

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

**A Report on the Quality of Education in**

**Bedwas Infant School  
St Mary Street  
Bedwas  
Caerphilly  
CF83 8EE**

**School Number: 6762335**

**Date of Inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

**by**

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**Under Estyn contract number: 1124307**

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Bedwas Infant 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 Bedwas Infant School took place between 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> April 2008. An independent team of four inspectors, led by Peter Mathias undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **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

## Proportions

Throughout this report, the following descriptors are used to denote proportions:

nearly all	with very few exceptions
most	90% or more
many	70% or more
a majority	over 60%
half	50%
around half	close to 50%
a minority	below 40%
few	below 20%
very few	less than 10%

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Bedwas Infant School is situated in the former mining village of the same name near to Caerphilly, which is the Unitary Authority (UA). There are 142 full-time equivalent pupils on roll between the ages of three and seven, including 23 full-time equivalent children in the nursery who attend on a part-time basis.
2. About 75% of pupils come from the local area, which is neither prosperous nor disadvantaged. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds with a full spread of ability. In general, on entry children have below the expected levels of basic skills.
3. The school reports that 12% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the UA average of 20.6% and the all-Wales average of 17.5%. About 20% of pupils are considered to have some degree of special educational needs (SEN). Two pupils have a statement of SEN. One pupil was temporarily excluded in the previous school year. No pupil is 'looked after' by the UA. No pupil is disapplied from the National Curriculum (NC).
4. English is the predominant language of all pupils. All pupils are from White, Welsh backgrounds. No pupil has Welsh as their first language.
5. The school was last inspected in the summer term 2002, when the previous headteacher was in post. There have been a small number of staff changes since that time. The school roll has remained about the same. During the inspection, one teacher was absent due to ill health; a temporary supply teacher took her place.
6. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award and the Eco-Schools Bronze Award.

### The School's Aims

7. The school's aims are:
  - to provide an education that is stimulating and challenging so that children develop a love of learning;
  - to promote a caring, safe and secure learning environment where children are happy, confident and able to reach their full potential;
  - to help children achieve self-discipline and self-respect;
  - to provide encouragement and motivation towards work, developing positive attitudes and a pride in what they achieve; and
  - to help pupils develop lively, enquiring minds and the ability to take responsibility for their own learning.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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8. The school's priorities and targets 2007/2008 are:

- to improve standards in reading, writing, mathematics, information and communications technology (ICT), Welsh as a second language, art and design technology;
- to promote thinking skills and to encourage different ways of learning;
- to improve the teaching of key skills to prepare for the Foundation Phase;
- to set up a school council;
- to achieve eco-schools silver award;
- to improve provision for SEN;
- to develop collaborative learning;
- to train support staff;
- to arrange for governors to undertake class visits;
- to share the self-evaluation report and to award grades;
- to produce an improved school development plan (SDP);
- to allocate new leadership roles;
- to develop a new model for professional development, planning, preparation and assessment arrangements;
- to develop and improve the learning environment; and
- to start a school allotment.

## Summary

9. Bedwas Infant School is a good school, which provides outstanding levels of care for its pupils. It is well led and has made good progress since its last inspection.

### Table of grades awarded

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

10. The inspection team agreed with six out of the seven judgements made by the school about the standards achieved and the other areas of its work. Where the inspection team disagreed, this was because the school underestimated by one grade the quality of the care, guidance and support it provides for its pupils. This aspect is judged to be good with many outstanding features.

### Standards

11. Overall, the standards of achievement in subjects and areas of learning inspected are as follows:

Pupils' standards of achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%

12. The above figures are well above those found in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) Annual Report for 2006/2007 where achievement in primary schools was Grade 2 or better in 80% of cases. The figures are also well above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target for primary schools that by 2010, in 98% of lessons inspected, the quality of learning should be Grade 3 or better.

### Subjects and areas of learning for under fives

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

13. The overall quality of education provided for children under five is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Nursery Grade	Reception Grade	KS1 Grade
Under fives	2	2	N/A
English	N/A	N/A	2
Welsh as a Second Language	N/A	N/A	2
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	2
Science	N/A	N/A	2
History	N/A	N/A	2
Geography	N/A	N/A	2
Information technology	N/A	N/A	2
Design technology	N/A	N/A	2
Art	N/A	N/A	2
Music	N/A	N/A	2
Physical education	N/A	N/A	2
Religious education	N/A	N/A	2

14. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make very good progress because of the outstanding provision and help they receive.
15. In the end of Key Stage 1 (KS1) national teacher assessments for seven year olds in 2007, starting in the nursery often from a below average base, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level (Level 2) was about the same as the UA and national averages in English, just below in mathematics and above in science, as were the combined results. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) was in line with most schools in the UA and nationally in English, in mathematics and science the results at Level 3 were well above the UA and national averages.
16. When these results are compared to schools in the UA with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, the 2007 results were just below average in English, well below in mathematics and above in science. The combined results were the average for these similar schools. In this group of pupils, there were an unusually high proportion of pupils with SEN. In these assessments girls out performed boys. This trend has been identified by the school as a cause for concern over some time. The school has recently taken steps to address it by using a range of strategies to improve the performance of boys.

17. Since 2005, results have fluctuated and have been consistently above the UA and national averages. In 2007 the school did not meet the targets agreed with the UA.
18. Standards and progress in the key skills are Grade 2 (good features and no important shortcomings). In nursery, reception and KS1, standards in communication in English and Welsh are Grade 2 overall. Children in the nursery, reception and KS1 listen very well and in English particularly speak with confidence. However, pupils' skills in writing in subjects other than English are Grade 3 (good features outweigh shortcomings). They do not write for a wide range of reasons and their written work is often untidy.
19. Pupils' bilingual skills are Grade 2. They have a good understanding of the richness of Welsh culture. Mathematical skills across the school are Grade 2, as they are in information and communications technology. In the nursery and reception, children's problem solving skills are Grade 1. In KS1 they are Grade 2. The picture is the same in their ability to work with others and in their creative skills. In the nursery, reception and KS1, pupils have a good understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance. A particularly outstanding feature is the very mature and confident way children in the nursery and reception, as well as pupils in KS1, treat each other and adults. This aspect of their key skills is Grade 1.
20. Attendance at 93.78% is above the UA and national averages and just above the WAG target of 93%. Nearly all pupils arrive on time at the start of the school day.

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

### **Grades for teaching**

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
15%	77%	8%	0%	0%

21. The above figures are well above the national picture reported by HMCI for 2006/2007, where the quality of teaching nationally in primary schools was at least Grade 2 in 80% of lessons with 14% having outstanding features. These figures are also above the WAG target for 2010, that the quality of teaching should be 80% Grade 2 or better.
22. In the nursery and reception, teachers plan carefully to provide a very wide range of learning experiences from which their children benefit significantly.
23. Across the school in the best lessons, the outstanding features include:
  - good systematic planning to match work to different abilities;
  - careful and detailed explanations of what is expected of pupils;
  - warm encouragement to do well;
  - very close and effective working relationships between adults and pupils;
  - good use of support assistants to help individuals;
  - the use of effective strategies to promote pupils' independence and to

encourage them to evaluate their own efforts accurately;

- very good use of the easily available resources; and
- regular and well-planned use of incidental Welsh.

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24. Where teaching had some shortcomings, these included:

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- limited subject knowledge; and
- insufficient challenge for some pupils.

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25. There are good arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' progress, which meet statutory requirements in full. Teachers assess pupils regularly and accurately using a range of different reliable tests and assessments. They ensure that their judgements are comparable and consistent with other schools in the area. Pupils with SEN are assessed regularly and their needs are very well addressed. Annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements and parents have good access to teachers in order to discuss the progress their children are making.

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26. The curriculum meets the legal requirements of the NC and for the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. It also meets the needs of all pupils. It is well planned so that pupils build systematically on what they already know and can do. All pupils are fully included in all the activities the school provides.

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27. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is Grade 1. There are many very well constructed opportunities for children in the early years and in KS1 to develop a sense of wonder when discovering new things and when reflecting during collective worship. The acts of collective worship meet legal requirements. Across the school, pupils show high levels of consideration and respect for others and know right from wrong. They care about the needs of others, and work with each other and with adults with confidence.

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28. Links with parents are strong. They are kept well informed and have easy access to teachers. The school's partnership with industry has many outstanding features and is of a high quality. All teachers have taken part in an industrial placement and pupils have a very good understanding for their ages of the world of work and their place in their community.

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29. The school is very much aware of the needs of all of its pupils and ensures that all are treated the same and have equal opportunities. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to look after the environment and to conserve resources. For example, they are increasingly aware, through their work on Fairtrade, of the inter-dependence of peoples across the world.

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30. There are outstanding arrangements to support pupils' well being. All staff demonstrate high levels of care and concern for their pupils and know them very well. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are carefully managed. Risk assessments are undertaken rigorously. Child protection arrangements are in line with local guidance. The school council is active and very much involved in decision-making.

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- 31. The support for pupils with SEN is of a very high quality and is very well managed. Individual education plans (IEP's) are detailed and are very well used to help pupils make good progress. The requirements of the Code of Practice for SEN are met in full.
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- 32. The school has well-organised and detailed policies and arrangements to review pupils' behaviour and performance as well as those to deal with issues of race, equality, disability, discrimination and equal opportunities. There is an accessibility plan in place based on a detailed survey of the site. The building and facilities are accessible to those with physical disabilities.
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### **Leadership and management**

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- 33. The headteacher's good leadership ensures that the school is effective and purposeful. She promotes a strong commitment from all staff to make the school a place where there are 'happy faces, kind hearts and enquiring minds'. The deputy headteacher provides good all round support. The roles of subject co-ordinators are well developed. However, due to recent staff changes the current responsibilities are not sufficiently well matched to the backgrounds, aptitudes and experiences of individual teachers. All teachers are fully focused on raising standards further and look very carefully at how pupils are achieving in their areas of responsibility. All staff work constructively together.
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- 34. The school takes careful note of national priorities and local initiatives. Preparations for the introduction of the Foundation Phase are well advanced and the school is well placed to introduce this initiative next year. Good arrangements to provide teachers with time during the taught week to plan, prepare and assess are put into practice effectively.
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- 35. The governing body meets its statutory duties in full. It is well led and is actively engaged in the day-to-day life of the school. Governors are well informed and play a full part in determining the long-term strategic needs of the school. The financial management is well organised and effective.
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- 36. The process of self-evaluation is well established and is sufficiently rigorous. It is closely linked to the school development plan (SDP), performance management and the school's budgeting procedures. All those with an interest in the school have been appropriately consulted and their views considered. The school self-evaluation report is sufficiently detailed and accurate. It is well used as a means of bringing about effective continuous improvement.
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- 37. Since the last inspection in April 2002, the school has made good progress overall in addressing the key issues from that inspection.
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- 38. The accommodation is suitable for the number of pupils on roll and the needs of the curriculum. There are sufficiently qualified and experienced teachers who are well deployed. Day-to-day administration is effective. The school is attractive, well maintained and functions smoothly. Learning support assistants are well deployed and contribute significantly to pupils' learning. There is an effective induction programme for newly qualified teachers.
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39. Good use is made of a range of resources which are readily available and are of a high quality and quantity to support learning.
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40. Bearing in mind the overall quality of education provided and the progress pupils make, the school gives good value for money.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the school in the areas inspected, the staff and governing body need to:

- R1** raise the performance of boys compared to girls; \*
- R2** review the allocation of areas of responsibility for subject co-ordinators in the light of the changes to the curriculum, to reflect more closely the needs of the curriculum and the teachers' different expertise and backgrounds; and \*
- R3** increase opportunities for pupils' writing and improve the quality of presentation across the curriculum. \*

- \* The school has already identified this area as a priority in its 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.

A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

## Standards

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

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

41. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
42. The standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

Pupils' standards of achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	20%	80%	0%	0%	0%

43. These figures are well above those found in HMCI's Annual Report for 2006/2007 where 80% of lessons in primary schools were Grade 2 or better. The figures are also well above the WAG targets set for these schools for the quality of learning assessed by Estyn to be Grade 3 or better in 98% of lessons.
44. Baseline assessments indicate that a significant proportion of children enter school with skills and experiences which are below those expected for children of this age.
45. The overall quality of education provided for children under five is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

#### Subjects and areas of learning for under fives

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

#### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Nursery	Reception	KS1
	Grade	Grade	Grade
<b>Under fives</b>	2	2	N/A
English	N/A	N/A	2
Welsh as a Second Language	N/A	N/A	2
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	2
Science	N/A	N/A	2
Information technology	N/A	N/A	2
Design technology	N/A	N/A	2
History	N/A	N/A	2
Geography	N/A	N/A	2

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Art	N/A	N/A	2
Music	N/A	N/A	2
Physical education	N/A	N/A	2
Religious education	N/A	N/A	2

46. Pupils with SEN make very good progress as a result of the outstanding provision and help they receive.
47. In the 2007 national teacher assessments for seven year olds in English, mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level (Level 2) was about the same as the UA and national averages in English, just below in mathematics and above in science and also when these results were combined. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 3) in English was above most schools locally and nationally. In mathematics and science, the results at Level 3 were well above the UA and national averages.
48. When these results are compared to schools in the UA with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, they are just below average in English, well below in mathematics and above average in science. The combined results were below the average for these similar schools.
49. The school's records indicate that in this group about one third of pupils had low levels of basic skills when they began in the nursery and half were considered to have some degree of SEN when they were seven years of age.
50. The school did not reach the target set for it by the UA. In these assessments girls outperformed boys in all three subjects. Since 2005, results have varied but have been consistently above the UA and national averages.
51. Overall, pupils' achievement in the key skills is Grade 2 (good features and no important shortcomings). In communication in English in the nursery and reception and in KS1 in the key skills of speaking and listening, they achieve very well. They speak confidently and listen very well. However, pupils do not write for a sufficient range of reasons in subjects other than English. They do not present their written work in all subjects neatly. Pupils are beginning to apply their skills in reading to other subjects and use their skills well to read with increasing accuracy and confidence.
52. In the nursery, reception and KS1, communication skills in Welsh are Grade 2. Children speak clearly often responding in Welsh appropriately in the nursery and reception to simple questions. Within KS1, pupils often respond in Welsh confidently when encouraged to do so, for example, when responding to instructions. They are beginning to read and to write simple sentences in Welsh.
53. Pupils are making good progress in using bilingual skills through the use of incidental Welsh at different times of the day. They are familiar with language patterns, which they use effectively in conversations. Their reading and

writing skills are good; they read simple Welsh texts with confidence and make good use of their knowledge of sentence patterns to write a series of accurate sentences.

54. Across the school, pupils' mathematical skills are Grade 2. In the nursery and reception, children are beginning to use their measuring skills to make things that fit together. They know that money changes hands when buying and selling a pizza. In KS1, pupils use standard units to measure, for example, in a science experiment. They record information in bar charts and graphs well.
55. In nursery, reception and KS1 pupils' skills in ICT are Grade 2. In the nursery and reception, children use the mouse to navigate through simple programmes. In KS1, they know how to use a computer as a word processor and draw and design using an art package. They use ICT to generate simple graphs effectively.
56. Pupils' understanding of the richness of Welsh culture is Grade 2. They have a growing awareness of their own area and of wider Wales. They perform Welsh songs and rhymes with enthusiasm and take part in cultural events, which help them to appreciate Welsh music and dance. Older pupils are familiar with the work of a number of local Welsh artists and craftspeople.
57. Pupils' personal and social skills are an outstanding feature of the school and are a Grade 1. Starting in the nursery, children work and play together very willingly. Across the school, they know what is expected of them. They wish to please their teachers and to succeed in all they attempt. They have a very clear sense of their different roles in the school community.
58. Across the school, pupils' problem-solving skills are Grade 2. In the nursery and reception, children are engaged in working things out for themselves, for example, in finding their own endings to the story of Jack and the Beanstalk or when using a range of media to produce a desired effect. In KS1, pupils have a growing awareness of how to plan logically, for example, in a science lesson in order to come to a reliable conclusion.
59. Creative skills are Grade 2. Across the school children in the nursery and reception and pupils in KS1 express themselves confidently in art, music and dance. They experiment and test out a wide range of materials in art to create colourful collages. They perform well when making music, and show a good sense of rhythm and mood when moving to different types of music.
60. A particular strength in the nursery and reception is the outstanding way children work very willingly together. Across the school, they share their ideas and resources generously, and co-operate easily and effectively in a wide range of settings.
61. Throughout the school, pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. Starting in the nursery, they are successfully encouraged to talk about their work and to think about what they have done well and what

they could do to make it better. Older pupils keep a careful record of the small steps they need to make to improve.

62. The school has high standards of behaviour. The foundations are laid very effectively in the early years and, as a result, pupils throughout the school make outstanding progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development.
63. Pupils know the routines and develop self-confidence and independence from an early age. They understand what is expected of them and even the youngest children are beginning to show care and concern for others.
64. Relationships are very positive and the vast majority of pupils throughout the school have good self-control. They co-operate very well in small groups and pairs, take turns and share well. Pupils are interested and highly motivated. They concentrate very well in lessons and persevere with their work.
65. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and friendly, and very confident with adults. Older pupils are good role models and are sensitive to the needs of the younger ones. Pupils work and play very well together. They move sensibly in and around the school. A very small minority show challenging behaviour, but they are managed positively and sensitively and are not allowed to disrupt others.
66. At 93.78% the average rate of attendance for the three terms before the inspection is above the UA and national averages and just above the WAG targets. Absences are caused mainly by the susceptibility to illness of the very young children but the overall rate is adversely affected by family holidays in term time. The vast majority of pupils arrive on time at the start of the day.
67. Pupils develop independent, problem-solving and decision-making skills very successfully and are exceptionally well prepared for effective participation in the work place and the community.
68. Pupils' understanding of equal opportunities is very good throughout the school because this is firmly embedded in the school's work. Boys and girls work and play together very well. They have a good knowledge and understanding of differences and similarities between cultures and customs around the world.
69. Pupils have a good understanding of their wider responsibilities for others through their roles on the eco-committee and school council. They show great commitment to their roles and take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils enjoy helping their teachers, other adults and each other, both in classes and when playing.
70. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of the world of work and their place in the community because they participate in a very good range of projects and activities.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

71. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
15%	77%	8%	0%	0%

72. The quality of teaching is good or better in 92% of lessons. These figures are above the national picture reported by HMCI in the Annual Report 2006/2007 where the quality of teaching was outstanding in 14% of lessons and good with no important shortcomings in 66% of lessons. These figures are also above the target for primary schools set out in the WAG 'Vision into Action' document where the quality of teaching should be at least Grade 2 or better in 80% of classes.
73. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers plan very thoroughly to organise effectively a very wide range of suitable learning experiences. A particular strength is the very close and effective working relationship that exists between teachers and their assistants so that children's individual needs are very thoroughly addressed. As a result, children work happily and enthusiastically.
74. Across the school, teachers plan systematically so that all lessons are well structured to meet the range of pupils' ages and abilities within the classes. Teachers carefully explain at the beginning of each lesson what pupils should achieve as a result of the teaching. Pupils are regularly reminded of these objectives during their lessons. Pupils are warmly encouraged and very effectively supported when necessary in order for them to achieve well.
75. A particular strength is the way in which pupils and adults work very closely together. There is a very strong sense of affection and care for each other, which effectively promotes pupils' positive attitudes and confidence to work hard. Teachers share a secure understanding of their subjects and how to teach them well.
76. In the best lessons, which have outstanding features, lessons are skilfully introduced so that children are enthused and eager to begin. They know exactly what is expected of them. Teachers ably judge when children need support and when it is better to allow them to explore for themselves. They effectively encourage children to think things out for themselves and to evaluate what they have achieved.
77. Teachers use a wide range of resources, including the outdoor areas, to promote children's imagination and their personal and social skills successfully. They use incidental Welsh naturally and encourage pupils successfully to respond in Welsh. They promote pupils' abilities to think

independently. For example, when designing a pizza, pupils are asked to apply what they know about healthy foods when choosing toppings. Across the school, teachers very cleverly remind pupils regularly to be aware of their own safety and that of others.

78. In the very small number of lessons where teaching had some shortcomings, the lessons were not well organised in order to ensure that all were fully engaged in the planned activities and the teachers were insecure in their knowledge of what they were teaching.
79. The school fully meets statutory requirements for recording and accrediting the achievements of pupils.
80. The school uses assessment effectively to ensure that teachers have a clear idea of the next stage pupils need to reach. Teachers assess pupils regularly and accurately using a range of published test materials as well as their own professional judgement about individual pieces of work. Every term, pupils are formally assessed in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Teachers keep detailed class records on these levels in addition to other information about pupils' progress, including their ongoing judgements about the progress of individuals in all other subjects.
81. The school carries out detailed baseline assessments and compares these with end of key stage assessments to check whether pupils make the expected progress during their time in school. The school also uses information from a range of other tests appropriately to note the performance of different year groups, classes and groups of pupils. It uses this information, for example, about the underperformance of boys, to make any necessary improvements to the curriculum, resources or to teaching to address this. The school has now identified more able or gifted and talented pupils in each year group and sets specific targets for them. All pupils are made aware of the small steps they need to take in order to improve further.
82. The school has been very successful in ensuring that teachers accurately assess pupils' work. It has done this by effective training and gathering together graded examples of pupils' work from other nearby schools to compare judgements about standards.
83. Pupils' work is marked regularly and teachers' comments are useful in helping pupils improve their work. Teachers set individual targets in writing and these are recorded on the next page of the pupils' book; this also happens in reading and mathematics. Class targets for the key skills, which are to be developed during lessons, are clearly displayed in classrooms in order to remind pupils of what is expected of them. These targets are also regularly shared with parents.
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84. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress through regular consultations with teachers in which they are encouraged to discuss their child's progress and to view their work. Meetings with parents of pupils with SEN are held each term. Reports to parents are informative and meet legal requirements.

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

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

85. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
86. The school meets all legal requirements, including those for providing religious education, personal and social education, health education and appropriate sex education. The curriculum is broad, balanced and equally available to all pupils. It ensures that pupils build systematically on what they already know and can do.
87. The school provides a highly stimulating range of experiences that combine learning and fun for children in the early years. Many of these take place out of doors. Activities enable children to develop creativity, perseverance and self-control as well as the necessary knowledge and skills in each of the areas of learning.
88. Weekly and termly plans ensure that pupils make steady progress in developing their key skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, numeracy and ICT through the different subjects they study.
89. The school caters well for the whole range of pupils' needs, including those pupils with SEN and with behavioural difficulties. Pupils underachieving in the development of their basic skills are also identified and their needs are thoroughly addressed. Pupils in mixed age classes are given different activities according to their ages and stages of learning. The small number of children of reception age included in the Y1 class follows an appropriate learning programme in accordance with the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five and this meets legal requirements.
90. All pupils are fully included in all the activities the school provides and the needs of all are considered. The school works hard to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to the needs of its pupils. For example, the skills of early reading and writing are not taught in set lessons until the summer term in reception, as the school is recently of the opinion that KS1 boys were becoming disinterested in these activities when they were started earlier. Insufficient time has elapsed to judge whether or not the initiative is effective in addressing this issue.
91. The sharing of information between teachers in the early years and their colleagues in KS1 ensures that pupils continue to make good progress when they move to Y1. This good progress continues when pupils transfer into the junior school because of the close liaison between staff at both schools. For example, teachers in Y2 and Y3 observe one another's practice and take lessons in each other's classes. There are also useful links with other cluster schools that benefit pupils. The local playgroup has closed and the school is currently working to develop closer links with two private settings.

- 92. The way in which the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is an outstanding feature of its work. Spiritual development is fostered very effectively through personal and social education, the 'Thinking Skills' programmes and through consciously setting out to develop a sense of spirituality in lessons. Collective worship and close links with the local Christian community also strengthen pupils' sense of awe and wonder at the world.
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- 93. As a result of the values the school promotes day by day and its effective positive behaviour programme, pupils show consideration and respect for others and they develop a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils know the importance of following school rules. They have a good understanding of the needs of others and regularly raise money for charities.
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- 94. The school makes very good provision for pupils to develop socially through working together in lessons, welcoming visitors and going out into the local community, for example, to entertain senior citizens in the area. They explore the local park, shops, post office, café, library and churches. The police, road safety officer, nurse and librarian visit the school. Pupils have the opportunity to join a good number of clubs, which include gardening, science, football and problem solving. As a result, pupils interact easily with other children and with adults of all ages.
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- 95. The school is successful in developing the bilingual competence of pupils using incidental Welsh and through introducing new vocabulary in lessons, such as physical education. The planning ensures that there are suitable opportunities to use and apply their bilingual skills across the curriculum. This enables pupils to make good progress through the key stage.
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- 96. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is successfully promoted across most areas of the curriculum and good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their Welsh heritage and culture. In art, pupils work with a local artist and study the work of Cefyn Burgess and William Brown. In history, the school celebrates the local association with the once famous runner Guto Nyth Bran. Pupils also visit museums and galleries.
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- 97. Pupils develop a basic understanding of other faiths and cultures appropriate to their age through their work in religious education and geography.
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- 98. The school's partnerships with other providers and interested parties to enrich learning experiences are an outstanding feature. The school has worked particularly hard at listening carefully and responding to parents' views. For example, the format of reports has been changed recently in response to parents' wishes for annual reports to be more easily understood. The school also provides clear and detailed information about its daily life and successfully encourages parents to participate actively in the education of their children. For example, it provides opportunities for this through family literacy and numeracy sessions. Parents have also taken part in activities run by the school to help them foster good behaviour at home as well as at school.
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99. The school works effectively in partnership with local colleges and places of higher education. There are also useful links with the local secondary school, which provide high quality work experience for older pupils.
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100. The school's partnership with industry is outstanding. Opportunities for pupils to develop the skills required to support economic development are outstanding. All pupils, including children in the early years, are involved in mini-enterprise projects. They make items for sale in the summer and Christmas fairs. The school has a written industry policy and programme of termly visits and visitors. The school has a very positive attitude to teacher placements; all teachers have undertaken at least one industrial placement to enhance their professional development and support their teaching and management skills.
101. There are very strong links with the 'Careers Wales' initiative. The school has been recognised for providing good work experience for students. As a result, pupils benefit from working with a wide range of adults and visits to places of employment. This starts in the early years when children work with 'people who help us'. Pupils are successfully encouraged to see adults as lifelong learners.
102. Pupils have a thorough understanding of sustainable development and energy conservation through their roles on the eco-committee and recycling and composting projects in school and the community. Pupils care for the environment and make it attractive. The recently established eco-committee and school council provide pupils with a real voice in the school, which is respected. They have a growing awareness of global citizenship through fundraising events and their work on Fairtrade and Africa.

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

##### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

103. The findings of the inspection team did not match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school underestimated by one grade the quality of care, guidance and support it provides.
104. The inspection team disagrees with the school because pupils are particularly well cared for, guided and supported. The school has a very positive ethos and every pupil is valued and included. All members of staff show outstanding care and concern for the well-being of every child. Parents value the family atmosphere within the school.
105. Teachers know the pupils and their families very well and have developed highly effective partnerships with them and the community. There is very good liaison with outside agencies, such as the school nurse and educational psychologist, which impact positively on the guidance and support offered to the pupils.
106. Parents are very well informed in a wide variety of ways. Their views on a wide range of school matters are sought through regular questionnaires and

a suggestion box. The school informs parents of the analysis of questionnaires and responds positively to their views.

107. Induction arrangements for the early years and for pupils moving from KS1 to KS2 are carefully planned and implemented. As a result, children quickly become independent and settle well in the nursery. There are suitable arrangements for pupils moving from one year group to another or from other schools. There are also close links with the receiving junior school to which most pupils transfer at the age of seven. The schools are involved in a shared transition plan that includes curriculum and sporting links.
108. The quality of personal support and guidance provided for pupils is outstanding. The policy is integrated into all aspects of the school's activities and the outcome is reflected in the pupils' caring and thoughtful attitudes, for example, when they write notes on the Kindness Tree and the Box of Kindness.
109. There are very effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' attendance, punctuality, behaviour and performance.
110. The school encourages pupils to have responsibilities, for example, to ensure that no child is friendless at lunchtime or playtime. They help care for the younger children. Adults in the school apply policies for behaviour management consistently. All adults in the school are very good role models. Trained midday supervisors play a full part in the reward system.
111. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are monitored very carefully. Parents are reminded at an early stage of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The school sets targets and works closely with the education welfare officer (EWO) when necessary. Parents of children with attendance below 80% receive a printout of their children's absence and lateness at the end of term in order that they should improve in the future. Pupils with full attendance are rewarded and their achievements recognised.
112. Pupils' behaviour is very closely monitored. A whole school behaviour project, introduced last year, rewards pupils who are consistently good and is an outstanding feature. Incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with sensitively. Pupils are quick to apologise. The school works closely with parents to support pupils who may be experiencing difficulties.
113. Arrangements to ensure the health and well-being of pupils are outstanding. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy. Risk assessments are systematic. All staff, including the mid day supervisors, are trained in first aid. One of the teaching assistants is particularly well qualified in these areas.
114. The school's efforts to ensure pupils' well-being is helped through close links with the school nurse. She makes presentations to staff and parents on issues such as the importance of sleep, safety in the sun, the prevention and treatment of head lice and other health issues.

115. The school is in its third year of the Healthy Schools initiative. It promotes health and fitness for pupils through a range of initiatives, including healthy school dinners and fruit only at snack and break times. Salad and fruit are available at lunchtime and parents have opportunities to sample dinners. Vegetarian and gluten-free options are available. The school council is very active in this area. It expresses its views forcefully.
116. There is a very good range of outdoor play equipment and purposeful play zones to promote active play times. Trained mid-day supervisors engage pupils in playground games and they are very keen to take part.
117. The school has provided a cycle rack and encourages pupils to walk or cycle to school, with many parents supporting this initiative.
118. All adults in the school, including the canteen staff, are aware of pupils with particular needs and are very knowledgeable about procedures in the event of accidents and emergencies.
119. There are appropriate policies and sound procedures for child protection, which conform to local guidance. The headteacher and her deputy are the designated child protection officers and there is a named designated link governor. All teachers, support staff and mid-day supervisors are trained to ensure they are aware and alert to signs and symptoms of child abuse and are fully aware of their responsibilities. All staff and volunteers have had appropriate checks made on their suitability to be with children.
120. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. It complies with the requirements of the code of practice for SEN and the WAG framework for inclusive education. An outstanding feature of the provision is the success of a range of literacy and numeracy initiatives in providing individual support for pupils with learning needs. These are highly effective in improving pupils' confidence and helping them make rapid progress towards achieving their learning targets.
121. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) is very effective and, in consultation with staff and parents, ensures high quality support for pupils and achievable targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). Record keeping is thorough, well organised and up to date. Systems for assessing and identifying the learning and behavioural needs of pupils are very good, especially in the early years, where baseline at entry to school and other assessments provide information for early intervention to meet children's needs.
122. More able and talented pupils are identified early, appropriate provision is made and their progress is carefully tracked. Extension work to develop pupils' thinking and problem-solving skills is provided through after school clubs. This is an outstanding feature of the provision for developing pupils' skills. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly and monitored through meetings of SEN staff, teachers and parents.

123. The learning support teacher withdraws groups of pupils for well-focused extra support, which is closely linked to their work in their classes. These sessions are very effective in providing extra help for pupils to assist them to achieve the targets in their IEPs. Pupils with SEN are very well supported in lessons and are very well integrated. They are provided with well conceived tasks which allow them to work at their own pace and level of ability. There is a good range of resources for SEN. Pupils also make effective use of ICT to support their learning.
124. The school works closely with the Behaviour Support Service to provide very good support for pupils whose behaviour may impede their progress and that of others. Teachers use a range of behaviour management techniques, which are useful for classroom management and allow pupils the opportunity to learn effectively.
125. All pupils with SEN, including those with disabilities, have equal access to the curriculum through well-planned tasks that ensure that pupils work at the appropriate level for their abilities. Liaison between the SENCo, class teachers, SEN support staff and outside agencies is very effective.
126. The school has well-planned and documented procedures for dealing with race equality, disability discrimination, bullying, and equal opportunities. All pupils are encouraged and enabled to take part in the activities provided by the school. Resources and relationships in the school community help to promote good race relations. The school supports and guides pupils very well taking account of their social, educational or linguistic backgrounds.
127. There are no pupils with mobility disabilities currently attending the school. However, there is a suitable and clear accessibility plan, which takes account of the school site and buildings. This forms part of the school's disability equality scheme and action plan.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

128. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
129. The headteacher provides a strong lead and is well supported by her deputy headteacher. Staff function together well as a purposeful team. All share a firm commitment to the school's vision, which they put into effect very successfully. The school is a place where 'happy faces, kind hearts and enquiring minds' are purposefully and effectively fostered. All staff have a determination to ensure that all pupils have equal access to what is taught and to enjoy their learning.
130. Historically, curriculum leaders have provided a positive lead for their subjects and have carefully reviewed what needs to be done to raise

standards further. However, due to staff changes, the current division of responsibilities does not now take sufficient account of individual teaching backgrounds and particular expertise and, as a result, currently not all teachers' particular opportunities are fully exploited.

131. There are detailed and effective arrangements, which are well used by the headteacher and teachers, to assess pupils' long-term progress and to judge whether pupils are making the progress that it is reasonable to expect of them. The effective deployment of support staff to help those who may be experiencing difficulties is well managed. Initiatives to improve standards in English and in Welsh have been carefully planned and put into effect.
132. The school takes careful account of national priorities and local initiatives. The school is very actively promoting awareness of healthy lifestyles and healthy eating. Links with the junior school to which most pupils transfer are strong, as they are with other schools in the area.
133. There is a school council, which is actively promoting pupils' understanding of their responsibilities and of the democratic process. The school successfully promotes pupils' understanding of ecological issues and of the need to protect and improve the environment.
134. Preparation for the introduction of the Foundation Phase is well advanced and teachers have a good understanding of how to provide effectively for this change. There are also well-constructed arrangements to promote pupils' bilingual skills.
135. Arrangements to give teachers time during the taught week to plan, prepare and assess are managed effectively and enable teachers to function better.
136. There are good arrangements to support newly qualified teachers and teachers who are new to the school.
137. The governing body is actively engaged in the daily life of the school and is supportive of its work. There are well-established links between individual governors and teachers, which ensures that governors are well informed about their areas of interest. The chair of governors works closely with the headteacher and provides a positive lead to governors in determining the long-term strategic direction for the school. They successfully hold the senior management constructively to account.
138. The financial management of the school is well organised and effective. It is accurately focused on the school's shorter and longer-term priorities. The governing body meets all of its statutory duties in full.

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

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

139. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
140. There is an appropriate range of procedures in place to gather information about the strengths and areas for development within the school, as well as about its performance in national teacher assessments. The headteacher and teachers are well informed about the areas for which they are responsible and have carried out systematic reviews of them.
141. Teachers regularly measure and predict pupils' progress. This information is carefully considered and acted upon effectively, for example, to help raise standards in English. Teaching and non-teaching staff have been fully involved in contributing to the drafting of the self-evaluation report. The views of pupils and parents have been sought through questionnaires, which are distributed and analysed annually. Governors have been given good opportunities to express their views about the school and to discuss and compare their perceptions with those of the teachers and of the UA.
142. The school's self-evaluation document is sufficiently detailed and clearly set out. The strengths and areas for improvement across the life of the school are well expressed. It provides an accurate picture of the school.
143. There are effective links between the school's self-evaluation process, the SDP, performance management and the school's budgeting procedures. The SDP is well organised and has sufficient detail to track the progress of initiatives and to judge their impact. For example, appropriate arrangements have been made to provide sufficient time for teachers to plan, prepare and assess during the taught week and to review the effectiveness of these arrangements.
144. The inspection team agrees with the school's identification of its strengths and areas for development. The inspection team also agrees with the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation in six of the seven key questions. Where it disagrees, the school underestimated by one grade the quality of care, guidance and support it provides for its pupils.
145. Since the last inspection in the summer term 2002, the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues from that inspection. Standards are significantly higher now than they were and specifically writing in English has improved. However, these skills are not sufficiently well used in other subjects. Overall, pupils do not take sufficient care in presenting their written work neatly in other subjects.
146. The quality of teaching and learning in KS1 is good and has improved since the time of the last inspection. Teachers use the information they collect about pupils' learning well to provide appropriately challenging work for all

pupils. The process for the school to look at its performance critically has been strengthened very effectively, and is rigorous and firmly in place. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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

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

147. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
148. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers who have the necessary knowledge and experience to teach the early years and the full requirements of the NC effectively at KS1. There is one newly qualified teacher who receives a good level of support from a mentor and suitable training is provided.
149. Learning support assistants are well deployed and make a substantial contribution to the quality of pupils' learning, particularly for pupils with SEN. Support assistants work effectively with teachers in planning, teaching and recording pupils' progress. Specially trained teaching assistants are employed to provide individual support for pupils, working with a range of numeracy and literacy initiatives. This has been very successful in improving pupils' confidence and progress.
150. The school clerks, caretaker, kitchen staff and mid-day supervisors fulfil their duties well and make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school. The school is clean, warm and welcoming.
151. Sufficient learning resources are available to meet the needs of the curriculum. A considerable investment has been made in the provision of information technology equipment and interactive white boards, which equip every classroom, and this has a positive impact on standards across the curriculum. Resources for the teaching of the early years' curriculum and all subjects are good and used effectively. The provision of fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms and library areas is good. These are appropriate for pupils' interests and abilities.
152. Good use is made of resources beyond the school, including museums, environmental centres, local theatre productions and regular visits to study the local village. These visits enrich the curriculum and have a beneficial impact on pupils' standards of achievement.
153. The accommodation is suitable for the number of pupils on roll and the provision of the curriculum. It provides a pleasant environment for good teaching, learning and support for pupils. Classrooms and corridors are bright and airy. They feature high quality displays, many of which reinforce pupils' learning.

154. The school building is well maintained and has recently been decorated. A central hall provides adequate accommodation for collective worship, physical education and dining. The problem of lack of storage for resources has been partly solved with the purchase of outside storage containers. However, the storage of equipment in the hall restricts the use of the space for physical education lessons.
155. The school is in the process of implementing its disability action plan. Appropriate provision for access to the school is made for the physically disabled.
156. Outside, the school has spacious play areas. The nursery and reception areas are safe and secure. Soft play surfaces have been installed. The school grounds are being well developed to provide many opportunities for pupils to learn.
157. The budget is managed efficiently by the headteacher and finance committee of the governing body to ensure that the school is staffed and resourced sufficiently to teach the curriculum and meet the needs of the pupils. Priorities for development are carefully identified and spending is closely linked to these and monitored regularly. The school has identified the need to complete the process of re-allocating teachers' responsibilities in line with recent changes as a result of workforce re-modelling.
158. Staff are deployed efficiently and support staff are very well deployed in supporting teachers and pupils. They make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning.
159. Appraisal and performance management systems are effective in identifying and meeting the development needs of staff. Systems for planning, preparation and assessment are well established and teachers are provided with sufficient time to carry out these tasks.
160. Resources are managed efficiently and budget planning is based on the school's self-evaluation systems and priorities for development. Targets for improvement are set and are incorporated into the SDP.
161. Careful budgeting has enabled improvements to be made. The headteacher and finance committee of the governing body regularly review budget spending. Subject leaders carefully evaluate resources and have an allocation of funds linked to priorities identified in the SDP.
162. The school is successful in managing resources and offers a good quality curriculum for its pupils. Bearing in mind the overall quality of education provided and the progress pupils make, often from a below expected base, the school gives good value for money.

## **Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning**

### **UNDER FIVES**

163. The overall quality of education provided for children under five is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

### **Language Literacy and communication skills**

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

##### **Good features**

164. Children in both nursery and reception listen attentively when adults are speaking and follow instructions carefully. They listen carefully to their friends and do not interrupt them when they are speaking.
165. Children speak clearly and confidently to adults in informal situations and answer questions at a more formal level using sentences of increasing length. When playing with their friends they converse sociably.
166. Children in both nursery and reception understand that writing is a method of communication. They quickly and confidently develop early writing skills and enjoy 'writing' lists, cards, letters, tickets and stories in their own way. They hold their pencils correctly and make appropriate marks to represent their ideas. As they progress through the early years, children begin to form recognisable letters and to copy words and phrases.
167. Nursery children enjoy communicating with Barnaby Bear through letters and postcards. They also enjoy writing the name of a teddy on his nametag. They shape the letters carefully and many sound them out as they write.
168. Children in both nursery and reception select picture and storybooks to read for pleasure during their free play sessions. They handle books confidently, turning the pages carefully and following the story from left to right. Children in both age groups know that print carries meaning and attempt to 'read' in their own words. From an early stage, children correctly recognise individual letters and sounds.
169. Nursery children have a well-developed vocabulary. They use words such as 'scruffy', 'smooth', 'curly', and 'short' to describe the fur of a bear.
170. Reception children show that they understand that stories have a beginning, middle and end when they accurately retell the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', using role-play and drama.
171. Children in both age groups know a good range of Welsh songs and rhymes. They develop their understanding of bilingualism effectively when they answer the register in Welsh, describe the weather and correctly follow instructions.

172. Nursery children enjoy speaking Welsh and frequently respond in the language without prompting. They are eager to demonstrate their skills to children in reception and have fun showing how much they know.

### **Shortcomings**

173. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Personal and Social Development**

### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

174. Children settle very quickly into the nursery and become very sociable and confident. They demonstrate good manners when eating and chat amicably during their drink and snack time.
175. Children of all ages develop very good attitudes to learning throughout their time in the early years. They concentrate and persevere exceptionally well when working on their tasks and engaging in play activities. They value their own achievements and those of their friends and share their work proudly with others.
176. Children of all ages understand very well the importance of personal hygiene and washing their hands after playing outside and before eating. They take responsibility for distributing equipment and tidying away at the end of the session.
177. Nursery children take turns, share and co-operate with outstanding self-control. They show concern and care for others and discuss the importance of friends with considerable maturity for their ages.
178. Reception children have a good understanding of the purpose of games. They co-operate well when playing snakes and ladders, for example. They take turns and share the equipment fairly. They also work effectively with others when throwing and catching balls and beanbags during their physical development session.

### **Shortcomings**

179. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Mathematical Development**

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

#### **Good features**

180. Nursery children have fun estimating height and length and do this with a good degree of accuracy. They competently compare one another's height

and correctly suggest where to place their friends in height order. They skilfully measure lengths of wool against themselves and use these as a non-standard measure to correctly predict and carefully check which outdoor objects are taller or shorter than they are.

181. Nursery children demonstrate a very good understanding of the use of money when they play in the jewellery shop. A minority of children correctly recognise the values of several coins.
182. In nursery and reception, number, pattern and shape form an integral part of play activities and children develop a sound understanding of the use of mathematics in every day life. They quickly learn to match, sort, order and count. They explore different ways of measuring length, volume and mass.
183. Nursery children successfully make repeating patterns and order different sizes of beads. Reception children successfully create the shapes of golden eggs for Jack.
184. Nursery children correctly count to ten and most children accurately count beyond this. Children correctly recognise number symbols to five and a minority do this up to number 10. Children successfully begin to name and order symbols denoting first, second, third and fourth.
185. Reception children competently use dice to play snakes and ladders. They accurately identify the number shaken and move the correct number of spaces. A growing number of children count accurately to 20. Many children recognize numbers to 100.

### **Shortcomings**

186. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Knowledge and Understanding of the World</b>
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### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

187. Reception children have a very good understanding of the purpose of castles. They are familiar with Caerphilly Castle and have some understanding of its size and shape. They know that castles were built a long time ago.
188. Nursery and reception children use computers with growing skill. When using programs that simulate a familiar story, they correctly follow instructions using the mouse accurately to move the cursor.
189. Reception children competently give instructions to a programmable toy. They explain in some detail how and why it is important to ensure that instructions are correct.

190. Nursery children acquire a developing idea of time. Most children accurately recite the days of the week. Many correctly say which comes next and a few know which day comes before. They describe the weather accurately in both English and Welsh.
191. Reception children successfully develop a sense of the passing of time because their teachers share the timetable for the day. They fully understand that particular events take place at certain times of the day and begin to plan for them.

### **Shortcomings**

192. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Creative development</b>
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### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Good and outstanding features**

193. Children in both age groups enjoy painting and craftwork and work imaginatively in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional styles. They express themselves very creatively using a wide variety of materials and tools.
194. Nursery children fully explore and develop their creative ideas through their art and craftwork, which is closely inter-linked with role-play and problem-solving activities. They experiment ably to discuss the properties of various materials. They explore methods of attaching them to each other. They express their own ideas imaginatively when making very attractive mobiles, decorating jewellery boxes or making colourful necklaces.
195. Nursery children very carefully observe and record the texture of teddy bears' fur using crayons or felt pens. They make very good attempts at mark making.
196. Reception children work very creatively when they use different voices to enact the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.
197. Nursery children use very imaginative printing techniques to place their designs on to fabric, handling printing blocks confidently.

### **Shortcomings**

198. There are no important shortcomings.

## Physical development

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

#### Good features

199. Children in the nursery and reception have increasing control over the tools and equipment they use. For example, nursery children manipulate clay skilfully to make beads of different shapes and size. Reception children carefully handle scissors, glue and tape to construct models of castles.
200. Reception children move with increasing control of their bodies. They dress and undress competently. They develop their throwing skills effectively using a range of physical education equipment.
201. In nursery and reception, they develop their hand and eye co-ordination by hitting targets and throwing to each other, and successfully find different ways of moving by running, skipping and jumping. Children are confident when using outdoor wheeled toys and large equipment. They explore and experiment. They are very aware of the need to keep safe and to avoid accidents.

#### Shortcomings

202. There are no important shortcomings.

## English

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

#### Good Features

203. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are outstanding. Pupils of all ages listen attentively and purposefully to their teachers and to other adults in a variety of situations.
204. In lessons, pupils think very carefully about information they are given and are eager to find out more. They are keen to ask further questions and seek clarification of points they wish to develop. Pupils are enthusiastic speakers. They speak very confidently and clearly use extended sentences. They do this in all situations, both when speaking with adults and with other children. Pupils in KS1 develop their vocabulary very effectively.
205. Pupils of all ages and abilities read well and achieve good standards. They read regularly to adults and to each other, and regularly use reading diaries to record their own progress. Pupils show a keen interest in reading, both for pleasure and for information. They enjoy their 'Big Book' and guided group-reading sessions in which they read a varied range of texts, including non-fiction.

206. In KS1, pupils are enthusiastic note takers and effectively use writing areas in the classrooms to record information. Most Y1 pupils understand the term 'opener' and begin to use these correctly when starting a sentence. A few pupils use a variety of connectives correctly to join sentences together.
207. Y2 pupils use adjectives correctly when describing a character in the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' story. Pupils of higher ability select words such as 'heartless' for their variety and interest. They skilfully search texts to identify interesting adjectives and use them competently in their own work.
208. Pupils' spelling is an outstanding feature. Pupils of all ages have a secure understanding of the sounds letters make. They are confident spellers who use their skills to spell increasingly complex words accurately.

### **Shortcomings**

209. Pupils' handwriting is often poorly formed and the presentation of their work is untidy.

<b>Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> language</b>
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### **Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

210. All pupils respond well to incidental spoken Welsh during the day. Pupils ask simple questions of each other in role-play situations, using an appropriate range of phrases and vocabulary. They are familiar with a range of vocabulary and use the names of colours, foods, clothes, numbers and family members with confidence. They respond well to questions and commands, for example, about the weather and how they feel. All pupils sing a variety of simple Welsh rhymes and songs with confidence and good intonation.
211. Pupils' listening skills are good and they respond well to adults and other pupils. They listen carefully to instructions and take turns to demonstrate the appropriate actions. They listen with concentration and interest to stories such as 'Dewi Dinosor' and respond well to questions, showing good understanding.
212. Pupils make good attempts to read together from 'Big Books' and are keen to discuss aspects of the story and to predict outcomes. They follow the text and read with good pronunciation. They confidently take turns to read the dialogue aloud and show good understanding. Older pupils confidently read aloud their own written sentences.
213. Pupils make good use of their knowledge of sentence patterns and vocabulary to write their own sentences. They write accurate sentences in response to questions about the weather, how they feel and what they like to eat. Pupils in Y2 write interesting letters about themselves using known language patterns and vocabulary. Some pupils competently write a paragraph about the activities and hobbies they enjoy.

## Shortcomings

214. There are no important shortcomings.

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## Mathematics

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

#### Good features

215. In Y1 and Y2, pupils use mathematical terms correctly in number calculations. In Y1, they count up to 20 and make numbers by connecting a range of different smaller numbers. They understand the meaning of zero and calculate quickly and accurately. In Y2, pupils calculate quickly and accurately by adding and subtracting within 100. They apply their knowledge to problems involving money. They explain strategies to solve addition and subtraction problems. They understand how to halve and double a small number and are beginning to understand how to add and subtract simple fractions.

216. Pupils in KS1 have a good understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes and understand how to sort shapes according to their characteristics. They describe the features they see accurately. In Y2, they recognise that some shapes are symmetrical and use different strategies well to find lines of symmetry. They use standard and non-standard units to estimate and measure length, weight and capacity. They tell the time to the hour and half hour.

217. In Y1 and Y2, pupils draw simple pictograms and bar graphs accurately to display data they have collected. They recognise a sequence of objects and correctly identify when the sequence is broken. They predict which element should follow another.

## Shortcomings

218. There are no important shortcomings.

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## Science

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

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#### Good Features

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219. In KS1, pupils have a good understanding of how to carry out simple investigations carefully and systematically, for example, when testing materials to discover their permeability or when measuring the strength of a magnet. They know the importance of making a sensible prediction before they begin and explaining what happened at the end.

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220. Older pupils in Y2 know that a test should be fair and repeatable. They study how living things including themselves change. They observe, record and illustrate their findings accurately.

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221. In Y1, pupils investigate how sounds are produced. They use magnifiers carefully to study plants. In Y2, pupils know how to construct a simple circuit. They record what they did to make the circuit and the equipment work, and the materials they used to do it. They have a good understanding of how living things move and change. They look carefully at information they gather about the link between the colour of hair and eyes. Pupils measure accurately how plants grow in different conditions. They understand that plants and people need specific elements to ensure that they grow healthily.

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### **Shortcomings**

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222. There are no important shortcomings.

## **History**

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

#### **Good features**

223. Pupils' have a growing awareness of the sequence of time. For example, pupils successfully compare toys of today with those of the past. When studying different modes of transport over the years, they accurately sequence pictures to make a timeline. They make good attempts to describe the differences between the past and the present. All pupils make good use of their study of the local area to compare changes in the village over time.

224. Pupils understand that they can find out about the past from a range of sources, such as books, visits to places of historical interest and through visitors talking about the past. Pupils listen with much interest to local residents talking about their past in Bedwas and how the village has changed. They use information gathered from questions they ask. They make informed comparisons of life then with that of today. They understand change, from when Bedwas was a coal mining community to the modern mixed industries of today.

225. Y2 pupils carefully investigate seaside trips in the past by studying photographs, books, drawings and seaside artefacts. They correctly identify differences between past and present times at the seaside and have a good understanding of the changes in the way of life now and then.

226. Pupils have good recall of stories from the past and the lives of famous people, such as Saint David and Welsh historical characters, such as Jemima Nicolas. They know in detail the story of the runner Guto Nyth Bran, a local hero, and his association with Bedwas.

227. From their visits to Caerphilly Castle, pupils are familiar with the structures of castles and accurately explain the function of various parts of the castle.

Pupils have a thorough knowledge of the history of their school and explain clearly that the first infant school was built in 1885. They study the old photographs in an album in order to draw sensible conclusions from the evidence set out in them.

### **Shortcomings**

228. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Geography**

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

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#### **Good features**

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229. In KS1, pupils know their routes to school and the main features they pass as they walk along them. They accurately record how they make their journeys and the places they pass. Pupils carefully draw simple plans and charts of the information they collect. They use simple symbols well to illustrate what they see.

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230. Older pupils in Y2 successfully contrast their own village with Fishguard. They identify similarities and differences in features in the landscape and in the buildings. They compare life in some detail in Botswana with their own. They know that Botswana is in Central Africa where many people are very poor. Pupils identify different trees found on a safari and draw them carefully to show their main characteristics. They are beginning to identify accurately the main physical features of their own country and local area.

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231. Pupils in Y2 are beginning to use simple maps in order to identify routes and features. They draw them to identify where their 'fantastic creatures' may be found. They know the importance of looking after the environment and in conserving natural resources.

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#### **Shortcomings**

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232. There are no important shortcomings.

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## **Information Technology**

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

#### **Good features**

233. Pupils understand that information can be gathered and stored in a variety of ways, including the use of technology. They use the computer to enter information to generate graphs and tables and for entering text. They also use computers to carry out research confidently.

234. Pupils in Y1 use a simple camera accurately to record information. Y2 pupils competently enter text and correctly use 'caps lock' and the 'shift' key to change from lower case to capital letters.
235. Pupils apply correction techniques, shifting a letter for example, with growing skill when improving their work. They capably use a spell checker to further improve their work. When typing, pupils are increasingly aware that letters are set out in a specific pattern and are located in the same place on different keyboards. They begin to memorise these. Pupils skilfully highlight particular words in bold in order to make them stand out.
236. Pupils in Y1 confidently use different tools in a painting program to develop their work in art. They draw, drag, and fill areas with colour with increasing accuracy.
237. Pupils in both year groups use ICT based models effectively to explore real situations, for example, when they group and classify materials in their science lessons.

### **Shortcomings**

238. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Design technology</b>
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### **Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

239. Pupils in Y1 design a placemat choosing and using a variety of materials. They plan how to make a Christmas decoration and make an extensive list of materials they would need to complete the construction of a vehicle. They make sensible evaluations of their design ideas.
240. Older pupils in Y2 design and make a frame for their picture. They test ways of joining materials together, for example, when making different types of bridges. They systematically construct articulated cards of a pig with a moving tail.
241. Within KS1, pupils design and carefully make healthy sandwiches as part of the school's 'Healthy Schools' initiative. They design a pizza to sell in their Italian restaurant and practise different techniques in handling and shaping the dough. They carefully plan how they will decorate the pizza with different ingredients and systematically test their results.
242. Across KS1, pupils understand that 'control' is part of many everyday devices and they turn things on and off using a programmable toy.

### **Shortcomings**

243. There are no important shortcomings.

## Music

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

#### Good features

244. At the time of the inspection, no music lessons were observed. Evidence of standards is based on the scheme of work, discussions with pupils and staff, pupils' performances during assembly, class music activities, and a scrutiny of pupils' electronically recorded work.
245. Pupils have a well-balanced range of skills in composing, performing and appraising music and have a good understanding of the musical elements.
246. Pupils confidently sing a wide variety of songs, hymns and rhymes in English and in Welsh. They sing in tune with clear diction and appropriate attention to breathing and the quality of sound.
247. Pupils have good listening skills and demonstrate good appraisal skills when listening to music in assembly and at lunchtimes. They listen with appreciation to visiting musicians, such as brass players and a harpist.
248. Pupils follow clapping patterns and repeat them accurately, adapting to different rhythms. They play a range of instruments in time with the music, keeping a steady beat. They correctly sort instruments into different types - those they beat, strike or shake. They accurately distinguish between loud and quiet sounds, and understand the effects that changes of volume can have on moods in music.
249. Pupils are developing their composition skills well. They successfully explore a range of tuned and untuned instruments to compose short pieces of music. Pupils explore their own sounds on a range of instruments to produce a composition to accompany a story. They confidently perform their compositions to an audience and competently follow the directions of a conductor.
250. Pupils celebrate music from other cultures and explore a range of multi-cultural instruments to produce effective rhythms. They listen with interest to a performance by a visiting African percussion band, which provides inspiration for their own work. Pupils successfully make and play their own instruments to celebrate 'Rosh Hosanah'.

#### Shortcomings

251. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Art</b>
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**Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

- 252. Pupils in Y2 develop their knowledge of colour and this helps them accurately group hot and cold colours together. Pupils express themselves creatively when they skilfully construct an exciting collage using silver paper.
- 253. Pupils apply a range of different techniques used by other artists, and use these effectively in their own work. They further explore different techniques for themselves, such as pushing thick paint using a large brush, and apply them well to create texture.
- 254. Pupils in Y1 apply the shading techniques they have mastered in their art lessons to good effect when closely observing the different textures of materials they study in science. They use a magnifying glass and a soft pencil to produce skilful drawings.
- 255. Pupils confidently use the computer to enhance the development of their artwork and create attractive effects.

**Shortcomings**

- 256. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Physical Education</b>
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**Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good Features**

- 257. Pupils in KS1 know the importance of 'warming up' before physical exercise and 'cooling down' afterwards. They understand the importance of regular exercise in order to keep healthy. Pupils recognise the effects of sustained physical exercise upon their bodies. They behave sensibly and safely when taking part in these activities. Across the school, all pupils wear appropriate clothing and dress and undress quickly and efficiently.
- 258. In KS1, pupils have a good understanding of the skills of physical education. They practise the techniques of throwing accurately and of catching securely. They know how to control a large ball with their feet showing good co-ordination.
- 259. They practise hand and eye co-ordination well, striking a ball with their hands and with a bat. They modify their activities so that when they are given new tasks they apply the skills they have learnt in one situation to another. They understand the importance of controlling the force of a pass or strike to ensure accuracy.

260. In Y1 and Y2, pupils co-operate willingly in dance and in gymnastics. They respond to instructions and use space well. They interpret the mood and expression within music and move rhythmically, repeating and extending a series of movements inspired by it.
261. In gymnastics, pupils travel with a change of pace, direction and height. They stretch, travel, balance and hold shapes, building up a series of linked actions well. They use fixed apparatus effectively as part of their movements. Both Y1 and Y2 pupils evaluate their own and other's performances realistically.

### **Shortcomings**

262. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Religious education</b>
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### **Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

263. Pupils in Y2 know that the Bible is a special book for Christians. They recall a number of stories from the Old Testament and recount these appropriately for their age.
264. Pupils accurately recall the main events in the life of Jesus. They know that Christians believe Jesus was crucified for their sins and rose from the dead on Easter Day.
265. Y2 pupils study Jewish customs and begin to understand some of the reasons for these. They make accurate comparisons between Judaism and Christianity and note the similarities and differences between them.
266. Pupils of all ages are beginning to understand the concept that light is used as a symbol through their study of Divali, Christingle and the feast of St Lucia. They are aware that religion is important to many people and that different groups of people may worship in different ways.
267. Pupils explore their feelings and reflect on what is special to them. They say 'thank you' for their friends and families.

### **Shortcomings**

268. There are no important shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection

The Governing body, head teacher and staff welcome the inspection report and are very pleased with its very positive outcomes. We would like to thank the inspection team for their professionalism, fairness and the courteous way in which they undertook the inspection. Their overall attitude and approach ensured there was a rigorous examination of the school

We are proud that the report states that Bedwas Infants is a good school that provides outstanding levels of care for its pupils. We are also pleased that the inspectors found that the school is well led and has made good progress since the last inspection.

There are many very positive comments within the report; however the school would like to highlight the following –

- the standards of achievement in subjects and areas of learning are well above national figures;
- the quality of teaching is also well above national figures.;
- the very good progress that pupils with SEN make;
- teaching assistants are well deployed and contribute significantly to pupils' progress;
- pupils speaking and listening skills are very good;
- in nursery and reception the key skills of problem solving and creativity are very good;
- PSE in both early years and KS1 is outstanding;
- links with parents are strong;
- the school's partnership with industry is of a high quality; and
- there are outstanding arrangements to support pupil's well-being.

The school is very pleased of the progress it has made since the last inspection and this has been due to the commitment and hard work of the governing body, staff, parents and pupils over the last six years. All of the shortcomings and key issues of the last report have been addressed and the standards have improved considerably.

We will carefully consider the recommendations and write an action plan that will be incorporated into next years and future School Development Plans. We will strive to raise the performance of boys compared to girls, review the allocation of areas of responsibility for subject leaders and improve writing across the curriculum. Governors will monitor the implementation of the action plan and will report on the progress being made in their annual report to parents.

We are committed to build on this successful report, so as to ensure the highest possible quality of education for all of the pupils in our care.

We are delighted that the inspection team found that Bedwas Infants School is a place where there are *Happy Faces, Kind Hearts and Inquiring Minds*.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Bedwas Infant School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3-7
Address of school	St Mary Street Bedwas Caerphilly
Postcode	CF83 8EE
Telephone number	029 2085 2512

Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Hadid
Date of appointment	January 2003
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Margaret Guilfoyle
Registered inspector	Mr Peter Mathias
Dates of inspection	14 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2008

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group								
Year group	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	23	35	44	40	N/A	N/A	N/A	142

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	5	3	6.4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	11.5:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	29
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1.3

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2007	82.9	91.4	93.2
Autumn 2007	91.2	91.0	93.7
Spring 2008	90.8	90.5	94.4

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	12
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1

### Appendix 3

#### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y2:			
			36			
Percentage of pupils at each level						
			W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	17	64	19
		National	3	13	63	20
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	3	17	61	19
		National	4	14	55	27
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	8	19	69	3
		National	5	14	68	12
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	8	42	50
		National	2	10	63	24
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	17	53	31
		National	2	10	64	23
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	3	58	39
		National	2	9	66	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment			
In the school	83.3	In Wales	80

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

- A team of four inspectors, who were present in the school for nine inspector days, carried out the inspection with a nominee from the school.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school. The inspection team met prior to the start of the inspection, with the nominee present.
- Twenty-one questionnaires were completed by parents and carefully analysed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff with responsibilities and support staff.
- School documentation and samples of pupils' work were examined.
- Twenty-six lessons or sessions were observed.
- A sample of pupils' work from across the ability range in each year group was examined.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading from each year group.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work and about the life of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during break periods, at lunchtime and at the beginning and end of the school sessions.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and observed extra-curricular activities.
- Post-inspection meetings were held with the staff and the governing body.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Peter Mathias (Registered Inspector)	Context Summary and Recommendations Contributions to Key Questions 1 & 2 Key Question 5 Key Question 6 Appendices Mathematics Science Design technology Geography Physical education
Mrs Caterina Lewis (Lay Inspector)	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, & 4
Mrs Eluned Evans (Team Inspector)	Contributions to Key Question 4 Key Question 7 Special educational needs Welsh as a Second Language History Music
Mrs Jan Marsden (Team Inspector)	Contributions to Key Questions 2 & 3 Early Years English Information technology Art Religious education
Mrs Lynne Hadid (Headteacher/Nominee)	Contributions to all Key Questions

### Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to thank the management group, the headteacher and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.

### Contractor:

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