 2, the pupils successfully experiment with a good range of instruments to create highly effective compositions.
- 161 The pupils who play the recorder achieve good standards. A small number of pupils also benefit from the guitar lessons they receive at school.
- 162 In both key stages, the pupils listen to a wide range of music. Good emphasis is placed on Welsh heritage as well as on the traditions of various other cultures. They knowledgeably describe and compare the characteristics of the music they hear, using the appropriate musical terms.

### Shortcomings

- 163 There are no important shortcomings.

## Physical education

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

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

### Outstanding features

- 164 Pupils in key stage 2 practise and develop their skills through a wide variety of gymnastics activities. Through regular self-evaluation, they refine their skills and achieve an outstanding level of performance.
- 165 By moving, jumping and landing and transferring weight from one part of the body to another, pupils in key stage 2 produce high quality shapes. They form a series of activities that emphasise changes in shape, speed and direction, and they achieve outstanding standards of performance.

### Good features

- 166 Pupils in both key stages dress appropriately in lessons and they work physically hard in the sessions. They follow the teacher's instructions in detail and have a good understanding of the requirements of the activities in question and of the expectations in terms of the quality of their performance. They describe the standard of their own work and that of others in detail, using the correct technical vocabulary.
- 167 Pupils in both key stages know the changes that the body undergoes as they exercise.
- 168 Pupils in key stage 1 show increasing control of their bodies as they move about the hall in different ways and at different speed. They step, jump and land confidently and display good balance and speed when rolling, turning, swinging and using apparatus. The pupils create a good variety of shapes as they work at various levels and when changing direction.
- 169 In games lessons, pupils in key stage 1 practise a good variety of techniques when throwing and catching a ball. They play competitive games fairly, keeping to the rules.

### **Shortcomings**

- 170 There are no important shortcomings.

## **Religious education**

### **Key Stage 1 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

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

#### **Outstanding features**

- 171 Pupils in key stage 1 make outstanding progress in their knowledge of the Hindu religion and they are able to discuss in simple terms the significance of light, by talking about Jesus the light of the world and Divali in the Hindu religion.
- 172 The ability of key stage 1 pupils to link lessons from the Bible to the way they live their everyday lives is also an outstanding feature.

#### **Good features**

- 173 Pupils in both key stages have a sound knowledge of the Bible as a special book for the Christian faith and they have a good knowledge of stories about the life of Jesus. They are also able to describe the main Christian celebrations.
- 174 Pupils of all ages discuss relationships and they know about the importance of values such as tolerance, caring for others and kindness. They understand that praying is part of worship and they create their own simple prayers for different occasions.
- 175 In key stage 2, the pupils begin to appreciate diversity in religion and culture, and they have a sound knowledge of the reasons for conducting pilgrimages in various religions.

176 Following their visit to a local church and taking part through role-play in a baptism service, the understanding of key stage 2 pupils of the main features of places of worship and the significance of certain rituals was deepened and developed.

### **Shortcomings**

177 There are no important shortcomings.

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

Having studied the inspection findings, the staff and governors at the school are glad to state that the report is fair, positive and constructive.

The inspectors' findings concur with the school's judgements on the key questions in the self-evaluation document.

The inspection was an evolving process which was typified by a professional and productive dialogue. The school was given the opportunity to display the required evidence, to confirm its opinions and to express its views on specific aspects. It took advantage of this opportunity to exhibit all of the school's strengths. It was felt that the role of the nominee had been a highly valuable aspect of the process.

The inspection acknowledged that there were very many positive features. Emphasis was placed on the pupils' success in developing their bilingual competence. Reference was also made to pupils' good behaviour and to the fact that they were courteous and considerate. The report acknowledged the high quality of teaching, a wholly justifiable comment in light of the commitment and skills of our teachers.

There is a clear focus on standards and attainment at the school. The outstanding standards achieved in religious education and physical education are acknowledged, and we take great pride in this. There are many aspects in which we achieved good standards, and we feel as a school that we can now aim at further development in this regard. It was agreed that certain aspects require improvement; amongst them the opportunity for pupils to work more independently, improvements in writing standards in Welsh and making more purposeful use of information and communication technology across all curriculum subjects. We shall now move on to revise the School Development Plan in order to respond positively to the five recommendations made in the report and the school will, as a result, move on to achieve higher standards.

At Ysgol Dolwyddelan, there is a genuine feeling of pride in everything that we do. The inspection gave the school an opportunity to look in detail at all aspects of its life and work, and the preparation of the self-evaluation report was a positive process that enabled us to identify all the school's achievements to date. This reflected the culture of self-criticism that is an integral part of the life of the school.

The inspection has reinforced our strengths and clearly identified the areas in which we can seek further development.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Gynradd Dolwyddelan
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Ffordd Tŷ Isaf Dolwyddelan Conwy
Post-code	LL25 0SZ
Telephone number	01690 750293
Headteacher	Mr Dafydd M Horan
Date of appointment	January 1980
Chair of governors	Mr E Noble
Reporting inspector	Wil Williams
Dates of inspection	26-28 February 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	1	3	9	2	6	5	3	7	36

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	2	2	2.7

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	13:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	2:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	16
Teacher (fte): class ratio	0.7:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2006	92%	92%	92%
Summer 2006	94%	96%	92%
Autumn 2006	94%	97%	95%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	23%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 1

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2006</b>	Number of pupils in Y2	6
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included		

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	50%	In Wales	80.9%

### National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 2

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006</b>	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) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	100%	In Wales	74.3%

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent a total of six inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- twelve lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship; and
- a range of extra curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began; and
- senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- sixteen responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and

- a wide range of pupils' past and current work.

The inspection team held post inspection meetings with staff and governors.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspects	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr Wil Williams	Rgl	Context; Summary; Recommendations; Annexes; Key questions 1; 5; 6 and 7.	Design and technology; geography; physical education.
Ms Lisa J Davies	Team	Key questions 2; 3; 4.	Welsh; music; religious education
Mr W Owen	Lay	Contributions to key questions 1; 3; 4 and 7	

**School's Nominee:** Mr Dafydd Horan

**Contractor:** Arolygiadau Deheubarth Inspections; Afallon; Heol Llandeilo; Gorslas; Llanelli; SA14 7LU.

### 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.