

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Blaencaerau Junior School
Blaencaerau Road
Caerau
Maesteg
CF34 0PP**

School Number: 6722094

Date of Inspection: 26/01/09

by

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Blaencaerau Junior 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 Blaencaerau Junior School took place between 26/01/09 and 28/01/09. An independent team of 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:

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Contents	Page
Context	1
Summary	2
Recommendations	7
Standards	8
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	8
The quality of education and training	11
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	11
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	13
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	15
Leadership and management	18
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	18
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	20
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	21
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	22
English	22
Science	23
History	24
Art and design	24
Music	25
Physical education	26
School's response to the inspection	27
Appendices	28
1 Basic information about the school	28
2 School data and indicators	28
3 National Curriculum assessments results	29
4 Evidence base of the inspection	29
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	30

Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 Blaencaerau Junior School is situated in the once mining village of Caerau at the head of the Llynfi Valley. The local authority (LA) is Bridgend. The school provides education for boys and girls between the ages of seven and eleven. There are 174 pupils on roll, including 29 pupils from a wider area who attend a resource base for those who have moderate to severe learning difficulties. The school roll has declined from the time of the last inspection in the Spring Term 2003.
- 2 Nearly all pupils come from the local area which is socially and economically disadvantaged. Approximately 53% of pupils are considered eligible for free school meals, which is well above the LA average of 18.1% and the Welsh average of 17.5%. Most pupils enter Y3 with below average levels of attainment; all but one pupil has English as a first language. None uses Welsh as a first language. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) for speech and communication difficulties. About 49% of pupils on roll at the school are considered to have some degree of additional learning needs (ALN). This is well above the national average. No pupil has the National Curriculum (NC) disapplied. Three pupils are 'looked after' by the LA and one pupil receives help in English as an additional language. Six boys were temporarily excluded in the previous school year.
- 3 The school holds the Healthy Schools Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second time.
- 4 The school is scheduled to close in July 2009 and to merge with two other schools to form a new primary school on another site.
- 5 The school's aims are wide and appropriate. The school's mission statement is "Bring Out the Best in Everyone".

The school's priorities and targets

- 6 The school's priorities and targets for 2008/2009 are to: -
 - appoint appropriate teaching staff and support staff in order to support inclusion throughout the school;
 - modify planning in the light of the new basic skills curriculum for Y3, Y4 and Y5;
 - involve pupils in the assessment of their own learning;
 - implement the RAISE proposal;
 - target under-achievement in reading and spelling and help address emotional and behavioural issues;
 - promote bilingualism and Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig across the curriculum and throughout the school;
 - continue to work within the information communications technology (ICT) self-review framework and towards the ICT Quality Mark;

- continue to do work with cluster schools at KS3 on cross phase moderation work in English, mathematics and science; and
- plan and prepare fully for the closure of Blaencaerau Junior School and the opening of Caerau Primary School.

Summary

- 7 Blaencaerau Junior School is a good school. It is well led and is at the heart of the local community. It has made good progress since its last inspection in the spring term 2003. Standards in art and music are very high.

Table of grades awarded

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

- 8 The inspection team agreed with six of the seven judgements made by the school about the standards pupils achieve and other areas of its work.
- 9 Where the inspection team disagreed this was because the school over-estimated by one grade how well learners are cared for, guided and supported. While the school provides good support for all of its pupils with some outstanding features in its provision for pupils with ALN, these were insufficient to justify the award of the highest grade.

Standards

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
12%	67%	21%	0%	0%

- 11 These figures are just below those reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) Annual Report 2007/2008 (primary) where standards were good or better in 84% of lessons. In this inspection 79% of lessons seen were in these categories. These figures are significantly higher than at the time of the last inspection.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	KS2
English	2
Science	2
History	2
Music	1
Art and design	1
Physical education	2

- 12 Many pupils begin in the school with below expected levels of attainment. Pupils with SEN, including those who attend the resource base for pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties, often make very good progress as do pupils with English as an additional language. However, in some classes the most able are under-challenged.
- 13 In the end of KS2 national teacher assessments for eleven year old in 2008, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level (Level 4) in English, mathematics and science was well below the LA and national averages. The combined results were well below these averages also. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 5) was below.
- 14 When these results are compared to schools thought to have a broadly similar proportion of pupils considered eligible for free school meals, the results were below these similar schools in all three subjects and when the results were combined. However, the group of schools in which this school is placed is for schools who have above 32% of pupils considered eligible for free school meals. In this school the proportion is very high and three times above the national average.
- 15 Also it is important to bear in mind when considering these results that they include pupils who attend the resource base for those with moderate to severe learning difficulties. When the results of these pupils are discounted, the school's performance was above most similar schools in English and mathematics and well above in science.
- 16 In these assessments girls out-performed boys as they have done over recent years. The overall trend in improvement in the last three years is positive. In 2008 the school met its targets agreed with the LA.
- 17 Standards and progress in the key skills of literacy in English have good features and no important shortcomings. In communication in English, pupils speak confidently, listen carefully and read extensively. They write well for a wide range of reasons.
- 18 In Welsh pupils speak and listen and write well bearing in mind their starting points. However, their ability to read in Welsh is limited and they lack consistent opportunities

across the school to learn how to use Welsh and English together in their day to day responses.

- 19 Pupils' mathematical skills are good with no important shortcomings. Across the school pupils use their understanding of number well when measuring in other subjects such as in science and in design technology. They express information clearly in a range of different graphical forms.
- 20 Across the school pupils' skills in information communications technology (ICT) are good with no important shortcomings. They utilise a wide variety of programs and use their skills effectively, for example to create newspaper articles and to analyse data carefully.
- 21 Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous. They have positive attitudes to their work and try hard. They make good progress in developing their personal, social and learning skills.
- 22 Attendance at 90.2% is below the LA and national averages and lower than attendance rates for schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Some pupils consistently arrive late for school.

The quality of education and training

Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	82%	9%	0%	0%

- 23 These figures are above the national picture reported by HMCI in the Annual Report 2007/2008 (primary) where the quality of teaching was good or better in 83% of lessons. However, in this inspection only 9% of lessons were placed in the highest category compared to the national picture of 16% of lessons being Grade 1.
- 24 Across the school in the best lessons the outstanding features in teaching included: -
- careful and effective planning to provide for the needs of all pupils;
 - very expressive language to encourage pupils to try hard and to be creative in their ideas;
 - infectious enthusiasm for the subject which makes learning fun;
 - vigorous and constructive questioning to encourage pupils to think things out for themselves; and
 - very positive and supportive relationships so that pupils respond very well because they wish to please their teachers.
- 25 Where teaching had some shortcomings these were: -
- insufficient challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able;

- pupils not encouraged to think for themselves and to find their own solutions; and
 - missed opportunities to encourage pupils' bilingual skills.
- 26 Arrangements for assessment and its use in planning and improving learning are good. They meet statutory requirements in full and are thorough. There are good quality reports to parents which give detailed information about the standards their children achieve and the progress they make. The school works closely with other schools in the area in order for teachers to agree what standards pupils achieve particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- 27 The curriculum meets all legal requirements for the NC and the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. It provides well for all pupils and is accessible to all, meeting the needs of the wide range of pupils in the school. However, teachers do not plan consistently across the school to build up pupils' key skills systematically.
- 28 Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Collective acts of worship meet statutory requirements and are of a mainly Christian nature. The heavy emphasis the school places on music across the school is a major contributor to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school promotes successfully pupils' understanding of their own heritage through Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig which is well developed and their knowledge of the multicultural nature of modern society.
- 29 There is good provision to encourage pupils' understanding of environmental, conservation and global issues. Pupils understand the importance of using resources sparingly and of their duties as citizens of the world. There are effective arrangements for the setting of homework which is closely linked to pupils' work in school. Partnerships with the wider community are strong.
- 30 Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. Teachers and their assistants know their pupils well and they carefully and effectively monitor and support their progress, development and well-being. Child protection arrangements meet local guidance and recommended good practice. There are very close and effective working relationships with parents, carers and a wide range of agencies and support services.
- 31 Across the school pupils have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They are successfully encouraged to make their views and opinions known through the school council and informally to teachers who listen and respect their views which are taken seriously.
- 32 Support for pupils with ALN has some outstanding features and is very well managed. The school very successfully ensures that these pupils in the main school and those in the resource base play a full part in the life of the school and are treated equally. The requirements of the code of practice for SEN are met in full. Initiatives to help raise standards in literacy are well used and are having a positive impact.
- 33 The school has carried out a detailed survey of the site and has an extensive disability action plan. There are detailed policies to ensure that any issues of racism

are addressed and the stereotyping of individuals and cultures is positively discouraged.

Leadership and Management

- 34 The school is well led and managed. The headteacher gives the school a clear sense of purpose and very successfully fosters a commitment amongst all staff to 'bring out the best in everyone'. The school is at the heart of the local community. All pupils are well treated and positively encouraged to make progress. The senior management team is effective and the day-to-day and longer-term needs of the school are fully addressed.
- 35 The roles of subject co-ordinators are well developed and they manage their subjects effectively. There are detailed arrangements for the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to review the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility and to assess the progress of the changes they are putting into effect.
- 36 The school takes careful note of national priorities and local initiatives. Arrangements to provide teachers with time during the taught week to plan, prepare and assess are effectively organised. The time set aside is well used.
- 37 The chair of governors provides a very strong lead and a very well informed steer to the governing body. He plays an influential role in the school and works closely with the headteacher to determine the school's long-term priorities. Governors actively hold the senior management constructively to account.
- 38 The governing body meets all of its statutory duties in full. The school's finances are well-managed and governors carefully assess the impact of decisions on the educational needs of pupils.
- 39 The process of self-evaluation is well established and is closely linked to the school improvement arrangements and to the performance management process for all staff. It is thorough, sufficiently detailed and broadly accurate. It is firmly based on first-hand evidence.
- 40 The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues of the previous inspection.
- 41 The school runs smoothly and day-to-day administration is calm and efficient. The accommodation has some very significant shortcomings. The playground space is restricted and the building is decayed. Notwithstanding this, staff make their classrooms attractive and stimulating places for pupils to learn. The accommodation is well kept and is clean.
- 42 The school is well resourced and good use is made of these. Resources are readily available. They are of a good quality and quantity to support learning. Bearing in mind the overall progress pupils make from a low base and the quality of education provided, despite the school's poor accommodation, 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 standards in pupils' competence in their use of incidental Welsh in their classes and around the school; *
- R2 give more emphasis in planning and teaching in order to ensure that all pupils, including the most able, build consistently on what they know and can do;
- R3 improve teachers' planning for key skills so that the good practice in some classes in this is consistent across the school and ensure that the appropriate level of challenge in each key skill is identified for each year group; and
- R4 raise levels of attendance.

* The school has already identified this as a priority in its school development plan.

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 43 The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 44 In the 2008 national assessments for eleven year olds, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level (Level 4) in English, mathematics and science and the combined results were well below average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 5) was also well below these averages. In these assessments girls performed better than boys. Over recent years the school has consistently performed well below the LA and national averages.
- 45 When these results are compared to schools considered to have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, i.e. above 32%, the results were below these similar schools in all three subjects and also when the results were combined. In this school, a very high proportion of pupils are considered eligible for free school meals and care should be taken when considering these results. They also include the performance of pupils who attend the two classes for pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties.
- 46 When these results are discounted, the performance of pupils in the main school was above most of these schools in English and mathematics and well above in science. The combined results were above most similar schools. In 2008 the school met the targets agreed with the LA.
- 47 Many pupils begin in the school with below expected levels of attainment. Nearly all, including the pupil with English as an additional language make good progress and meet or exceed the targets predicted for them when they entered the school at seven years of age. All pupils with ALN, including those who attend the resource base and those with SEN, make very good progress and reach or exceed the targets set for them.
- 48 Across the school, pupils know what is expected of them and the targets they should achieve. They have a clear picture of what they need to do to improve. However, in a few lessons the most able are not sufficiently challenged.
- 49 Standards of achievement in the lessons in the subjects inspected were as follows: -

Subject grades for subjects inspected

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
12%	67%	21%	0%	0%

- 50 These figures are just below those reported in HMCI's Annual Report 2007/2008 (primary) where standards were good or better in 84% of lessons. These figures are significantly higher than at the time of the last inspection.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	KS2
English	2
Science	2
History	2
Music	1
Art	1
Physical education	2

- 51 Pupils' communication skills in English and Welsh are Grade 2. In communication in Welsh pupils speak, listen and write well, bearing in mind their low starting point, but they lack confidence and ability to read Welsh. They do not use their knowledge of Welsh with sufficient confidence to extend their use of Welsh by responding to questions or formal and informal discussions in their lessons.
- 52 In the key skill of communication in English, pupils speak confidently to each other and to adults, although they rarely speak in extended sentences. They listen well in a variety of settings. They read for information to interpret data regularly and effectively. Across the key stage many write for a wide range of reasons appropriately and reach good standards bearing in mind their levels of skills when they begin school.
- 53 Pupils' mathematical skills are good with no important shortcomings. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge well in science to measure results and draw a variety of graphs to express this information. They have a good understanding of how to collect and interpret data they have found for example, in geography and in history. They measure accurately in design technology.
- 54 Across the school, pupils' skills in ICT are Grade 2. Pupils use a good range of programs to write and set out data. They work independently and use their skills effectively to analyse data in science. They write newspaper articles and compose poems illustrating them with graphics and with digital photographs. Pupils' understanding of the richness of their Welsh culture is good. Pupils have many opportunities which are effective to appreciate the work of many Welsh artists, musicians and authors, including an author from their own professional staff and with a local artist. They have a good understanding of some aspects of Welsh drama and dance. They have a good understanding of their Welsh heritage and of the history of their local community.
- 55 Pupils' personal and social skills are good. Pupil's show care and respect for each other. They have positive attitudes when working collaboratively together. They enjoy their learning.
- 56 Within KS2 pupils make good progress in developing their personal, social and learning skills. They have a strong sense of their own identity and their place in the community.
- 57 Pupils' problem solving skills are good. They find out for example which foods will make a good diet. They apply criteria well when analysing a piece of writing in an English lesson.

- 58 Pupils' creative skills are good. They use their creative skills well when inventing characters in English. They compose a piece of music well in their music lessons. They create a wide-range of different types of art and use appropriate media and techniques.
- 59 All pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance. They are well motivated and are well aware of the short-term targets which are set for them.
- 60 Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are good and the school functions well as a supportive, happy and orderly community. The headteacher and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. A clear code of conduct exists and pupils understand what is expected of them.
- 61 The school has successfully implemented a range of strategies to enhance pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially through discussion time, and this has contributed significantly to the positive behaviour of pupils and the quality of life in the school. Pupils are courteous, polite and relate well to each other, to staff and to visitors.
- 62 Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and play, are interested and keen to please their teachers. They listen carefully in lessons, sustain concentration to the best of their abilities and persevere well with their tasks. They take delight in their achievements and readily share them with others.
- 63 The school places a high priority on attendance and punctuality but despite its considerable efforts there are shortcomings in the attendance rates achieved and in the punctuality of pupils at the start of the school day. Attendance rates for the past three terms averages 90.2%. These rates are lower than the LA and national rates of attendance for pupils of primary school age and lower than those for schools that have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.
- 64 A few pupils have a high level of persistent absence, which has an adverse impact on the continuity of their education and the standards they achieve. The school works closely with the education welfare service to support children and their families and there have been some improvements for individual pupils in recent months.
- 65 A small minority of pupils are consistently late for the start of the school day. This disrupts classes and these pupils sometimes miss important parts of the first lesson of the day.
- 66 Pupils are developing the skills to work independently and to take responsibility for their own learning. They work together in pairs and groups with confidence, organise activities fairly and ensure everyone contributes.
- 67 Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the importance treating everyone equally, fairly and without discrimination. In discussion, pupils display a growing respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within society.

- 68 The school prepares pupils well for effective participation in the life and work of the local community. Governors, staff and pupils work in close partnership with the local people and organisations and support a range of community initiatives 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

- 69 The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 70 The quality of teaching was judged as follows:-

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	82%	9%	0%	0%

- 71 The quality of teaching is good or better, that is Grade 1 or Grade 2 in 91% of lessons. This figure is above the national figure reported by HMCI in the Annual Report (Primary) 2007/2008 when the quality of teaching was good or better (Grade 1 and Grade 2) in 83% of lessons. However, only 9% of lessons in this inspection were Grade 1. Nationally in 2007/2008 16% of lessons inspected were in this category.
- 72 Across KS2 teachers' planning is generally well-constructed and sufficiently detailed to provide for the needs of all pupils in the classes. However, in a few lessons, teachers' planning does not give sufficient emphasis to extending the learning of the most able. Planning is well-organised to ensure that lessons move forward systematically and lessons have a sense of direction. Planning for those identified as having some degree of ALN is very thorough and ensures that all pupils with SEN, including those who attend the resource base, are fully involved in their lessons and make at least good progress.
- 73 At the beginning of lessons pupils are made well aware of what is expected of them. They are positively encouraged to remember and to work towards the individual short-term targets which are set for them. Teachers consistently show high expectations of their pupils and enthusiastically encourage them to achieve their objectives.
- 74 In the best lessons teachers use very expressive language to encourage pupils to work creatively. They show a very good understanding of their subjects, for example when describing and demonstrating how to produce different textures and effects when creating a still-life painting. In these lessons, teachers very actively support individual pupils and question vigorously to encourage pupils to observe closely and to evaluate their own efforts realistically.
- 75 Where teaching has many outstanding features the teachers very successfully encourage pupils to work hard and to find learning fun. They foster very positive attitudes to learning through their own enthusiasm for the topics of the lessons.

They use a wide-range of resources and teaching techniques to stimulate pupils' mental processes and to encourage them to find their own solutions to problems. Relationships between the teachers and all pupils are very positive and pupils strive hard to please their teachers because they know that their efforts are valued and warmly recognised.

- 76 Where teaching has some shortcomings, teachers do not ensure that the task set are sufficiently challenging for all pupils in the class, including the most able. Few opportunities are given for pupils to think things out for themselves. They do not question in sufficient depth to identify whether all pupils have made progress in the lessons. In some lessons teachers are too ready to accept second best and opportunities are missed to demonstrate the standards pupils should aim to achieve. Teachers miss opportunities to encourage pupils to use their bilingual skills.
- 77 Assessment procedures are good. They are thorough and fully meet statutory requirements. The school has implemented an effective system for assessing pupils' progress from the time they enter the school. There is a sound transfer of information system between classes and there are good practices in the transfer of information subsequent to the secondary school.
- 78 The assessment, recording and reporting co-ordinator liaises closely with subject co-ordinators and then all staff. Short term planning encourages staff to assess progress already made. Tasks are systematically analysed and the information used well to influence future planning.
- 79 Assessment arrangements are thorough in all subjects. The information gained is used to help governors, the headteacher and staff to evaluate the effectiveness of policies and inform curriculum planning to set new objectives. The school regularly analyses performance of boys and girls and year on year trends. It is well used to identify strengths and weaknesses in standards across the school.
- 80 To help in assessment, useful collections of pupils' work have been compiled to indicate the levels that pupils can achieve in each year group. The school works closely with the secondary school and other schools in the area in order for teachers to agree the standards pupils achieve, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- 81 Pupils are involved in planning and setting their own targets, which are well constructed, purposeful and achievable. Pupils are well informed through careful marking of their work about how they are achieving. Comments are purposeful but do not allow pupils sufficient opportunities to express their views on their work.
- 82 The pupils are beginning to learn to be constructively critical about their own work in their targets.
- 83 Detailed records are kept of the progress of pupils with SEN and ALN and targets are clearly noted in individual education plans (IEP). These records contain useful information which is used effectively to plan for further progress.

- 84 Reports to parents are good. This is due to the hard work of the school to ensure that all parents are fully informed about their children's progress and achievements. They give a clear picture of what pupils know and can do and clearly indicate where pupils need to improve.

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 reflects the needs of the range of pupils by providing equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. This provides a wide range of experiences that meet the requirements of the NC well and the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.
- 87 The overall quality of the educational provision is very good. The ethos and vision of the school is reflected in the daily planning and organization. Pupils are generally well motivated and eager to acquire new skills and knowledge. This enables pupils to develop a sustained interest in lifelong learning.
- 88 Curriculum planning builds systematically on existing knowledge, understanding and skills. The school has an effective approach and detailed planning provides a clear structure for nearly all areas of the curriculum. However, the planning for the systematic development of key skills in all year groups does not indicate clearly what pupils should learn year on year.
- 89 Good emphasis is placed on nurturing good quality language across the curriculum. There are effective arrangements for providing additional support and resources for pupils whose attainment levels are either below or above average. Personal and social education is a very good feature of the curricular provision. It permeates throughout all aspects of the curriculum and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and attitudes.
- 90 Through a range of curricular activities and periods such as collective worship and through the school council, pupils receive good opportunities to practise their skills and to discuss issues of importance to them. These experiences make a significant contribution to improving their levels of achievement.
- 91 Daily acts of worship, which meet the legal requirements, make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. The standard of attentiveness, the quality of the music provided by the school orchestra and the pupils' singing all contribute significantly to the spiritual aspect of their development. Staff promote good manners and respect among pupils.
- 92 Pupils are polite and friendly towards each other and towards staff and visitors. They show respect to people and the school environment. Their social awareness is promoted well by their participation in campaigns to raise money for good causes and

charities. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is well developed and pupils demonstrate an appreciation of the traditions and culture of Wales.

- 93 A very good number of extra-curricular activities are provided for pupils through after school and lunchtime clubs.
- 94 Arrangements for the setting of homework are appropriate and effectively support the work in classes.
- 95 The promotion of bilingual opportunities allows pupils to make limited progress in their competence.
- 96 Younger pupils cope with some aspects of the language and many are prepared to converse in one word response or phrases. Older pupils do not have the confidence to converse in Welsh and the level of their understanding is limited. Although planning is focussed in all classrooms pupils and staff do not use incidental Welsh regularly.
- 97 The school's partnerships with parents, the local community, the receiving secondary schools and higher education institutions are good.
- 98 Parents are supportive of the school, express satisfaction with the aims and values that the school promotes and particularly appreciate the sense of community fostered by the school.
- 99 Communication with parents is well established and effective, and parents appreciate the ready access they have to headteacher and staff. A constructive home/school agreement is in place that has readily been accepted by most parents.
- 100 Effective pastoral, administrative and curricular links have been developed with the two receiving secondary schools. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils are good and pupils are well prepared to move on to the next stage of their education.
- 101 The school has established productive partnerships with several institutions providing higher education it provides training facilities for student teachers and students undertaking vocational qualifications. Students are carefully mentored and well supported by staff and they make a positive contribution to the life and work of the school.
- 102 The many positive links with the local community are effective and contribute well to pupils' learning. The school and its various activities are well supported and valued by the local community.
- 103 The school successfully promotes pupils' awareness of the world of work, and the vocational aspect of the personal and social education (PSE) programme is well addressed by teachers. Through their educational visits and in discussion with personnel from a range of professions and occupations, pupils are gaining a good understanding of different working environments and the variety of work undertaken in their area and further afield.

- 104 The school has developed good working relationships with the Education Business Partnership (EBP) and with 'Careers Wales'. Several teachers have undertaken relevant business courses and placements which have enhanced professional development and enriched the curriculum provision for pupils.
- 105 The school's policies and procedures to promote equal opportunities and to tackle social disadvantage and stereotyping are effective. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to all other facilities in the school.
- 106 The standards in, and provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship are good and the school makes good efforts to act in a sustainable way by minimising waste and reducing energy consumption. As part of the eco-schools award scheme, the school has received the bronze award in recognition of its commitment to conservation and the environment.
- 107 Pupils' understanding of environmental, conservation and global issues is good and they genuinely feel they can make a real difference, both locally and globally, through active citizenship and care for the environment. Global citizenship is well promoted and pupils have a good awareness of the lives of children on other continents and the global forces that shape their lives.
- 108 Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are good. Pupils take part in competitions sponsored by business and relevant agencies, run the fruit tuck shop and they design, make and sell goods for a profit.
- 109 Pupils' involvement in the 'Formula One Challenge', a competition sponsored by the car industry, has been an outstanding success and pupils are proud of their achievements in it. As well as providing them with the skills needed to support economic development, this enterprise activity made a good contribution to the development of pupils' key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- 110 The school is committed to national priorities for lifelong learning. The school is at the heart of the regeneration of the local community. The working relationships forged with a range of agencies and personnel, including Communities First, the Regeneration Officer for Caerau and the Community Police are exemplary and of great benefit to pupils and their families.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 111 The findings of the inspection team did not match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report by one grade. While the school provides well in this area and its provision has some outstanding features, these were insufficient to justify the highest grade.
- 112 The quality of care, support and guidance provided by the school is consistently good. The headteacher and staff know pupils well and effective procedures are in place to monitor and support pupils' progress, development and well-being.

- 113 The school has developed outstanding partnerships with a wide range of agencies and support services to ensure pupils' needs are carefully assessed and provided for. This multi-disciplinary approach is particularly beneficial for children in challenging and vulnerable circumstances.
- 114 The school enjoys close and effective working partnerships with parents and carers, which contribute significantly to the good quality of support and guidance offered to pupils. The school listens carefully to parents and carers and takes into consideration their views.
- 115 Pupils also are given good opportunities to make their views and opinions known to staff and do so with confidence through the school council. The school council is a good forum for the development of pupils' personal and social skills and enables pupils to work together to tackle issues that concern them. The school councillors undertake their duties conscientiously and are good ambassadors for their school.
- 116 The induction procedures for pupils entering the school, moving classes and transferring to secondary school are effective and ensure pupils settle quickly into their new environments with minimal disruption to their learning and personal well being.
- 117 The quality of pastoral support and guidance provided by the headteacher and staff has some outstanding features. Pupils work and play in a happy, secure environment where they feel valued. They readily turn to adults for help and support and are listened to and treated with respect and kindness. In discussion, they state that they are happy in school, like their teachers and feel that they are treated fairly.
- 118 Pupils have access to a relevant personal and social education programme in line with national recommendations. Aspects of PSE are having a positive impact on pupils' emotional, personal and social development, especially through the discussion time initiative.
- 119 There are effective procedures in place to monitor pupils' behaviour, attendance, punctuality and performance. Pupils whose behaviour is giving cause for concern are counselled, parents are involved and support is sought from external agencies when necessary.
- 120 Registration is conducted efficiently and lessons start promptly. The school complies with attendance requirements set out in National Assembly for Wales (NAW) Circular 47/06, (Inclusion and Pupil Support).
- 121 The school works in close partnership with the education welfare officer (EWO) and home/school liaison officer to monitor attendance and punctuality. Effective procedures are in place to encourage good attendance and punctuality, to ensure pupils' absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations where necessary. The school's administrative officer makes a valuable contribution to the efficient monitoring of attendance and punctuality.
- 122 The school has established successful arrangements that contribute to the well being of children. The school has a detailed policy and set of procedures to promote health

and safety, including risk assessment, which are monitored and implemented consistently by the headteacher, staff and the governing body.

- 123 The headteacher and staff make outstanding efforts to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle and pupils respond positively to this. Parents have responded well to the school's initiatives and are very supportive of what the school is aiming to achieve. Pupils are encouraged to eat fresh fruit and healthy snacks, and fresh water is readily available. They have access to a wide range of physical and sporting activities, which contribute significantly to their well being.
- 124 The duty of care is fundamental to the school's ethos and consequently the school works in its pupils' best interests to nurture their welfare and to protect them from harm. The school's policy and procedures to deal with child protection issues are clearly understood by all staff and training is regularly updated. The headteacher is the designated person with responsibility for child protection issues and she handles a wide range of complex issues with great skill, sensitivity and discretion.
- 125 Provision for all pupils with ALN and SEN is an outstanding feature of the school. The learning support policy provides well co-ordinated and clearly documented provision in accordance with the Code of Practice. Careful consideration is given to the needs of the pupils and the school effectively implements procedures for early identification and subsequent monitoring of those experiencing difficulties in their learning.
- 126 The school is sensitive to issues of inclusion and this enables learning support assistants to assist staff in providing good quality support for pupils with SEN both in the main school and in the resource base and in so doing allows them full access to the curriculum.
- 127 Emphasis is placed on home/school links in reviewing specific needs and in enabling pupils to make good progress within a positive and encouraging learning environment.
- 128 The review of individual education plans (IEPs) is regular with updates in accordance with development and consultation with parents. The use of external agencies is good and provides appropriate support for the school and pupils.
- 129 The school's behavioural management programme is positive and effective. It is based on the positive recognition of pupils' achievements and successes. Procedures for pupil exclusion are in place. All staff are trained in positive behaviour management.
- 130 The more able and talented pupils are sometimes given appropriate challenges in their learning. However, the school policy on provision for these pupils is not followed consistently.
- 131 Good, additional support helps to meet the needs of different groups of pupils who require and receive timely support programmes. The school has very good arrangements for providing this by withdrawing groups of pupils into well appointed teaching areas which adjoin mainstream classrooms. There they receive support from experienced and skilled support staff.

- 132 Teachers take great care to build flexibility into these arrangements so that pupils do not miss other work. Assessment records, examination of work, reviews of IEP, show that they are making good progress. They enjoy the sessions, understand their own needs and some comment positively on their progress. All who have learning needs make good progress considering their individual need and circumstances.
- 133 The school's provision for equal opportunities is consistently good. Good quality documentation underpins this good practice and the headteacher regularly monitors and evaluates the school's work in this area.
- 134 The school recognises the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and all pupils are treated equally and with dignity and respect. The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to participate in school activities and stereotypical views are challenged.
- 135 Good race relations are promoted successfully and the school values and celebrates diversity. Pupils value and respect the contribution of others regardless of their ability, gender, race or background.
- 136 The school takes all reasonable action to secure the equal treatment of disabled pupils. It welcomes disabled visitors to the school and is aware of its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). The disability equality scheme and action plan clearly outline the school's commitment to ensuring disabled pupils are not treated any less favourably than other pupils. Shortcomings in the accommodation make physical access for wheelchair users difficult. The school is due to close in July 2009.
- 137 The measures taken to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination and bullying are effective and such instances are rare in the school. In discussion, pupils stated that they would be confident in reporting instances of bullying and racism and felt that staff would listen to them and take seriously their concerns. Pupils confirm that the school is a supportive community where all pupils are treated equally.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 138 The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 139 The headteacher provides a strong and purposeful lead to the school. She has ably ensured that all staff share a clear vision for the school and are committed to, 'bringing out the best in everyone.' She has been very successful in establishing the school at the heart of the community it serves and in ensuring it is a very inclusive and caring place for all of its pupils.
- 140 Staff morale is high and all have a strong sense of purpose and willingness to provide pupils with good opportunities to learn and to make progress. All share high

expectations of themselves, each other and their pupils. They work enthusiastically together as a close and cohesive team.

- 141 Across the school, teachers give a positive lead to their subjects and contribute effectively to the management of them. They ensure that all pupils have equal access to what is taught and in all aspects of school life. A particular strength is the close working relationship between the headteacher and deputy headteacher who ensure that all aspects of the school's day-to-day needs and longer-term priorities are thoroughly and efficiently addressed.
- 142 Subject co-ordinators give a positive lead to their subjects and plan carefully to oversee the impact of decisions and the quality of teaching and learning for example in initiatives to raise standards in English and to evaluate where future priorities lie. There are good arrangements to address any weaknesses and to contribute to the school development plan (SDP).
- 143 There are detailed arrangements in place to oversee pupils' long-term progress and to identify when they are not achieving as well as they reasonably could. Resources and support staff are carefully used to maintain these initiatives.
- 144 The school takes careful note of local and national priorities. However, there is no breakfast club because of health and safety issues. While the school has given increased attention to developing pupils' confidence to use both English and Welsh incidentally in lessons, standards and progress are inconsistent across the school. The school council is active and pupils are developing from this a good understanding of the democratic process.
- 145 There are strong links with other schools in the area including the secondary school to which most pupils transfer.
- 146 There are well-established and well-used systems in place for the headteacher and co-ordinators to observe teaching and learning and to evaluate the progress the school is making towards its longer term needs. The information gathered is well used to identify and address teachers' in-service training needs. Links between this process and the school's performance management arrangements are effective. There are appropriate arrangements in place to support newly qualified teachers and staff who are new to the school.
- 147 The governing body is very well led by a chair of governors with considerable experience. He provides a rigorous and far sighted sense of direction and purpose to governors. He works very closely and effectively with the headteacher to address a wide range of issues very successfully, including the arrangements to amalgamate this school into a new primary school at the end of the school year. Many governors are actively engaged in the daily life of the school. Its links with the local community are strong and mutually beneficial. Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school. They are well informed about initiatives the school is pursuing.
- 148 The governing body very constructively holds the professional leadership of the school to account and has taken its full part in agreeing the long-term strategic direction of the school. Governors are well informed about the school's performance in national assessments.

149 There are thorough and effective procedures for financial management. The school's finances are carefully directed to address the educational needs of pupils. 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

- 150 The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 151 The school's evaluation process is detailed and well-established. It provides considerable information about the performance of the school. It is based on a collection of evidence carefully gathered by all of the professional staff and relates to their own responsibilities and to the standards being achieved. Teachers systematically measure and predict pupils' progress and use that information well.
- 152 The process of self-evaluation is thorough. It involves consultation with all of the teaching and non-teaching staff and governors. Pupils are encouraged through the school council and in other ways, to express their views of the school which are carefully considered. The opinions of parents have been sought.
- 153 The school's self-evaluation document is comprehensive and carefully constructed. It accurately describes the school's strengths and areas for development. It is closely linked to the SDP. This document is realistically costed and progress towards objectives are followed up rigorously in order to judge whether the aims of the initiatives have been met. There are close links between the process of self-evaluation and the school's performance management programme which is closely linked in turn to local and national priorities.
- 154 The inspection team agreed with six of the seven judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report in the seven key questions and with nearly all of the school's identification of its strengths and areas for development.
- 155 Where the inspection team disagreed, this was because the school over-estimated by one grade how well learners are cared for, guided and supported. The school provides well for its pupils in these areas and this is particularly shown in the help provided for pupils who have ALN and play a full part in the life of the school. However, taken overall in this key question there were insufficient outstanding features to support the highest grade.
- 156 Since the last inspection in the spring term 2003, the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues identified.
- 157 Standards in the subjects inspected where they were satisfactory have improved. Standards in music have improved significantly and are now very high. Much has been achieved in encouraging pupils to work independently and collaboratively and to carry out investigations. However, the most able are not always appropriately challenged. For the most part, teachers now utilise and evaluate their short term planning well.

158 There are detailed and effective arrangements in place for school self-evaluation to take place and to identify areas for improvement from it. Teaching and non-teaching staff have attended in service training in the teaching the key skills. However, teachers do not consistently plan in sufficient detail for the systematic development of the key skills to ensure that pupils build on what they already know and can do in these areas year on year.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 159 The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 160 The school has an appropriate number of teachers who are suitably qualified and have a range of expertise and experience which is used well. The pupil/ teacher ratio is good. A range of training opportunities and visits ensure that individual teacher needs and school priorities are met.
- 161 Staff are well deployed. The time set aside for teachers to plan, prepare and assess during the taught week is well organised and is used purposefully to help raise standards.
- 162 The good quality of pupil support through dedicated teaching assistants is a strength of the school. They are used well and their quality has enabled the school to plan its strategies effectively. This is an outstanding feature.
- 163 Arrangements to rationalise and remodel the school's management structures have been successful and improved school leadership. All staff benefit from appropriate training that improves the expertise in curriculum areas. In addition, whole school training addresses priorities indicated in the SDP. Induction of new staff is effectively provided by an experienced member of staff.
- 164 The school clerk is very experienced and knows the school well. All staff have job descriptions. There is good supervision at meal times with staff aware of issues relating to unacceptable behaviour and emergencies.
- 165 Non-teaching staff work hard to keep the school clean and well maintained.
- 166 The school has appropriate resources to meet the needs of all subjects. There is a dedicated ICT room which contains an adequate numbers of computers.
- 167 Outside play facilities are limited. The school building is in a poor state. There is evidence of water damage and the effects of dampness. However, staff make their classrooms vibrant and colourful learning environments.
- 168 There is sufficient storage space and resources are stored neatly. The library is large and has an excellent range of books.
- 169 Overall, the use of accommodation is good. Inside it is more than adequate in terms of space with each classroom having a whiteboard and, some classes an interactive

whiteboard. Classrooms, hall and work areas show imaginative use. Stimulating displays help to create an environment which is conducive to learning.

- 170 Financial management is rigorous. Priorities are set by the head and the governing body's finance committee. Sound financial protocols have enabled the headteacher to manage the financial implications of seeking additional funding competently.
- 171 The headteacher and governors have prioritised the quality of teaching as a means of raising standards and have ensured that the school is very well staffed. The governing body audits expenditure rigorously and ensure that resources are matched to priorities.
- 172 Bearing in mind the progress pupils make often from a low base and the overall quality of education provided, despite the school's poor accommodation, the school gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

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

Good features

- 173 Throughout KS2 most pupils listen attentively to their teachers, support assistants and one another. They answer questions well and with confidence. They consider their ideas effectively prior to answering questions and use language well to express their views.
- 174 Pupils speak effectively in paired and group work as well as in various debating activities, which develops their confidence well. They participate well in discussions, put forward their views coherently and extend their vocabulary.
- 175 Standards in reading are good. Most pupils read with appropriate fluency, accuracy, expression and understanding according to their age and ability. Many achieve the expected level and around half beyond the expected level.
- 176 The majority of pupils are able to talk about the books they have read and their favourite authors and can explain the reason for their choices. Older pupils can summarise the plot of their book and describe the characters. They are able to answer correctly analytical questions about an extract from a story.
- 177 Pupils write for a range of purposes and a variety of audiences; they write play scripts, narratives and some poetry. They make good use of grammar, spelling and punctuation and become more accurate and consistent in their use of speech marks.
- 178 Many pupils involve themselves in tasks with interest and use dictionaries with confidence to explore the meaning of words.
- 179 Writing is well structured and accurate with a good awareness of purpose. Pupils often draw on content from other curricular areas such as history. They use vivid

descriptions and powerful imagery in their creative writing. This is an outstanding feature. Handwriting is legible. Pupils enjoy improving their handwriting as was evident in discussion with them. Work is presented very neatly and orderly.

Shortcomings

180 There are no important shortcomings.

Science

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

Good features

181 Many younger pupils know how to record their observations appropriately in a logical way. They recognise the importance of constants and variables when carrying out a fair test, for example when testing the stretching abilities of different materials. They record the information clearly and interpret their findings carefully. They are beginning to appreciate the importance of making a prediction when they begin an investigation, for example about magnetic forces.

182 Within upper KS2, many older pupils know through careful experimentations that friction is a force between two surfaces which push and pull against each other. They know that solids and liquids have different properties and that some can change from one to the other and back again. They know that some changes are irreversible.

183 Older pupils in KS2 in their study of the human eye, know that lenses refract light. They know that sound travels in waves and is transmitted to the brain via the ear drums which sense this. They experiment and learn how to adjust the pitch of the sound a bottle partially filled with water makes and they change that pitch as more or less water is added or taken away.

184 Older pupils in KS2 measure the effects of different exercises on their heart rates and record their findings neatly. They use a range of graphical techniques well to present their findings and to draw accurate conclusions.

185 Across the key stage many pupils use scientific language appropriately.

Shortcomings

186 There are no important shortcomings.

History

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

Good features

- 187 Pupils in KS2 have a good understanding of life in a Celtic settlement such as Castell Henllys which they visited. They know how the walls of round houses were constructed out of wattle and daub and that their roofs were built using a range of thatching materials to enable the builders to adjust the shape of the roof as it was constructed. They know that the Celts were ingenious and used honey as a means to create a hive of bees. They wove intricate baskets to trap fish. They used a wide-range of natural dyes to make colourful fabrics. Pupils accurately compare Celtic society with that of the Roman invaders. They know that the Celtic people came to Wales from Central Europe and that they were very warlike.
- 188 Older pupils in KS2 know about life in Stuart Britain. They know that the Great Fire of London caused significant damage but also helped in the process of improving health and living conditions in London after the Great Plaque.
- 189 Older pupils know the main events which occurred during the life of Queen Victoria. They use the 1891 census of the area and the school registers well to investigate the occupations and places of origin of people who had come to live in their then growing and thriving community. They empathise readily with the life of children in the Victorian period and compare it to their own experiences. They study old school photographs systematically to form their own ideas about living conditions in Caerau then. They know that mining was a dangerous occupation and that nearly all of the families who lived in the area at the end of the 19th Century were either miners or worked in the collieries.
- 190 Many older pupils in KS2 have a secure understanding of the main events leading up to the outbreak of World War II. They know that life at home during wartime was austere. They readily identify with the experiences of evacuees. They learn from first-hand discussion the feelings of one of those evacuated and follow the life story of that person subsequently.

Shortcomings

- 191 There are no important shortcomings.

Art and Design

Key stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

- 192 The breadth and depth of pupils' knowledge and understanding, along with the overall quality and range of art work is an outstanding feature of the school.

- 193 Pupils make very careful observational drawings which clearly develop across the key stage where they achieve very good standards.
- 194 All pupils know how to use colour, pattern, texture, size and contrast to very good effect. Pupils work with visiting artists to produce work of a high quality.
- 195 Pupils use sketchbooks consistently and effectively to experiment with different techniques for drawing, shading, tone, pattern and effect. Their sketchbooks become a record of experiment in art and a map of achievement.

Good features

- 196 In many instances pupils use relevant art vocabulary very confidently to describe their work and to evaluate aspects of their own and each other's work. They use a variety of media and a range of tools very effectively.
- 197 Pupils study the work of a range of local artists and in particular the work of Welsh artist Kyffin Williams. They routinely compare and contrast their work with the work of these artists. Many are confident in discussing the mood of paintings and the effect of light and colour.
- 198 Older pupils successfully explore and experiment with a variety of media and confidently create and express new ideas. They have a good understanding of a variety of techniques such as collage, painting with watercolours or and paint creating three-dimensional work.
- 199 Pupils select appropriate modelling materials and tools and create effective landscape scenes.

Shortcomings

- 200 There are no important shortcomings.

Music

Key stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

- 201 Nearly all pupils have a very well balanced range of skills in composing, performing and appraising music and have a good understanding of the musical elements. In upper Key Stage 2 pupils' skills in composing, performing and appraising are particularly outstanding.
- 202 Very many pupils display very high standards in performance as a result of very good quality music activities and from dedicated peripatetic teachers and in-school instrumental tuition.
- 203 Pupils' appraising skills are outstanding. They listen very carefully to each other's music in order to make distinctions within the musical elements. They confidently discuss and evaluate music, including their own compositions and performances, examples of which they record on disc.

204 Pupils develop their performing skills extremely well. They sing an expanding repertoire of hymns and songs that include Welsh and African songs with confidence, enjoyment and with increasing control of musical elements.

Good features

205 Pupils successfully focus their listening skills on elements such as pitch, rhythm, beat and dynamics whilst performing and composing. Many skilfully sing in two parts and listen carefully to each other's part of the song.

206 Pupils' musical compositions are developing well. They confidently experiment with sounds and rhythms and compose their own music using a variety of instruments.

207 Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in school and community performances and reach very good standards, for example when working with the National Orchestra of Wales.

208 Pupils have a good knowledge of famous composers and performers. They compare such works with traditional and contemporary Welsh music.

Shortcomings

209 There are no important shortcomings.

Physical education

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

Good features

210 Older pupils perform sequences of gymnastic movements confidently. They use the floor and larger apparatus well to extend their movements and to add greater challenge to them. They know the importance of showing good style and control when beginning and completing gymnastic movements. They evaluate their own performance and those of others constructively.

211 Older pupils in KS2 dance confidently when creating a mirror dance. They interpret sounds well and make expressive movements synchronizing each action carefully with their partner. They move systematically together well and in time to the music. They try hard and all pupils take part willingly and enthusiastically. They show good quality movements, extending arms and legs as far as they are able. They evaluate their performances realistically and make sensible suggestions about how to improve.

212 Within KS2 pupils understand how to apply their catching, throwing and rolling skills into a small game situation. They have good techniques and co-ordination when passing over, around or under an opponent. They move into undefended space quickly and recognise when it is safe to pass or to retain the ball. They have a growing awareness of tactics when taking part in more complex games.

213 By the age of eleven most pupils swim confidently and competently. Older boys and girls have good opportunities both in and out of school to take part in competitive sport and to achieve success.

Shortcomings

214 There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

215 Our school welcomes this positive report. We feel it recognises the dedication, skill and commitment of the management of the school, teachers, support staff and chair of governors.

216 The way staff work together, as a team to fulfil our motto, 'Bringing out the best in everyone' is a major strength of the school and we are happy that this has been highlighted.

217 The support of our parents and positive behaviour of pupils is pleasing to read about.

218 We are glad that the inspection was thorough and rigorous, during this late stage in the life of the school and all staff felt it was an open, transparent and valuable experience and for this we wish to thank registered inspector and his team.

219 We feel this report will provide a platform for the further development of education within the new primary school.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Blaencaerau Junior School
School type	Primary
Age-range of pupils	7-11
Address of school	Blaencaerau Road Caerau Maesteg
Postcode	CF34 0PP
Telephone number	01656 724233

Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Bevan
Date of appointment	1 st January 2002
Chair of governors	Mr Paul Young
Registered inspector	Mr Peter Mathias
Dates of inspection	26 th – 28 th January 2009

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	45	33	54	42	174

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	9	0	9

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	23:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	n/a
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	7:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	23
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term			Whole school
Spring 2008			91%
Summer 2008			88%
Autumn 2008			91.7%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	53%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	6

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y6		42		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	4.3	4.3	27.7	425.6	21.3
		National	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	6.4	27.7	34.0	31.9
		National	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	4.3	21.3	40.4	34.0
		National	0.5	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and English by teacher assessment	
In the school	57.4%
In Wales	75.5%

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent the equivalent of seven inspector days in the school and carried out the inspection with a peer assessor and a nominee from the school:

Member of the inspection team observed: -

- thirty-four lessons or part lessons. Twenty-four were in the six subjects inspected and ten in other subjects;
- registrations, assemblies and acts of collective worship; and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils representing each year group;
- the school council; and
- representatives of organisations associated with the school.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- seventeen responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work; and
- samples of pupils' reports.

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

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Peter Mathias (registered Inspector)	Context Summary & Recommendations Contributions to Key Questions 1 & 2 Key Questions 5 & 6 Science History Physical education Appendices
Mrs Janet Warr (Lay Inspector)	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3 & 4
Mr Enir Morgan (Team Member)	Contributions to Key Question 2, 3 & 4 Key Question 7 English Music Art
Mrs Sharon Bevan (Headteacher/Nominee)	Attending meetings Contributing information School's Response
Mr Stuart Scammell (Peer Assessor)	Observing lessons and attending meetings

Acknowledgement:

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

Contractor:

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