

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Abertaf Primary School
Troedpennar Terrace
Abercynon
Rhondda Cynon Taff
CF45 4TS**

School Number: 6742057

Date of Inspection: 23/03/09

by

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Date of Publication: 29/05/09

Under Estyn contract number: 1113808

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Abertaf Primary School 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 Abertaf Primary School took place between 23/03/09 and 25/03/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Luned Eleri Betts 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 **full** 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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Abertaf Primary School is situated in the village of Abercynon at the lower end of the Cynon Valley. The school serves a catchment area that comprises privately owned houses as well as a small council estate. It caters for learners aged three to eleven years of age.
2. At the time of the inspection there were ninety-two pupils on roll, most of whom live in the immediate vicinity. This figure includes five pupils in the area autistic unit for those aged seven to eleven years of age plus twelve full-time equivalent children of nursery age. The total number on roll is lower than during the last inspection. Nursery and reception children are in the same class and are taught together in mixed groups according to their stage of development. The Foundation Phase is being delivered therefore, to both nursery and reception children.
3. On entry to school the attainment of children is varied and generally represents the full range of ability. The majority of pupils come from predominantly English speaking homes, but around 8% come from ethnic minority groups. None uses Welsh at home. Approximately 17% are entitled to free school meals a figure that is about the same as local and national levels. One pupil receives support in English as an additional language (EAL). Two are looked after by the local authority.
4. In addition to the autistic unit there are four mainstream classes including the mixed nursery and reception class. The other three mainstream classes also contain two age groups. Children under-five and key stage (KS)1 pupils are taught in one building while KS2, the autistic unit and school administration occupy the other building. The school employs six full-time teachers. During the inspection a supply teacher was in charge of a class in KS2 as the permanent teacher had been absent for sometime as a result of an accident.
5. Twelve pupils (13%) are on the special educational needs (SEN) register; one has a statement. This is below national and local levels. No pupil has been excluded in the last twelve months.
6. The school was last inspected in April 2003. Since then a new deputy has been appointed and most members of the governing body (GB) are new to their role. The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time in 2006.

The school's priorities and targets

7. The school's motto is 'Live, Laugh, Learn.'
8. The school's main aims are to:
 - provide a broad, balanced, differentiated and stimulating curriculum that operates in an atmosphere in which the child is happy and confident;
 - provide opportunities to develop the learning skills of pupils in order that they may access the entire curriculum;
 - raise learners' awareness of issues that are prevalent in our multi-cultural society which help develop their moral values;
 - develop in our pupils an aesthetic sense of awareness by providing rich and varied materials, situations and experiences;
 - foster a sense of love for music in every child by affording many and varied musical opportunities;
 - broaden the horizons of pupils by enhancing curriculum provision;
 - value every child for the contribution he/she makes to the life of the school;
 - create a healthy school where children are aware of the benefit of healthy eating and regular exercise;
 - develop forums that allow children to have influence and responsibilities within the school; and
 - develop a curriculum which places greater emphasis on thinking skills.
9. The school's priorities for 2008-9 are to:
 - continue the implementation of the Foundation Phase;
 - continue to develop the monitoring, self-evaluation and documentation aspects of leadership and management;
 - develop pupil self-assessment;
 - develop the role of subject leaders;
 - develop boys' writing skills;
 - provide effective information for stakeholders;
 - establish portfolios to assist with teacher assessment and moderation;
 - improve the quality of information communications technology (ICT) resources and implement the ICT action plan;
 - further develop the performance management process;
 - raise standards in teaching and learning in design technology and religious education;
 - improve the provision for the cwricwlwm Cymreig; and
 - develop the Physical Education and School Sports (PESS) initiative.

Summary

10. Abertaf Primary School provides a happy environment for its pupils. All learners are treated equally and a feeling of mutual respect between pupils, and between pupils and teachers is evident. Learners have a sense of ownership of their school community.
11. Provision and standards in the nursery and reception class, the school's overall preparations for implementing the Foundation Phase and provision in the special unit are outstanding features.
12. Shortcomings were identified in subjects in both key stages. The inspection team felt however, that the school's new management structures had already begun to address many of these shortcomings.

Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	Grade 3
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 3
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

13. The inspection team agreed with the grades given by the school in five key questions. In the other two questions a lower grade was given as important shortcomings were identified.

Standards

14. The national curriculum (NC) assessment percentages in both key stages and comparisons with similar schools have to be treated with caution because of the small number in each cohort and because the school moved in 2008 to a group with a higher number of learners eligible for free school meals.
15. In KS1 in NC assessments in 2008 all pupils attained Level 2, the level expected of learners who are seven years of age, in English, mathematics and science. The core subject indicator (CSI), which is the number of pupils who

attain a Level 2 in all three core subjects, also produced a 100% success rate. Generally girls outperform boys. The school's performance is well above local and national averages. This shows a steady improvement over the last three years, particularly in English and mathematics.

16. In 2006 and 2007 when compared with schools in the same free school meals group, results in English and mathematics in KS1 were in the lower 50% but in science and the CS1 they were in the upper 50%. In 2008 however, when placed in a higher band of free school meals, the school was in the upper 25% in all subjects and the CS1.
17. In KS2 NC results over the last three years generally indicate a downward trend. However, in English in 2008, the percentage of pupils who attained a Level 4, the level expected of learners who are eleven years of age, was above local but below national averages. The percentage of those attaining the higher Level 5 was well above these percentages. In mathematics the percentage attaining a Level 4 was lower than both percentages but those attaining a Level 5 was higher. In science pupils' attainment in Level 4 and 5 was above both percentages. The CS1, however, was below. Generally girls outperform boys in English.
18. In 2007 compared with similar schools attainment of pupils in KS2 was in the upper 25% in English, mathematics and the CS1 and in the upper 50% of schools in science. However, in 2008 the school was in the lower 50% in mathematics and science, while in English it was just below the upper 25%. The CS1 was in the lower 25% of schools.

Grades for standards in lessons observed during the inspection

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	50%	28%	3%	-

19. These figures are below the national averages as published in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) Annual Report for 2007-8, where overall standards in primary schools in Wales are reported to be Grade 2 or better in 84% of lessons. However, standards are above the Grade 1 national average of 12%. These percentages show an increase since the last inspection.

Grades for areas of learning for under-fives

Area of learning	Under-fives	Foundation Class
Personal and social development well-being and cultural diversity	Grade	1
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade	1
Mathematical development	Grade	1
Welsh language development	Grade	1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade	1
Physical development	Grade	1
Creative Development	Grade	1

20. The overall quality of the provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Under-fives	KS1	KS2
English		Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics		Grade 2	Grade 2
Science		Grade 3	Grade 3
Welsh second language		Grade 2	Grade 2
Design Technology		Grade 4	Grade 4
Information Communications Technology		Grade 4	Grade 4
History		Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography		Grade 4	Grade 4
Art and design		Grade 2	Grade 2
Music		Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical Education		Grade 3	Grade 3
Religious Education		Grade 3	Grade 3
Foundation Phase	Grade 1		

21. Almost all learners achieve the targets and goals set for them in core subjects and succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. Children in the under-fives class make outstanding progress and pupils in both key stages make good progress towards fulfilling their potential in the majority of subjects.
22. In the key skills of language, numeracy and ICT children achieve well in the under-fives class. In KS1 and KS2, standards are good in listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy. However, competence in ICT skills has many shortcomings. Creative skills are good overall in most subjects; competence in bilingualism is good.
23. Overall pupils make good progress in the development of their personal, social and learning skills; children in the under-fives class make outstanding progress. Learners are developing a good sense of belonging to the community and an understanding of the world of work.
24. Pupils' behaviour generally and the respect they show to adults and each other are good. They have a good understanding of equal opportunities because this is firmly embedded in the school's work.
25. At 91.45 % the average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is below local and national averages and those for similar schools.

26. Pupils, including those in the special unit, are well prepared for effective participation in the workplace.

The quality of education and training

Grades for teaching

27. The quality of teaching in sessions observed during the inspection was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
35%	32%	32%	-	-

28. These figures are below the national averages as published in HMCI's annual report for 2007-8, where overall the quality of teaching in primary schools is reported to be a Grade 2 or above in 83% of lessons. However, the percentage of Grade 1 teaching is well above the national figure of 16%. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.
29. Outstanding features seen in teaching include lively, energetic presentations, strategies that make learning fun, activities which foster independent learning, and excellent questioning and explaining skills. Good features include effective use of resources, both indoors and outdoors and good deployment of support staff. Where there are shortcomings in teaching, introductions are too long, there is too much teacher direction and tasks are not sufficiently challenging.
30. Assessment has many good features. Pupils' progress throughout the school is assessed on a regular basis and a variety of approaches are used effectively to make judgements about children's attainment. Class work is marked regularly. Annual reports to parents are of a very good quality and meet statutory requirements.
31. The curriculum is broad and appropriately balanced except for the limited provision in ICT. It fulfils statutory requirements for the Foundation Phase and the NC and religious education in both key stages. The school caters for the wide range of learners.
32. Schemes of work are in the process of being appropriately refined to encompass recent initiatives and reflect the changing curriculum both in the Foundation Phase and KS2. All key skills in the under-fives and the special unit have a clear focus in planning but the focus in KS1 and KS2 is on literacy and numeracy and is limited in ICT.
33. Provision for the cwricwlwm Cymreig is good overall. Multiculturalism also features appropriately in curriculum provision.
34. Learning experiences successfully promote education for sustainable development.
35. The focus on healthy eating and the need for exercise is well promoted across the school both in classes and whole school collective worship.

36. The school's provision for personal and social education (PSE) is good. Learners' moral development is good; pupils are made aware of what is right and wrong.
37. Collective worship fulfils statutory requirements. Appropriate messages linked to Bible stories are conveyed on most occasions. The lack of a spiritual ethos and opportunities for learners to reflect on moral issues on some occasions however, are important shortcomings.
38. A good range of extra curricular activities are provided. However the provision for competitive and inter-school sporting events is limited. Visits to the community and further afield consolidate pupils' learning.
39. The school has a homework policy, but the current document does not fully reflect the needs of the school. The provision of homework in KS2 is a shortcoming as it is not consistently provided for pupils and does not increase in quantity and regularity as learners move up the school.
40. Partnerships with parents, the community and other schools and providers are positive. Overall, daily informal contact with parents and guardians is good. There is a small but very active home-school association. A few dedicated parents organise fundraising and social events.
41. Partnerships with industry are good and the school benefits materially from links, for example through governors' places of work.
42. The quality of care, support and guidance provided by the school is good. Teachers know their pupils well and are sensitive to their individual needs. There is a high emphasis on learners' well-being.
43. There are well established transition arrangements from KS2 to KS3 with the schools to which pupils transfer.
44. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) is good and fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Pupils' needs are identified early, and support is provided promptly.
45. In the special unit staff are particularly effective and experienced in dealing with specific problems, such as social interaction and communication difficulties. These pupils make good progress in line with their abilities. These pupils are fully included in all appropriate school activities; this is an outstanding feature .
46. There are effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality. Pupils' behaviour is also closely monitored and when required, action is taken to support pupils who may experience difficulties.
47. Pupils are positively encouraged by staff to recognise and respect diversity. The school secures equal treatment of disabled learners.

Leadership and management

48. Leadership provides successful direction through aims and values that are reflected well in the life and work of the school. The headteacher is committed and the school has moved forward significantly since the appointment of the new deputy headteacher and new members of the GB, but this has not yet fully impacted on standards in all subjects. The special unit and the under-fives class are managed exceedingly well.
49. All staff work together as an effective team and, alongside governors, are committed to meeting the needs of pupils. Day-to-day managerial arrangements are firmly established, and are well understood within the school.
50. Progress since the last inspection has good features that outweigh shortcomings. Schemes of work have improved and teachers' planning is now monitored. More effective use is made of data to measure performance and stakeholders are more aware of the school's performance when compared with other schools. However, design technology still has shortcomings and ICT in particular has not made the progress expected in line with current national developments in the subject.
51. Over recent months a culture of self-evaluation has successfully been developed. Many of the recommendations in this report have already been identified as areas to develop in the school's self-evaluation report.
52. Members of staff are aware of the importance of their annual subject reviews in the self-evaluation process and have identified many of the shortcomings in subjects. In particular, a critical subject review by the ICT co-ordinator reflects the shortcomings in the subject and its effect on standards. Consequently an action plan has been put in place. Unforeseen difficulties, however, arising from the eventual high costs of installing new computers and a suite, have caused the actions recommended to be delayed.
53. The role of parents, learners and GB as stakeholders in the self-evaluation process is progressing appropriately. The school is looking to develop this aspect further.
54. Overall, resources are effectively managed. Staffing levels are appropriate. Support staff have a key role in the school and make a good contribution to maintaining pupils' standards of achievement.
55. The quality of the accommodation is good overall. The refurbishment of the under-fives and KS1 outdoor play area is an outstanding feature and provides an exceptionally stimulating, safe and secure area for the youngest children.
56. The school makes good use of its accommodation and the buildings are well maintained. A number of health and safety issues identified by the inspection team were discussed with the GB.

57. The school maintains an appropriate provision of resources to support learning in most subject areas and to match the educational needs of the pupils. The provision for ICT resources however does not match the learning priorities of the school.
58. The governing body (GB) complies with statutory requirements. Members make a valuable contribution and are fully committed to the school's aims. New members are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the self-evaluation process and realise the need to develop their role further in school management and self-evaluation issues. They are appropriately involved in helping to set the school's strategic direction and in reviewing expenditure. Overall, financial implications are clearly thought through and the school gives good value for money.

Recommendations

In order to move the school forward staff and the GB need to:

- R1 raise standards in ICT and ensure there are appropriate resources to achieve this in both key stages;
- R2 raise standards in geography and design technology and address shortcomings identified in other subjects;
- R3 continue to improve attendance levels;
- R4 ensure that whole school collective worship consistently includes an appropriate spiritual ethos;
- R5 update the homework policy and ensure that provision for homework is consistent between classes;
- R6 further develop the role of the GB in the management of the school; and
- R7 continue to develop a culture of self-evaluation by building on the recent involvement of staff, GB, parents and learners in the self-evaluation process.

Aspects of R 1, 2, 3, and 7 are identified as priorities in the current school development plan (SDP).

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 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

59. The grade awarded by the inspection team does not match the Grade 2 given by the school in its self-evaluation report, because the team felt that there were too many shortcomings to award a Grade 2. Although a minority of subjects were given a Grade 4 as a result of the scrutiny of previous work, the inspection team felt that the school was aware of the shortcomings and that these subjects were already improving.
60. The NC assessment percentages in both key stages and comparisons with similar schools have to be treated with caution, because of the small number in each cohort and because the school moved in 2008 to a group with a higher number of learners eligible for free school meals.
61. In KS1 in 2008 the cohort was significantly smaller than either the 2006 or 2007 cohorts and consisted of only five pupils. All attained Level 2 in English, mathematics and science. The CSI therefore also produced a 100% success rate. Three pupils attained a Level 3, the higher level in mathematics and science, while two pupils attained the higher level in English. Generally girls outperform boys. The school's performance is well above local and national averages; results were in line with the school's predicted performance. This shows a steady improvement over the last three years, particularly in English and mathematics.
62. In 2006 and 2007, when compared with similar schools, results in English and mathematics in KS1 were in the lower 50%, but in science and the CS1 they were in the upper 50%. In 2008 however, the school was in the upper 25% of the higher performing schools in all subjects, including the CS1.
63. In KS2 results over the last three years generally indicate a downward trend. However, in English in 2008, the percentage of pupils who attained a Level 4 was above local but below national averages. The percentage of those attaining the higher Level 5 was well above local and national percentages. In mathematics the percentage attaining a Level 4 was lower than both but the number attaining a Level 5 was higher than both percentages. In science pupils attainment is above both local and national percentages and the number attaining a Level 5 was also higher. The CS1, however, was below both percentages. Generally girls outperform boys in English. Targets set were generally well matched to assessment results.
64. In 2007 when compared with similar schools the attainment of pupils in KS2 was in the upper 25% in English, mathematics and the CS1 and in the upper 50% of schools in science. However, in 2008, when compared with schools who have a higher percentage of free school meals, the school was in the lower 50% in mathematics and science, while in English it was just below the upper 25%. The CS1 was in the lower 25% of schools.

Grades for standards in lessons observed during the inspection

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
19%	50%	28%	3%	-

65. These figures are below the national averages as published in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) Annual Report for 2007-8, where overall standards in primary schools in Wales are reported to be Grade 2 or better in 84% of lessons. However, standards are above the Grade 1 national average of 12%. These percentages show an improvement in standards since the last inspection.

Grades for areas of learning for under-fives

Area of learning	Under-fives	Foundation Class
Personal and social development well-being and cultural diversity	Grade 1	
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 1	
Mathematical development	Grade 1	
Welsh language development	Grade 1	
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 1	
Physical development	Grade 1	
Creative development	Grade 1	

66. The overall quality of the provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Under-fives	KS1	KS2
English		Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics		Grade 2	Grade 2
Science		Grade 3	Grade 3
Welsh second language		Grade 2	Grade 2
Design Technology		Grade 4	Grade 4
Information Communications Technology		Grade 4	Grade 4
History		Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography		Grade 4	Grade 4
Art and design		Grade 2	Grade 2
Music		Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical Education		Grade 3	Grade 3
Religious Education		Grade 3	Grade 3
Foundation Phase	Grade 1		

67. Children under five consistently achieve outstanding standards and progress towards fulfilling their potential. In both key stages pupils achieve good standards in knowledge, understanding and skills and acquire new skills and

increase their understanding and fulfil their potential well in the majority of subjects..

68. Almost all learners, including those in the special unit, achieve the targets and goals set for them in core subjects. Pupils respond well to the targets set for the end of KS1 following formal baseline assessments in nursery and reception; children under five often achieve better than is expected.
69. A consistent good feature throughout the school is that learners succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. This is especially true of pupils who come from outside the catchment area to attend the special unit.
70. In the key skills of language, numeracy and ICT children achieve very well in the under-fives class. They confidently converse and communicate with adults and display eagerly their skills in numeracy and in using the computer.
71. In KS1 and KS2, standards are good in the key skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy. Pupils use these skills confidently across most subjects. However, competence in ICT skills has many shortcomings in classes in both key stages, except for the special unit where standards overall are good in relation to learners' ability. Rarely were learners seen using computers during the inspection. Creative skills are good overall in most subjects and competence in bilingualism across the school is good.
72. The good thinking skills of older pupils in KS2 prepares them well for the next stage in their learning.
73. Overall pupils make good progress in the development of their personal, social and learning skills with children in the under-fives class making outstanding progress in these aspects.
74. In all classes pupils know the learning intentions and the skills they need to achieve. They are aware of how they are progressing as they respond well to the effective support provided when completing tasks. However, they are not always aware of what they need to do to improve, except for older pupils in KS2 who make good use of peer assessment and opportunities for self reflection.
75. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Most have good attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons. The youngest in particular, enjoy finding things out for themselves. Most willingly co-operate and support each other when working in groups and pairs and at other times. They sustain good levels of concentration and even the least able persevere well with their tasks.
76. Pupils' behaviour generally and the respect they show to adults and each other are good. As a result, there is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school. There are a few, however, who present teachers with challenging behaviour. On occasions this adversely affects their peers and the progress of lessons.

77. The foundations for good behaviour are laid extremely well in the under-fives class and older pupils are good role models. In their responses at the pre-inspection meetings and in the questionnaires, parents and the GB agree that with a few exceptions pupils behave well in school. There have been no exclusions for many years. In discussion with the school council, pupils say that although they sometimes squabble, friendships are restored and they generally get on well. They feel that boys and girls share and play together well.
78. Throughout the day pupils move sensibly in and around the school and between buildings. Behaviour in the hall during whole school assembly and in the separate canteen is good. Lunch times and the breakfast club are enjoyable social occasions.
79. Pupils have a good understanding of equal opportunities because this is firmly embedded in the school's work. Nearly all are sensitive to the needs of their peers and younger ones.
80. At 91.45 per cent the average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is below local and national average and those for similar schools. Absences are caused mainly by illness but the overall rate is adversely affected by family holidays in term time.
81. Nearly all pupils arrive on time at the start of the day. They respond well to the termly and end of year rewards for full attendance. They appreciate the fact that the class with the best attendance and those with improved attendance are congratulated at the weekly celebration assembly.
82. Pupils, including those in the special unit, are well prepared for effective participation in the workplace. They understand the importance of working together as a team.
83. Learners develop a good sense of belonging to the community and an understanding of the world of work because they are involved in a good range of projects and events as well as visits to appropriate places. For example they are involved in the annual Remembrance Day service. Year (Y)5 and Y6 pupils have worked with Road Safety Officers and their peers in the neighbouring Welsh medium school on the Safe Route to School project. The Eco committee and pupils in the special unit are involved in the Bryncynon project to develop the land beyond the boundary wall as a teaching resource.
84. Pupils throughout the school have roles and responsibilities, such as 'Helpwr Heddiw' and monitors. In Y6 they take their responsibilities as 'buddies' seriously and show great commitment to their roles. They develop a good understanding of corporate responsibilities through their membership of the school council and Eco committee.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

85. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
86. The quality of teaching in sessions observed during the inspection was as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
35%	32%	32%	-	-

87. These figures are below the national averages as published in HMCI's annual report for 2007-8, where overall the quality of teaching in primary schools is reported to be a Grade 2 or above in 83% of lessons. However, the percentage of Grade 1 teaching is well above the national figure of 16%. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.
88. Examples of outstanding teaching were seen in the majority of classes but the majority were in the under-fives class. Good features outweighed shortcomings in the class for younger pupils in KS2.
89. Overall teachers prepare interesting activities to motivate pupils. They set suitable time limits for the completion of tasks, and make effective use of various strategies to help pupils succeed in their work. They intervene effectively in the learning when necessary, and ensure that all pupils are given opportunities to participate in lessons. Lessons are taught at an appropriate pace.
90. All teaching staff have excellent working relationships with their pupils, which creates a purposeful working atmosphere. The wide range of teaching strategies has a positive impact on learning, and ensures that pupils apply themselves to work well. Teachers exercise authority clearly and fairly, and have high expectations about behaviour.
91. In general, teachers have good subject knowledge in most subjects and are familiar with recent developments in primary education. A thorough understanding by teachers and support staff of the principles of the Foundation Phase is evident in the planning and delivery of the curriculum for learners aged 3 to 7 years of age. All staff are competent in teaching the content of the NC programmes of study, the agreed syllabus for religious education and the PSE framework. Overall teachers succeed in challenging the needs of all pupils, including those with ALN.
92. Teachers' planning is well structured and the clear learning objectives are communicated to pupils. Short term planning also includes differentiated activities, resources and assessment procedures. Learning support staff are

involved closely in planning, and are briefed appropriately about what they are expected to do.

93. Teachers ensure active participation by all pupils. Effective use is made of various types of class organisation. At best, homework tasks are closely linked to what is being taught, but this is inconsistent across the school.
94. In lessons teachers promote equal opportunities well, and treat all pupils equally, irrespective of race, gender or disability. They cater well for the learning needs of all pupils, including those with SEN, those with EAL and the more able and talented. They meet the English language needs of pupils particularly well with programmes, such as Catch Up and Teaching Talking, being used effectively to impact positively on standards. Teachers ensure there are opportunities for pupils to use their proficiency in Welsh and English to improve their understanding in various curricular areas; they develop pupils' bilingual skills well.
95. Outstanding features seen in teaching include:
 - lively, energetic presentations;
 - strategies that make learning fun;
 - activities which foster independent learning; and
 - excellent questioning and explaining skills.
96. Good features seen in teaching include:
 - effective use of resources, both indoors and outdoors; and
 - good deployment of support staff.
97. Where there are shortcomings in teaching:
 - introductions are too long;
 - there is too much teacher direction; and
 - tasks are not sufficiently challenging.
98. Assessment has many good features. Its use in the under fives class is highly effective and is clearly linked to the Foundation Phase. Focused observations of children by staff are particularly effective. Baseline assessments are implemented purposefully.
99. Pupils' progress throughout the school is assessed on a regular basis and a variety of approaches are used effectively to make judgements about children's attainment. These include day-to-day observations, standardised tests and teachers' assessments. Appropriate use is made of this data to set end of key stage targets and to track the progress of individuals and year group cohorts over a period of time. Data is carefully analysed and the information provided is used effectively to cater for the needs of individual pupils.
100. Methods of day-to-day recording of individual pupils' progress are effective, resulting in careful monitoring, and in planning further development. Record of

achievement files contain samples of pupils' work and a record of their progress in the core subjects.

101. Pupils' class work is marked regularly and, in general, teachers make positive comments. In the best examples, work is annotated by teachers and there is a clear reference to lesson objectives and guidelines about the way forward. In a few cases there is no clear guidance on how pupils can improve.
102. On the whole, pupils have a good understanding of the purpose of assessment and an awareness of some of their strengths and weaknesses. As yet, however, they are not fully involved in planning their own progress, although the school is in the process of further developing such practices as group and individual target setting and self and peer assessment. The school is actively involved in cluster moderation and standardisation.
103. Annual reports to parents are of a very good quality, and meet statutory requirements. They inform parents of their children's progress in all areas of learning and subjects and give appropriate guidelines about future learning. Parents appreciate the fact that they are invited to respond to reports and they also praise the open door policy. They are happy to visit the school each term to discuss their child's progress.
104. In order to ensure continuity in pupils' learning, relevant information is transferred to local secondary schools, to the local education authority (LEA) and to various outside agencies. The school is appropriately involved in moderation and standardisation procedures with other schools.

Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

105. The grade awarded by the inspection team does not match the Grade 2 given by the school in its self-evaluation report because the team felt that although there were many good features in the provision, there were too many shortcomings to award a Grade 2 for this question.
106. The curriculum is broad and appropriately balanced except for the limited provision in ICT. It fulfils statutory requirements for the Foundation Phase and the NC and religious education in both key stages.
107. Overall, provision is suitably differentiated for learners in mixed age classes, especially for under-fives and KS1; the school caters for the wide range of learners.
108. Curriculum documents include appropriate policies and schemes of work. Often based on LEA and commercial schemes, they are adapted appropriately to suit the needs of the school. In most subjects they provide guidelines for a two year cycle to avoid duplication in classes which include learners across two year

- groups. Some non-core subjects in KS2 are taught in blocks of time so that pupils can look at subjects in depth; this is not effective in all subjects.
109. Schemes of work are in the process of being appropriately refined to encompass recent initiatives and to reflect the changing curriculum both in the Foundation Phase and KS2. In KS1 the transition between NC requirements and Foundation Phase outcomes are well developed but at present is impacting negatively on coverage in some subjects.
 110. In the under-fives class, short term planning is flexible and child centred to suit the needs and interest of the children. As a result, it is appropriate that nursery and reception children are taught together in mixed groups linked to their stages of development.
 111. Key skills are effectively identified in short term planning. Literacy and numeracy receive a clear focus in the under-fives class where provision for ICT is also good. In both key stages, planning for listening and speaking is consistently good while reading, writing and numeracy is good overall but the provision for ICT in mainstream classes has many shortcomings in important areas. In the special unit provision for all key skills is good.
 112. Strategies for the provision of bilingualism are positive. In the under-fives class and KS1 it is good and often outstanding; in KS2 it is good overall. Learners are provided with opportunities to see Welsh displayed alongside English, to read Welsh books, to be proactive in a Welsh assembly and use Welsh during daily life.
 113. Provision for the cwricwlwm Cymreig is good overall. It is effective in history where Abercynon in the past is used well to provide pupils with an insight into their heritage. They are also made aware of Welsh singers and composers.
 114. Multiculturalism features appropriately in the school's curriculum. Learners in the under -fives class and KS1 are aware of the food, the colours and customs linked to India and China, while pupils in KS2 discuss features of countries like Egypt, see greetings in a number of languages on classroom doors and become aware of other cultures through their studies in religious education.
 115. Learning experiences successfully promote education for sustainable development. Although the school has not yet been received any Eco school awards, recycling and conserving energy activities are well guided and developed by the enthusiastic Eco committee. Pupil monitors successfully supervise the use of energy and water. They are aware why these actions are important for the future of the world and that they are playing their part as global citizens. Activities such as the Yellow Woods Challenge are reported fully in the monthly Eco news letter published by them. They work together as 'Crazy Daises' to take care of the school environment by helping plants grow.
 116. The focus on healthy eating and the need for exercise is well promoted across the school both in classes and often in whole school collective worship. The fruit tuck shop is enthusiastically supervised by pupils. The selling of fruit and toast introduces pupils to the possibilities of setting up a business and

establishing entrepreneurial skills. This aspect, however, is not sufficiently developed across the school.

117. The school's provision for PSE is good. Effective activities include identifying the characteristics of a good person, discussing emotions and the importance of school rules. Learners' moral development is good; pupils are made aware of what is right and wrong. Activities promoting an awareness of equal opportunities are positive aspects of school life. Pupils collect for good causes such as Children in Need and become aware of their responsibilities towards others.
118. Collective worship fulfils statutory requirements. Appropriate messages linked to Bible stories are conveyed on most occasions. The lack of a spiritual ethos and opportunities for learners to reflect on moral issues however are significant shortcomings.
119. A good range of extra-curricular activities are provided. There are many opportunities in after school clubs to develop skills in art, French and sporting activities.
120. Visits to the community and further afield consolidate pupils' learning. These include the local fire station, park, riding centre, Techniquest, the National Botanic Gardens and castles in South Wales. Visitors enhance the curriculum; these include peripatetic teachers, as well as people representing other cultures, poets and musicians.
121. The school has a homework policy but the document does not fully reflect the needs of the school. The provision of homework in KS2 is a shortcoming.
122. The school has positive partnerships with parents, the community and other schools and providers. Overall daily informal contact with parents and guardians, particularly by the teacher in the under-fives class and the headteacher who is on the yard at the start and the end of the day, is good.
123. The quality of information for parents and guardians of children in the under-fives class and KS1 is very good. Weekly topic sheets, the notice board and other communications keep them well informed about themes and the ways parents can help their children. They are often invited to take part in activities such as the recent Mother's Day celebrations.
124. The Language and Play and the Number and Play sessions for parents and children are very well attended and beneficial. Parents in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting feel they are very well informed about the Foundation Phase curriculum.
125. Parents receive a copy of the prospectus when their children start school and most sign the home-school agreement. However, they feel that an updated document at more regular intervals would improve their knowledge of how and what their children are taught. The school is already responding to this.

126. At the start of each term parents receive a 'welcome back to school' letter that contains useful diary dates of events. Other written communications such as planned educational visits are sent on a needs basis.
127. There is a small but very active home-school association. A few dedicated parents organise fundraising and social events. They provide generous financial support and valuable resources, such as the outdoor classroom, support for the new reading scheme and equipment for physical education.
128. Adults provide valuable support in class, on visits and with practical activities that are highly valued by the school and have very positive effects on pupils' learning. The link governor for SEN occasionally helps in the special unit. Invited members of the community attend concerts, celebrations and other events.
129. As part of the Small Schools Network the school is involved in termly initiatives such as improving the outdoor environment. However, links with surrounding primary schools are not well developed in relation to inter-school sporting competitions.
130. The school is in partnership with an initial teacher training university and has close links with surrounding colleges of further education. It provides very valuable training and work experience for student teachers and child care students.
131. The school has good links with the clergy who regularly take assemblies; as part of their learning activities younger children have recently visited a nearby church.
132. The school has good links with industry. Educational visits and visitors from the community help to raise pupils' awareness of the world of work both past and present. Younger children work with 'people who help us'. Pupils in both key stages work with professionals such as a theatre group, poet and storyteller. Y6, including those in the special unit, take part in the Crucial Crew project. The police, fire service and school nurse support the school's PSE programme.
133. There are strong links with the Education Business Partnership and pupils are involved in workshops and projects such as science and road safety. The headteacher, school clerk and two teaching assistants have benefited from placements in industry that enhance their teaching, management skills and professional development.
134. The school benefits materially from its links, for example through governors' places of work. Donations of resources through these links, such as reading books and equipment to develop the outdoor environment, enrich the curriculum.
135. Although the school does not prepare pupils well to become confident users of ICT in the community, other initiatives, such as ensuring their healthy lifestyles

and their understanding of the importance of sustainable development reflect national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

136. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
137. The quality of care, support and guidance provided by the school is good. Staff ensure that all pupils feel valued. They know them well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Pupils state that they feel safe and well supported. All members of staff are qualified in first aid.
138. Induction arrangements for pupils are good and help younger children to settle quickly into routines. There are effective procedures, including a 'buddy' system, in place to support pupils who join the school at a later stage. New pupils in the special unit benefit from visits to the school and their families receive a fully comprehensive transition booklet.
139. There are well established transition arrangements from KS2 to KS3 with the schools where pupils transfer and the school is involved in a transition plan with its main receiving secondary school. Y6 pupils are involved in cross phase bridging units in English and science and the PESS project. Sixth form students run a variety of after school sports clubs that are valued by the older pupils.
140. The quality of personal support and guidance provided by the school through its PSE programme is good. Activities such as circle time and the breakfast club have a positive impact on the well-being of pupils and the school council is effective in ensuring that help is available for pupils with problems. Through the school council's activities, pupils show a good understanding of their responsibilities and citizenship.
141. The school's policies and procedures for ensuring every child's healthy development, safety and welfare are good. They are complemented by activities, such as the fruit tuck shop and road safety training. Risk assessments are completed when necessary.
142. There is an appropriate policy and sound procedures for child protection that follow LEA guidelines. The headteacher is the named person and there is a second named person and a link governor, with responsibility for this aspect. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.
143. The provision for pupils with ALN is good and fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. This is well managed by both the headteacher and the teacher in charge of the special unit, who share the role of special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). Pupils' needs are identified early, and support is provided promptly.

144. Individual education plans (IEPs) are shared with pupils and parents and they include appropriate and realistic targets, which are reviewed twice a year. Effective use is made of outside agencies, such as speech therapists and the educational psychologist, to give further support to pupils with particular needs.
145. Pupils with SEN receive good support in class from teachers and support staff and a small group of Y4 and Y5 pupils is withdrawn from class for special help once a week. Pupils in need of help with literacy or numeracy benefit from initiatives such as Catch Up, Spotlight and Teaching Talking and the school makes appropriate provision in classes for more able and talented children through providing suitable extension work. All pupils with ALN make good progress in literacy and numeracy relative to their age and abilities.
146. Provision in the special unit is outstanding. Staff are particularly effective and experienced in dealing with specific problems, such as social interaction and communication difficulties. Pupils benefit greatly from highly structured teaching with much repetition, and are rewarded and praised for high standards of work and behaviour. IEPs are linked mainly to social aspects and pupils receive excellent preparation for life skills, for example, in exciting 'Time to Talk' sessions with the visiting speech therapist. There is a strong relationship of trust between staff and pupils in this class, which fosters learning. Pupils make good progress in line with their abilities. Pupils in the special unit are fully included in all appropriate school activities.
147. There are effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality. The school operates a first day response to absence. It sets targets and works very closely with the education welfare officer and the few families that give concern.
148. Pupils' behaviour is very closely monitored and when required, action is taken to support pupils who may experience difficulties. Teachers and support staff apply policies for behaviour management consistently. Appropriate measures are in place to eliminate bullying and all forms of harassment and the school responds immediately to incidences of oppressive behaviour.
149. One of the On Track activities deals effectively with pupil behaviour and confidence building, and parents and pupils sign a Code of Conduct agreement in order to promote positive behaviour.
150. Achievements in and out of school are celebrated at special weekly assemblies. All adults in the school have a role in the reward system.
151. All learners are supported appropriately, taking account of their backgrounds, abilities, race and gender. They have equal access and opportunity to participate in all school activities. Those with EAL receive effective help, and make good progress in learning English. An outstanding feature of the provision is the way pupils from the special class are particularly well integrated into the life of the school.

152. Pupils are positively encouraged by staff to recognise and respect diversity. The school liaises effectively with outside agencies that bring cultural experiences into the school.
153. The school secures equal treatment of disabled learners and is wheelchair accessible. Pupils with vision impairment are able to access learning effectively with help from the LEA. The school has appropriate documentation to ensure equality and accessibility in line with statutory requirements.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

154. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report but does not match the Grade 3 given for Key Question 1. This is because the school has moved forward significantly since the appointment of the new deputy headteacher and new members of the GB, but the measures put in place have not fully impacted on standards in all subjects.
155. Leadership provides successful direction through aims and values that are reflected well in the life and work of the school. Together with practical policies they provide a common purpose and ensure that the school does its best for all pupils.
156. The headteacher is committed to improving the quality of provision and standards in the school. She is supported ably by the deputy head teacher who has been largely responsible since her appointment for the management of the Foundation Phase and the raising of standards in her own Y5 and Y6 class. The special unit is managed exceedingly well by the teacher in charge. The deployment of support staff is well organised.
157. The senior management team (SMT) ensure that all members of staff are aware of and committed to their newly-acquired job descriptions. Subject co-ordinators are making a concerted effort to improve standards and quality through scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, and through newly established effective monitoring of teaching. Information gathered is used effectively to adapt curriculum delivery if necessary.
158. All staff work together as an effective team and, alongside governors, are committed to meeting the needs of pupils. Day-to-day managerial arrangements are firmly established, and are well understood within the school. Regular staff meetings establish good understanding and involvement of members of staff in school development.
159. The school takes appropriate account of national and local priorities. There is a clear focus on raising standards of performance through its participation in cluster school, LEA and Welsh Assembly Government initiatives.

160. The school benefits from being part of the Small Schools Network, and is involved in a variety of projects delivered by various providers, for example, the recycling initiatives Its promotion of inclusion and tackling social disadvantage is good.
161. The well established performance management systems directly influence the continuing professional development of all teaching and support staff. Under the team leadership of the headteacher and her deputy arrangements to manage staff performance are effective and in line with national guidelines. The professional development and training of teachers and support staff is good and forms a key element of the SDP.
162. Dissemination of the professional development of teachers and support staff has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, for example, in the teaching of Welsh, and in the promotion of physical education through the PESS programme.
163. The GB makes a valuable contribution to the success of the school and complies with statutory requirements. Members are fully committed to the school's aims and discharge their duties and responsibilities well; they are appropriately involved in helping to set the school's strategic direction. They are well informed about areas of the school's work through their subject link roles but realise the need to develop further their role in school management issues.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

164. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
165. The team agreed with the school's judgements in five key questions, but awarded a lower grade in two because of shortcomings identified.
166. Progress since the last inspection has good features that outweigh shortcomings. In the self-evaluation report prepared for the current inspection, the school presented a clear picture of actions taken to address the key issues identified in the last report. Targets set in the post inspection action plan were appropriate but did not address all issues successfully.
167. Progress in improving standards in religious education, which was unsatisfactory in KS2 in the last inspection, has now improved but, as in the last report, shortcomings are identified in design technology. Some subjects, identified as satisfactory last time, still have shortcomings. ICT in particular has not the made the progress expected in line with current national developments in the subject. Schemes of work and outside support have ensured that shortcomings identified in most other subject areas have also been addressed. Teachers' planning, which was identified as a shortcoming is now monitored to

ensure that it adequately reflects schemes of work. The school has also increased its effectiveness in the use of data to measure performance and has taken steps to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the school's performance when compared with other schools.

168. The school has over the recent months successfully developed a culture of self-evaluation. The self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection focuses clearly on the school's strengths and indicates where development and improvement is necessary. Many of the recommendations in this report have already been identified as areas to develop in the school's self-evaluation report.
169. The LEA analysis of results is used effectively to move the school forward and to identify trends. Even though small cohorts make this difficult, aspects such as the writing skills of boys, receive effective attention through the SDP.
170. Data from NC end of key stage assessments during the last three years has been used effectively to set targets and to predict learners' performance. Data obtained from baseline assessments is used well to predict the performance of learners at the end of KS1. Those who are predicted not to achieve the level expected of learners who are seven years of age are targeted effectively using initiatives that have a positive impact on standards.
171. Members of staff are aware of the importance of their annual subject reviews in the self-evaluation process. A critical subject review by the ICT co-ordinator, for example, reflected the shortcomings in the subject and their effect on standards. Consequently an action plan was put in place. Unforeseen difficulties, however, arising from the eventual high costs of installing new computers and a suite have caused the actions recommended to be delayed.
172. Focused, regular monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' work occurs regularly. Subject co-ordinators, SENCo and the SMT evaluate the effectiveness of short term planning; findings are fed into the SDP. Consequently the document is becoming an effective tool in moving the school forward with a focus on appropriate targets; it includes costings, responsibilities for action and effective timescales for completion.
173. The role of parents and learners as stakeholders in the self-evaluation process is progressing appropriately. The school is looking to develop this aspect through the further use of questionnaires to parents. Learners use the avenue of the school council well to ensure that their opinions are sought and heeded.
174. Although most members of the GB are new to their role, they are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the self-evaluation process. They have undertaken their own review and drawn up their own action plan. They are frequent visitors to school and observe aspects of daily life. Many have conscientiously attended staff meetings to further their understanding of current initiatives. In the pre-inspection meeting they displayed a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

175. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report. Although standards in key question 1 were judged to be a Grade 3, the team felt that recent outstanding developments and refurbishments in the accommodation particularly in relation to the Foundation Phase were outstanding and that this question was worthy of a Grade 2.
176. Staffing levels are appropriate and members of staff have agreed defined roles and responsibilities. Teaching staff are suitably qualified.
177. In line with national guidance, the school has restructured teachers' responsibilities in order to implement teaching and learning responsibilities. All teachers make effective use of appropriate time during the school week for planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA).
178. Strategies to cover PPA time offers pupils enhanced opportunities for drama and music and supports provision for the Foundation Phase. The headteacher, who is one of the two SENCOs, covers for the teacher in charge of the unit. This enables her to have hands on experience in the unit and provides good value for money.
179. Support staff has a key role in the school making a good contribution to maintaining pupils' standards of achievement.
180. Staff members regularly attend courses which are linked to priorities in the SDP. The deputy has completed a higher degree in leadership and management, while the teacher in the unit is following a postgraduate course in autism. Support staff in the unit are also completing courses which enhance their knowledge of autism, while a member of support staff is currently following a qualification in children's learning. Generally staff have received much training on the Foundation Phase and Welsh.
181. The quality of the accommodation is good overall. The refurbishment of the under-fives and KS1 outdoor play area provides an exceptionally stimulating, safe and secure area for the youngest children.
182. The school makes good use of its accommodation. Indoors the space in both buildings is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and these are well maintained. Both buildings, however, suffer patches of water penetration because of vandalism to the roof. A number of health and safety issues identified by the inspection team were discussed with the GB.
183. The library situated in the KS2 building is used effectively by pupils in both key stages. The multi-purpose hall situated in the KS1 building is small, but used well for assemblies, physical education and after school clubs.

184. There is a separate spacious canteen at the far end of the KS2 playground. It is used appropriately for breakfast club and lunches. However the fabric of the building is not as well maintained as the other two school buildings.
185. The school has a toilet for the disabled. However there is a lack of privacy for staff and girls in KS2 as access to the staff toilet is in the girls' toilet and shower area.
186. Staff work hard to create a stimulating learning environment. There are good displays of pupils' work throughout the school that celebrate their achievements.
187. The outdoor play area for children from three to seven years of age has a soft play surface. The role play areas for these children are used effectively to develop children's speaking and listening skills.
188. Both hard surface playgrounds are of a good size. A range of out door play equipment has recently been added but playground game markings are faded and there is a lack of stimulus to enhance outdoor play.
189. The school buildings and site are looked after well by the hard working caretaker and cleaning staff. The administrative staff help to ensure that the school runs efficiently during the day.
190. The school maintains an appropriate provision of resources to support learning in most subject areas and to match the educational needs of the pupils. The provision of ICT resources, however, is inadequate and does not match the learning priorities of the school.
191. Resources are effectively managed; subject co-ordinators identify priorities to ensure resources for their subject support learning opportunities for pupils. The GB contributes to the financial decisions taken by the school in order to achieve the targets set in the SDP; this process positively influences the management of resources in the school.
192. Overall financial implications are clearly thought through and the school gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Foundation Phase

Grade 1

Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

193. All children, including those newly admitted to the class, are completely at home in their new surroundings. They succeed in a very short time in forming close relationships with adults and other children. Their ability to concentrate for sustained periods is excellent. They quickly develop into very confident individuals who can engage in solitary play and also can complete tasks and activities in groups. They take turns readily and successfully handle their new learning experiences. Their confidence in all these situations enables them to become independent thinkers and respond to reason.
194. Children have an excellent awareness of the need to display appropriate behaviour in a range of different class and whole school situations. They volunteer avidly to stand in front of the class to display work or take part in an activity. They are very aware of the importance of kindness and how feelings can change from happiness to sadness and jealousy.
195. The manner in which children quickly begin to take responsibility for their personal hygiene is an excellent feature of their well-being. They fully understand the importance of eating healthy foods and looking after their teeth. They have a very sound awareness of other cultures; for example they know that the food, way of writing, customs and celebrations in China are very different from their own experiences.

Shortcomings

196. There are no important shortcomings.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

197. Children's listening skills are very well developed. This enables them to carry out instructions confidently and take a full part in class discussions. Children answer questions correctly often giving extended answers and providing reasons. They express their opinions very clearly and concisely. They understand that descriptive words are very important to convey their full meaning. They can suggest a very good selection of words to describe how frogspawn changes into tadpoles. Their recall of a large number of nursery rhymes which they enunciate clearly, is an outstanding feature

Good features

198. Children establish a sound understanding that letters represent sounds. They form letters accurately and can provide many words beginning with the letter 'f'. They take an avid interest in books and handle them correctly. They begin to distinguish print and pictures in stories. They can talk about the characters in their class stories; for example, they can recall the main events in Jack and the Beanstalk. Older children engage readily in emergent writing and begin to understand that there are many purposes to writing. Many develop good skills

in over and underwriting and begin to demonstrate independence when conveying their thoughts in writing.

Shortcomings

199. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematical development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

200. Children handle numbers very well. They count confidently forwards and backwards to ten and above and they show a full understanding of the concept of numbers when adding and taking them away. They can work out how the counting system works in tens to a very high number. They have an excellent recall of number songs and rhymes. They also have a very good understanding of time and have a full awareness of the concepts of day and night and yesterday, today and tomorrow. They can work out accurately how many 'sleeps' until a certain event takes place.

Good features

201. Children use terminology well to discuss length and weight and have a sound understanding of the meaning of the words 'tall', 'short', 'full' and 'empty'. They are able to sort clothing suitable for night and day correctly into sets. They have a clear understanding of shapes which they can name in Welsh and English. They further their awareness of two dimensional shapes when creating repeating patterns in a sequence. They also understand the concept of sequence when working as a group on a television chart. Their use of positional language develops well.

Shortcomings

202. There are no important shortcomings.

Welsh language development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

203. Children's attitudes towards their new linguistic experiences are extremely positive. They enjoy greeting adults in Welsh and using the words and phrases they have acquired. They are very confident when using new vocabulary and can recall correctly previously learnt vocabulary and phrases. Their knowledge of songs that repeat the language patterns they know and of traditional Welsh songs is very good.

Good features

204. Children enunciate clearly when counting, describing colours and shapes and giving greetings. They show a full understanding of basic instructions and give the correct response in words and action. They can add phrase and word extensions to the phrase 'Ga i? They have a good range of vocabulary in relation to clothes and parts of the body and in a Welsh assembly quickly learn the words for foods that are healthy and unhealthy.

Shortcomings

205. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

206. Children have a very good understanding of the seasons; they can identify the many aspects in which the seasons differ and they can talk about their main features. They have a very good awareness how animals live in different surroundings and a variety of environments and can identify which ones live in water. Their knowledge of the life cycle of the frog is excellent and their response to the daily development of the class frogspawn is infectious. They can relate their knowledge of the life cycle to the butterfly also.

207. Children have a full understanding that some everyday materials change and that the change is irreversible. They understand that light comes from a variety of sources. They know that there are different types of houses such as terraced and detached ones. They know about places of work and can identify what they would like to do when they grow up. They have a clear understanding of the roles people play at a wedding and some of the customs linked to this ceremony. Children have an excellent knowledge of Bible stories and wedding customs of different religions, and retell the story of Rama and Sita enthusiastically.

Shortcomings

208. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

209. Children develop an excellent awareness of space when using physical spaces inside and outside the classroom. They move around objects very well and travel using parts of their bodies confidently. They are very successful when

forming their bodies into a variety of shapes to convey the story 'From Frogspawn to Frog'. They are able to curl, wriggle and jump to show the different stages in the life of a frog very effectively. They evaluate the performance of their peers very sensibly.

Good features

210. Children use their bodies well when mirroring actions and understand the difference between walking, skipping, jumping and climbing. They display good co-ordination when handling a range of small equipment and small world toys. They handle gluing, writing and painting equipment carefully and successfully manipulate malleable materials. They handle computer parts well and a range of musical instruments effectively.

Shortcomings

211. There are no important shortcomings.

Creative development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

212. Children sing their large repertoire of songs tunefully and have an excellent sense of rhythm and beat. They understand the importance of using appropriate actions to convey meaning and do so eagerly. They know the names of a range of instruments and can identify which instruments are best to convey the movements of a tiny caterpillar. They explore instruments very well and find ways of making them 'whisper'.

Good features

213. Children have an excellent awareness of the range of textures in the materials they can use. They create an attractive firework display using glitter and paint. They create colourful flower pictures from hand paints and develop their understanding of pattern and colour when creating their own versions of Elmer the Elephant. They emulate successfully the work of artists such as Miro and Mondrian. They create their own versions of Divali lamps and use malleable material well to create faces. They role play very effectively in the home corner and handle cooking utensils sensibly and purposefully.

Shortcomings

214. There are no important shortcomings.

English

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

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

Good features

215. In KS1 pupils develop good listening and speaking skills. When taking part in conversations and dialogues, they show an eagerness and confidence to listen to their peers and to play a full part in discussions themselves.
216. In KS1 learners listen consistently well to class stories and answer questions correctly when quizzed on events recalling events and characters. They speak fluently about their activities and when necessary make good use of appropriate descriptive words to convey their thoughts and opinions.
217. In KS1 pupils can recognise and use letter blend sounds. Younger ones confidently identify a range of initial sounds and in Y2 they identify vowel phonemes and can find words with similar rhyming patterns.
218. Pupils across KS1 make a concerted effort to read from the interactive whiteboard and are eager to browse in books. They talk fluently about the stories they read and what the pictures convey. More able readers discuss books with confidence and can recall a great deal of what they have previously read. Many read aloud expressively and know the importance of changing the level of the voice when reading questions and answers in text. The majority break down unfamiliar words and can make appropriate predictions about a story. Most self-correct if they have misread.
219. In Y1 and Y2 pupils write for a variety of purposes; for example they understand how to record rules, how to write ingredients and instructions in recipes and how to compose letters. They begin to realise how a poem looks in writing and they attempt to write simple ones.
220. In KS1 pupils practise their writing conscientiously and form letters accurately on the writing table; they develop well from emergent to independent writing.
221. Spelling and punctuation develops well as pupils in KS1 realise the importance of remembering basic rules and conventions in their writing.
222. In KS2 pupils extend their vocabulary well and gain greater confidence in speaking and listening skills. Many are eager to converse with adults and do so clearly and confidently. They develop their speaking skills in a variety of contexts, such as when they evaluate their completed tasks and the work of others. They respond in extended sentences to questions and pay attention to using correct language terminology.
223. Pupils in KS2 read with expression and understanding and can relate the facts and fiction they read to their personal experiences. They deal with challenging

and difficult vocabulary well; the majority read without hesitation and with purposeful expression. They pay appropriate attention to punctuation when reading in order to understand the drift of the story. They have a good knowledge of the terminology of books and use words such as 'illustrator' in the correct context.

224. Older pupils in KS2 express the differences between dialogue and narrative and can discuss the effectiveness of story beginnings and the need for powerful endings.
225. Younger pupils in KS2 can write for a number of audiences and purposes. They understand what makes a good poem and can compose a variety of them on subjects such as animals and astronauts; they also compose shape poems. They understand what is meant by a fairy tale; for example they can rewrite the tale of Little Red Riding Hood effectively. They can describe events from the past and use speech marks effectively when writing passages about the past and present.
226. Older pupils in Y5 and Y6 understand the important features they must consider when writing stories. Consequently they plan their stories well, giving appropriate attention to settings and characters. They understand that using techniques such as alliteration can improve the quality of their poems. They use appropriate linguistic techniques to describe memories and to write autobiographies and letters about events.
227. In KS2 pupils have a good knowledge of spelling and punctuation and use this to enhance their work. Many use dictionaries and thesauri confidently to improve the quality of their written work. The handwriting skills of the majority develop well.

Shortcomings

228. There are no important shortcomings but a minority of pupils pay insufficient attention to handwriting; this impacts on the quality of the presentation of their work.

Mathematics

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

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

Good features

229. In KS1 pupils recognise numbers to a 100, and count confidently backwards and forwards. Their understanding of place value to a 100 is good, and they recognise what each digit represents. Their mental recall of addition and subtraction facts is good, with quick recall of number bonds to twenty. They understand that two numbers can be added in any order. Their recognition of odd and even numbers is good, as is their recognition of sequences of

numbers, for example, counting in fives. They apply these concepts purposefully to real life problems.

230. Most pupils in KS1 measure length, height and weight effectively using non-standard measures. They have a good knowledge of the names of many two-dimensional shapes, and sort them correctly according to the number of sides and corners. Many pupils recognise right angles.
231. In KS1 pupils' use of positional language is good, and most use appropriate language associated with movement and time. The majority can tell the time accurately to the hour and the half hour and order the days of the week and the months of the year correctly.
232. In KS1 pupils represent data in simple graph form and interpret representations effectively.
233. Younger pupils in KS2 read, write and order whole numbers to 1000 and know several times tables. They have a good recognition of simple fractions and use known number facts and place value to add and subtract mentally. Many have a good understanding of the relationship between addition and subtraction, and between division and multiplication.
234. Older pupils in KS2 demonstrate a sound understanding of the four rules of number. They estimate sensibly, and recall number facts quickly and accurately in mental work, using various strategies. Most are confident when working with decimals, fractions and percentages. They reason and solve problems effectively by using and applying mathematics in practical tasks.
235. KS2 pupils identify a wide range of two and three dimensional shapes, describing their geometrical properties correctly. They demonstrate a sound understanding of standard measures to calculate perimeters and areas and tell the time correctly using analogue and digital clocks.
236. In KS2 pupils present data in a variety of forms and most of them interpret statistical information correctly and extract information effectively from tables, graphs, diagrams and charts. They use mathematical language appropriately when discussing their work.
237. Pupils in KS2 have a good understanding of key mathematical concepts, and see connections between different topics.

Shortcomings

238. There are no important shortcomings.

Science

Key Stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

239. Pupils across the school have a good understanding of the principles of a fair test. They make sensible predictions and identify variables, and form fair conclusions on the basis of their findings.
240. In both key stages pupils represent findings of investigations appropriately in a variety of forms, such as posters, graphs and diagrams, and interpret information appropriately.
241. In KS1, pupils have a good knowledge of the names and properties of a range of materials. Most use appropriate scientific vocabulary related to texture and appearance when describing the materials of everyday objects, and know which materials are waterproof.
242. Y1 and Y2 pupils name light sources confidently and understand that light travels in a straight line. Most have a secure understanding of how to make a circuit.
243. KS1 pupils classify living things correctly and distinguish effectively between living and non-living things. Many have a good understanding of life processes through growing plants. Most name parts of plants correctly and understand well what conditions plants need to flourish.
244. Around half of Y3 and Y4 pupils understand what is meant by friction and gravity, and have an appropriate recall of previous work done on electricity. Most use thermometers accurately when measuring temperature in their investigation into materials that keep objects cold.
245. Y5 and Y6 pupils classify materials accurately using criteria such as solids, liquids and gases. On the whole they have a good understanding of the processes of evaporation and condensation and apply their knowledge effectively to their work on the water cycle. Investigations into properties of solid materials and gases show effective planning of investigative work. Their enquiry into the best thermal insulators to keep liquids warm shows accuracy of measurement and the use of information to draw reasonable conclusions.
246. In KS2 pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the sun, the moon and other planets and realise that the earth rotates around the sun. They are knowledgeable about the phases of the moon.

Shortcomings

247. In both key stages pupils rely too much on teacher direction and do not develop fully the skills of scientific investigation.

248. Pupils across the school do not record information in a sufficient variety of forms and many have difficulty in applying their knowledge in science to everyday events in the world around them.

Welsh second language

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

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

Good features

249. Pupils across the school have a very positive attitude to Welsh and are eager to be pro-active in their Welsh lessons and to practise their knowledge with Welsh speaking adults and visitors. They respond with understanding to Welsh used incidentally during the school day. This is a very good feature of the KS1 class.
250. Pupils across the school respond well to short focused daily sessions consolidating previously learnt words and language patterns. Observations across the three days of the inspection showed that pupils' confidence in using newly learnt vocabulary over a series of days consolidates their skills successfully.
251. In both key stages pupils sing and enunciate a broad range of traditional, popular and repetitive songs tunefully and clearly. They often accompany these with appropriate actions to display their understanding.
252. All pupils respond well to a whole school Welsh assembly where Welsh is a major medium of communication.
253. In KS1 pupils use a range of language patterns including 'Ble rwyd ti'n byw?' to ask where others live and ' Wyt ti'n hoffi?' to ask what people like and they give the correct responses to these questions. They ask and answer a number of other questions requesting and providing personal information.
254. Pupils in KS1 have a good knowledge of the words for colours, numbers, greetings, commands and instructions. They have a sound knowledge of words for the days of the week and months and can say the date in Welsh and describe the weather. They use a number of sentence starters such as 'Ble', 'Pa', 'Beth', 'Ydy' and 'Oes'.
255. In the Y3 and Y4 class pupils use a range of words telling each other what clothes they are wearing. They can add a variety of combinations to extend the use of the language pattern 'Pwy sy'n gwisgo?' Younger pupils in KS2 respond well in the Welsh assembly where they learn and recall a range of foods that are classified as healthy and unhealthy ones.
256. In the Y5 and Y6 class pupils use the irregular short forms of the past tense confidently to ask and answer questions with 'Es i' and 'Ces i'. They extend these patterns adding previously learnt vocabulary. In pairs they can create

dialogues based on these sentence starters and turn them into the correct question forms.

257. Pupils constantly see Welsh books and other resources around them in classrooms and around the school. As they proceed through the school, they make increasing use of their reading skills, reading with relative ease and self correcting words they misread.
258. Learners across both key stages consolidate their oracy skills in writing. In KS1 they can confidently write the language patterns they know and older pupils in KS2 can record dialogues and original descriptions of themselves in writing.

Shortcomings

259. There are no important shortcomings.

Design technology

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

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

Good features

260. Most pupils across the school use tools and equipment safely; for example, when cooking pancakes in KS1 they ensure that preparation areas are clean, and handle knives carefully when preparing vegetables to make 'cawl'.
261. In general, pupils in both key stages apply appropriate knowledge and skills from science and mathematics when working on their design tasks. Many Y3 and Y4 pupils measure carefully when making boxes. Most Y5 and Y6 pupils measure accurately when making shelters and strengthen their models in suitable ways.
262. Pupils across the school have a good awareness of sustainability and issues relating to the environment in their designing and making. Most older pupils in KS2 have an appropriate understanding of the place of design technology in meeting the needs of society.
263. In both key stages, a majority of pupils have some realisation of the importance of initial research as part of the planning process. Y1 and Y2 learners, for example, investigate structures before making models with junk materials and Y3 and Y4 pupils make appropriate studies of pop-up cards on the market before creating their own. Y5 and Y6 learners look at and discuss critically different types of shelters, before designing and making shelters in groups. At the end of the design process Y5 and Y6 pupils evaluate their designs honestly; for example, they suggest ways in which their Venetian masks can be improved.

264. In the special unit pupils make effective use of wooden spoons to make dolls. They draw faces using felt pens and select appropriate materials for dressing the dolls. The finished products are of a good quality.

Shortcomings

265. Nearly all pupils rely on their teachers' ideas when generating initial design ideas, resulting in a lack of creativity in most of the work.

266. In KS1 and at the younger end of KS2 pupils' knowledge of the designing and making process and producing prototypes is underdeveloped.

267. In general, pupils across the school do not evaluate their work as it develops, and do not adapt ideas accordingly.

268. In KS2 pupils' grasp of control technology is limited, and they seldom incorporate elements into their design work.

269. In both key stages pupils' knowledge and use of appropriate technical terms is limited.

Information communications technology

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

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

270. No lessons in ICT were seen during the inspection but evidence in pupils' work and discussions with groups of learners and staff indicated that overall there were shortcomings in many important areas.

Good features:

271. The majority of pupils in KS1 are able to follow simple instructions and select appropriate control devices in responding to on screen instructions.

272. Many younger pupils in KS1 can input simple commands to control devices and change variables in direction and pathways.

273. In KS2 many younger pupils use word processing to create stories, changing font, size, and alignment.

274. A minority of pupils in Y5 and Y6 are able to confidently create simple multi media presentations using a variety of techniques to manipulate and animate text and graphics. They can use applications to enhance their written work in a variety of subject areas.

275. A minority of Y5 and Y6 pupils use simple spreadsheets purposefully to record data and perform simple calculations.
276. Older pupils in KS2 have access to the internet and use this to conduct research for subject based topics.

Shortcomings

277. Learners in KS1 and younger KS2 lack confidence in using ICT and are unfamiliar with basic functions to create or communicate information. Most KS1 pupils are unable to record, save or present their ideas electronically and the work in KS2 does not demonstrate appropriate standards.
278. Younger pupils in KS2 are unable to access the internet or use this resource to conduct research to support their learning.
279. Overall the majority of pupils lack confidence in their ability to select and use appropriate applications to contribute to their work.

History

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

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

280. No lessons in history were observed during the inspection but evidence in pupils' work, the school portfolio of activities in history and talking to pupils indicates that overall standards are good.

Good features

281. Pupils across the school develop a good sense of curiosity about the past. They understand the peculiarities of many historical periods and how life has changed over time.
282. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of chronology in KS1 and understand how they have changed since they were babies. They understand how clothes worn by babies differ from those worn by adults and know that there are specific differences between the lives of toddlers and adults.
283. In KS1 pupils use photographs effectively to distinguish between past and present and use appropriate vocabulary when discussing the past. They are able to tell the difference between toys used in the past and ones they use today and discuss how the variety of toys, such as teddies, has improved from those with which their parents played.
284. Pupils in KS2 increase their knowledge and understanding of the past through a school topic on clothes through the ages. They deduce that clothes often give an insight into how people lived and can offer their own interpretation of events. They understand how clothes worn by the Celts, Romans, Tudors, Stuarts and Victorians reflected the kind of life they lived. They also have a

good awareness of how fashions have changed during the lives of their parents and grandparents, from the 'swinging' 60s to the present day.

285. Pupils across the school successfully empathise with historical characters and make informed judgments on their role. Younger pupils understand what living in a castle was like; visits consolidate their understanding. Older pupils discuss what a king would do in Tudor times, how rich ladies lived and the differences between the lives of the rich and the poor.
286. Pupils in the Y3 and Y4 class have a good understanding of Anglo Saxon and Roman times. In this context they use a range of historical terminology such as 'invaders' and 'settlers'. They have a good knowledge of when the Romans were active in Britain and what effect they had on existing life. They can identify where they settled in Wales and recall historical information well in this context. They question appropriately why historical events developed as they did.
287. In Y5 and Y6 pupils develop a good understanding of life in Victorian times. They know how conditions at the time affected the lives of children and empathise with their plight.
288. Older pupils in KS2 understand the roles some important people played during the Second World War. They understand how the war was fought in the air and what cities were affected during the blitz. They empathise with the way it affected the lives of evacuees and understand the implications on their lives of forced separation and the rationing of food. Pupils build up a sound historical vocabulary including words like 'incendiary' and 'propaganda'. They relate well to the experiences of Ann Frank.
289. Pupils make good use of artefacts and displays in the school museum to understand the history of Abercynon including its dependence on coal. They increase their understanding when visitors to school give their own interpretations and share memories of what the school used to be like in the middle of the 20th century.

Shortcomings

290. There are no important shortcomings.

Geography

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

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

Good features

291. Most pupils in KS1 identify familiar landmarks in the locality, and answer simple questions about physical features when observing the local area from the school yard.

292. A majority of Y1 and Y2 pupils use compass maps correctly, demonstrating the ability of most to follow directions correctly. They draw simple, accurate pictorial maps tracing their journey from home to school.
293. A minority of Y3 pupils have appropriate recall of previous work about Botswana and relate a small number of facts about the way of life there and how it differs from life in this country.
294. Through effective use of a local traffic survey, most older pupils in KS 2 demonstrate appropriate use of geographical skills. Their questionnaires, debate, posters and tables show a good understanding of the importance of observation, collecting, recording and interpreting evidence.
295. Pupils in both key stages have a good understanding of peoples' responsibility for the environment. KS1 pupils recognise the benefits of the school's recycling programme and express their views well about litter in their local area. Y5 and Y6 pupils are well aware of ways in which people can improve or damage the environment; they discuss and debate issues, such as child labour, maturely.

Shortcomings

296. Pupils across the school have little knowledge of the physical and human features of different localities in Wales, Europe and the wider world and have difficulty in comparing Abercynon effectively with other places.
297. The knowledge of the majority of pupils in KS1 in making and reading maps is limited and most are unable to use globes and atlases effectively.
298. Pupils in both key stages do not gather evidence from a variety of sources to answer geographical questions in sufficient depth. They do not use appropriate geographical terms to describe aspects of their work.
299. Overall, there is a lack of depth in investigative work and pupils' geographical inquiry skills are underdeveloped. In KS1, many do not describe features in sufficient detail and in KS2, their skills in investigating patterns in physical and human processes are limited.

Art and design

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

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

300. No lessons in art and design were seen during the inspection but evidence in pupils' work, the school portfolio and talking to pupils indicates that overall standards are good.

Good features

301. Across both key stages pupils develop a good range of artistic skills through using a wide range of media and materials. They experiment with techniques including printing, collage, textiles and patterns.
302. Pupils' previous work shows they make objects and artefacts in two and three dimensions using an appropriate wide variety of materials and textures.
303. Pupils are stimulated as artists because of the prominence given to their own art work and other artists in displays in both school buildings.
304. In KS1 learners are aware of the unique style of Monet. They emulate his techniques, subjects and use of colour.
305. In KS1 pupils understand the importance of colour mixing to improve the effectiveness of their paintings. When talking about weather patterns they create attractive kites and pictures of sunny days, experimenting successfully with colour and tone. In their paintings of umbrellas they show an understanding of the effects printing techniques can produce.
306. Pupils in KS1 use a range of materials effectively. They create attractive images of spring in a variety of materials to reflect successfully the colours of the season. Their pictures of what they see in the environment using pencils and pastels develop a good understanding of line, colour and perspective.
307. Awareness of pattern develops well in KS1 when pupils work as a group to create an elephant, using a range of paper materials and small objects. When designing a coat for a giant, they experiment successfully with repeating patterns. In this task they further their understanding of the fabrics they can use for a collage and develop their weaving techniques.
308. Portraits of special people in wool and pastels displayed in the KS1 gallery show good observational skills.
309. In KS1 pupils produce very attractive screen prints developing their understanding of tone when working with an Indian artist. They begin to understand the variety in multi cultural art and the popularity of particular colours in other cultures.
310. In the special unit, pupils develop a good awareness of pattern when looking at Celtic ones and realise how patterns can help produce an attractive coat of many colours for Joseph. They use the colour wheels in the class to remind them of the possibilities of hues and tones.
311. Younger pupils in KS2 produce very attractive pictures of 'Glistening Leaves' using metallic paint. These they attractively mount to enhance the finished products.
312. In KS2 younger pupils produce attractive masks which display their good awareness of line, pattern and colour. Their observational drawings are also of good quality and show detailed observation.

313. In KS2 pupils recreate paintings based on 'The Snail' by Henri Matisse consolidating their awareness of line, colour and shape.
314. Older pupils in KS2 paint polystyrene tiles producing effective pictures depicting a variety of flower scenes showing detail, and a variety of colour, tone and shape. Older pupils in KS2 also look at patterns in the work of William Morris. They emulate his patterns successfully and do their own research on the work of Laura Ashley. In this class pupils evaluate and reflect on their work effectively.

Shortcomings

315. There are no important shortcomings but across both key stages experiences in using the computer to create pictures are limited.

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

316. Pupils in KS1 have a good repertoire of songs in both English and Welsh which they sing tunefully. They pay appropriate attention to intonation and enunciate words well, which they often accompany with actions..
317. In KS1 a majority of pupils can repeat a simple rhythm correctly and count out a steady beat.
318. Pupils in KS1 have a good knowledge of a variety of instruments. They name many of them correctly and understand that there are different methods of playing them. They do so enthusiastically. During this activity they show a sound knowledge of musical vocabulary and use words such as strum and pluck correctly.
319. In KS1 many pupils are aware that an orchestra is made up of many types of instruments and that a conductor's role is to keep a steady beat.
320. Younger pupils in KS2 listen to 'Greensleeves' and understand its link with Tudor times. They can identify the harp as one of the main instruments and a few make mature observations on what the music conveys to them. The majority work well in groups to compose their own versions of music in the same genre. They display a good ability to create repeating patterns, conveying question and answer in their renderings. They evaluate the efforts of their peers well in this activity and offer constructive suggestions on how the work can be improved.
321. A few younger pupils in KS2 take on the role of a conductor well to ensure a steady beat is kept.

322. Older pupils in KS2 have a good understanding of the three beat rhythm of the waltz. They understand the basic features of this musical form. Those who learn to play string, brass and woodwind instruments use their knowledge well to help others in this activity.
323. Older pupils are aware of the importance of Strauss as a composer and listen intelligently to his Blue Danube Waltz. They move appropriately to the music and compare an original version of this waltz to a modern version newly released; they express their preference effectively as groups.
324. Older pupils in KS2 use musical terminology such as score and opera correctly. They know how to construct a graphic score. They can also identify the instruments of the orchestra and understand that percussion instruments play a different role to tuned instruments in a musical performance.
325. Pupils listen to The Planet Suite by Gustav Holst and are able to record a variety of images and emotions that the music of each planet conveys to them.
326. Pupils work well with others in groups to create compositions which have a simple musical shape. They appreciate the quality of rap music performed by one of the groups.

Shortcomings

327. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical education

Key Stage 1 : Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 : Grade 3 Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

328. Pupils in both key stages understand the importance of warming up the body and of cooling down routines when exercising. They are aware of the benefit of regular exercise and its importance as part of a healthy life style.
329. Y1 and Y2 pupils move energetically in gymnastics lessons, and on the whole most demonstrate good body control. They make effective use of space and perform short sequences showing clear body shapes.
330. In dance lessons in KS2 a majority of pupils show increasing control of their bodies, with a good awareness of body parts. They respond with sensitivity to music and create lively dances that show good flow and effective use of a variety of levels.
331. Pupils in both key stages work well together in pairs, groups and as a whole class to perform and improve their work in gymnastics and dance.

332. In KS2, a majority of pupils' ball handling skills are good. They display appropriate control when throwing, catching, kicking and travelling with the ball. In small games situations they make effective use of marking techniques.
333. A range of secondary evidence indicates that most pupils make good progress and achieve sound standards in swimming.

Shortcomings

334. Most pupils in both key stages pay insufficient attention to refining the quality of their movement in gymnastics and dance lessons.
335. Pupils lack skills in orienteering, problem solving and adventure activities.

Religious education

Key Stage 1 : Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 : Grade 3 : Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

336. Most pupils in KS1 show a clear understanding of the significance of Christian celebrations such as Christmas and Easter, and know why Christians have harvest celebrations. They increase their understanding of Christian worship through visits to the local church and chapel.
337. In KS1, many pupils have a good recall of Bible stories, such as the story of Moses and Noah, and they retell them vividly.
338. Most KS1 pupils understand the importance of families, communities and homes and appreciate people who help them. Their understanding of social and moral principles, such as kindness and care for others, is good.
339. A majority of Y3 and Y4 pupils are aware of events in the Christian calendar, and have a good understanding of their significance. Pupils in Y5 and Y6 understand well how Jesus affects the way in which Christians live.
340. Through their theme of 'Life and Death' Y5 and Y6 pupils further their awareness of the Christian faith. Many discuss sensibly questions related to their feelings about life and man's place in the universe. They have a good understanding of the way in which customs and beliefs shape the identity of individuals, families and communities.
341. KS2 pupils are familiar with features of Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Most pupils at the upper end of the key stage have a good knowledge of the Five Pillars of Islam, and discuss aspects of Islam knowledgeably. They understand fully the importance of the Qu'ran to Muslims, and know what various customs entail.

342. Pupils in the special unit know what Easter signifies to Christians and have good recognition of related artefacts.

Shortcomings

343. Pupils do not study different religions in sufficient depth to enable them to make informed comparisons between them.

344. Pupils' knowledge of famous individuals or groups of people who have contributed to the quality of life worldwide is limited, as is their knowledge of religious figures in Wales.

School's response to the inspection

345. We are pleased the inspectors' findings recognise that the school has moved on since the last inspection.

346. We are very pleased that they noted the outstanding features evident in our nursery/reception class, our overall preparation for the Foundation Phase and the provision in the Autistic Unit.

347. The report acknowledges the valuable role the GB plays in contributing to the success of the school.

348. The GB, staff and pupils would like to thank the inspection team for the professional manner in which they conducted the inspection.

349. The inspection process was productive and will enable the school to build on its current good practice and improve standards.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Abertaf Primary School
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Troedpennar Terrace, Abercynon Rhondda Cynon Taff
Postcode	CF45 4TS
Telephone number	01443 740265

Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Locke
Date of appointment	October 1997
Chair of governors	Mrs Stephanie Martin
Registered inspector	Mrs Eleri Betts
Dates of inspection	March 23 rd -25 th

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	12	10	10	9	9	17	15	10	92

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	6	0	6

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	7:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	1:2
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	22
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	87.0%	89.5%	90.3%
Summer 2008	89.4%	88.2%	89.6%
Autumn 2008	88.6%	87.9%	93.8%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17.4%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	Nil

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008	Number of pupils in Y2	5
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	100%	In Wales	80.7%

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 2008			Number of pupils in Y6:					14	
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	7	14	36	43
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	29	36	36
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	9	0	0	14	50	36
		National	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

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	64.3%	In the school	N/A
In Wales	75.5%	In Wales	N/A

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

Four inspectors spent the equivalent of eight inspector days in the school. The school's nominee and a peer assessor were also part of the team. All members met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- Thirty-seven lessons or part lessons were observed;
- registrations and 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;
- teachers, support and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils representing each year group; and
- the school council and representatives of organisations associated with the school.

The team also considered;

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- thirty six responses to a parents' questionnaire of which 91% of answers were positive;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work; and
- samples of pupils' reports.

After the inspection the team held meetings with staff and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs Eleri Betts Registered Inspector	Summary Report Context of the School Recommendations Key Questions 1/3/6. Foundation Phase English, Welsh second language, History, Art, Music.
Mrs Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1/3/4/7.
Mrs Zohrah Evans Team Inspector	Key Questions 2/4/5. Maths, Science, Design technology, Geography, Physical education, Religious education.
Mr Graham Haines Team Inspector	Key Question 7 Information communications technology
Mrs Janet Francis Jones Peer Assessor	Attending meetings and observing in classrooms.
Mrs Margaret Locke Nominee/ Headteacher	Attending meetings and providing information

Acknowledgement

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

Contractor:

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