

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Blaengarw Primary School
Station Street
Blaengarw
Bridgend
CF32 8BA**

School Number: 6722055

Date of Inspection: 21st April 2008

by

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

The inspection of Blaengarw Primary School took place between 21/04/08 and 23/04/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Phillip David Watcyn Edwards 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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Blaengarw Primary School is located in the village of Blaengarw at the top of the Garw valley in the county borough of Bridgend. The school was built in 1887 and underwent an internal refurbishment in 1997. There is an ongoing planned programme of redecoration for the interior of the school and a commitment to the maintenance of the Victorian building. There is no grassed playing area or sports field, but an adjacent community playing area with a basketball court is used by the school during school hours and for after-school activities.
2. Blaengarw Primary serves the village of Blaengarw, but currently also has around 14% of its pupils who reside outside the traditional catchment area. The school describes the area it serves to be generally disadvantaged with around 18% of pupils entitled to free school meals, which is similar to the Wales national average of 17.5%. The school demonstrates that this is not an accurate reflection of the socio-economic circumstances of the area as Blaengarw ranks 128/965 in the Welsh indicator of multiple deprivation, with health and education ranking even lower at 62 and 90 respectively.
3. Currently, there are 157 full-time pupils on roll with 15 full-time and four part-time nursery children making a full-time equivalent of 174. English is the predominant home language in the home of all pupils. In addition to the nursery and reception class there are six other classes in key stage (KS) 1 and KS2. All of these are mixed aged classes including the class for 12 KS2 pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) who live in the Garw valley and Blaengarw. The annual intake covers the full ability range with many children entering the nursery at a low baseline level. There are no pupils in care.
4. There are 56 pupils (33%) with some form of special educational need (SEN), including three on school action and 53 on school action plus.
5. The proportion of pupils with statements outlining their SEN is below the local and national averages. There are no pupils who do not follow the National Curriculum (NC) or for whom it is modified.
6. There are eight full-time and one part-time teachers, including the headteacher. There are three part and three full-time learning support assistants (LSAs), as well as one full and one part-time school administration assistants. The deputy headteacher was absent on sick leave during the inspection period and an acting deputy has temporarily taken her place.
7. The school was last inspected in summer 2002. Since then, the number on roll has declined from 200 to 174. The number on roll is falling steadily and is predicted to continue to do so.

The school's priorities and targets

The school's mission statement:

- 'Blaengarw Primary School seeks to be a happy, caring community in which all who work are valued, supported and treated with respect and tolerance. In so seeking, we hope everyone will be motivated to achieve their full potential and strive for the highest standards of teaching, learning and behaviour.'

The school's aims are to:

- deliver the National Curriculum (NC) and the Desirable Outcomes effectively using appropriate resources and learning programmes in order that children may achieve their full academic potential;
- develop and maintain procedures for assessing, monitoring, evaluating and recording the work of the school in order to achieve continuity, progression and consistency within and between key stages and phases of education;
- create a pleasant and rewarding work environment by the promotion of mutual respect, consideration for others and a climate of tolerance; by valuing the individual; and by ensuring equal opportunities for all;
- prepare children for life by building confidence, encouraging a positive attitude as well balanced, self-motivated and responsible members of the community;
- provide the experiences which will promote children's social, cultural, moral and spiritual development;
- foster links with the community, the local secondary school and to maintain effective communication with parents;
- create an environment in which appropriate training and resources are available to ensure high quality teaching and learning throughout the school that supports all staff; and
- encourage the development of children who are communicative, articulate and receptive to new ideas.

The school's targets in the school development plan (SDP) for 2007-2008 are to:

- develop skills and strategies for learning;
- continue to raise standards in the core curriculum;
- continue to raise standards in foundation subjects;
- plan for, implement and develop the foundation phase;
- raise standards in personal and social education;
- optimise staff development activities;
- continue to develop and improve school self evaluation practices; and
- further develop and improve the school environment

Summary

8. Blaengarw Primary School is a vibrant school. It is a well organised setting with many good and outstanding features. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences where they achieve well and experience success. The school is particularly well led and managed.

Table of grades awarded

Key question	Grade
1. How well do learners achieve?	2
2. How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	1
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?	1
6. How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	1
7. How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	1

9. The inspection team agreed with six of the school's grades for the seven key questions. Where they differed in Key Question 2, the team awarded the higher grade 1, as there were mostly good and outstanding features in the quality of teaching. Although there is not a direct match between the grade 2 judgement awarded to key question 1, and the grade 1 awarded to key questions 2, 5, 6 and 7, there is clear evidence to show that the significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection in many of the subjects inspected is due mostly to outstanding leadership and management and effective teaching.
10. The standards pupils achieve have good features and no important shortcomings.
11. In the subjects inspected, standards of achievement in lessons were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	70%	6%	0%	0%

12. Standards achieved in lessons are above the national figures quoted in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) latest report for 2006-7, grade 2 or better in 80% of lessons, and 10% at grade 1. The percentages are also above the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) 2010 target that the quality of learning should be grade 3 or better in 98% of lessons.
13. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

14. Standards in the six areas of learning:

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

15. Standards in subjects inspected:

Subjects	Nursery	Reception
Under-fives	Grade 1	Grade 1
	KS1	KS2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh second language	Grade 2	Grade 1
Religious education	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

16. Pupils, including those with SEN, achieve good standards in knowledge, understanding and skills. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, succeed well regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds and reach agreed targets and goals set by the school. Overall, these attributes have a good influence on the quality of their learning throughout the school, particularly in the mild learning difficulties (MLD) class.
17. When the 2007 core subject indicator (CSI) for KS1 (pupils attaining at least level two in mathematics, science and English) is compared with Welsh national figures, it is similar. When compared with similar schools over the past three years, namely those with a free school meal entitlement of between 16% and 24%, the school is usually in the upper 50%.
18. When the 2007 CSI for KS2 (pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English) is compared with local and national benchmarks, it is above the local authority (LA) and all Wales figures. When compared with similar schools over the last three years, there has been an overall improvement into the upper 50%.
19. The performance of boys compared with girls varies from year to year and no consistent pattern emerges due to the uneven number of boys compared with girls in each year. Nevertheless, the school's success in encouraging boys to have positive attitudes to work is very evident. The upward trend of continuous improvement since the previous inspection and the manner in which most pupils, including the few who enter at a low baseline, achieve well and acquire new knowledge and skills is very good.
20. Children under-five make outstanding progress in the key skills of speaking and listening. They speak with assurance about their activities and listen intently to stories and to instructions. Their reading, writing, number and

information communications technology (ICT) skills develop well in nearly all the areas of learning. Their bilingual skills have outstanding features where many use incidental Welsh naturally and confidently beside English. Creative skills are good overall.

21. In KS1 and KS2, pupils' key skill of speaking across the curriculum is often outstanding and many speak clearly and with very good intonation. KS1 pupils' skill of listening is outstanding. They listen carefully and quietly, absorbing with interest what is being said by others. In KS2, listening is good overall. In KS1 and KS2, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT skills are good. In KS1 and KS2, pupils' bilingual skills are outstanding with both Welsh and English being used appropriately as an integral part of the school day. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate outstanding development in their personal and social skills by being polite, courteous and considerate. Pupils' creative skills are good in both KS1 and KS2.
22. Pupils in relation to their varying abilities, including those with SEN, achieve well, and make good overall progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage of their learning. They generally have a good understanding of the work they are doing and agree individual targets to improve their performance, but there are inconsistencies in the way targets are set and the types of targets pupils have.
23. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are major strengths of the school. In discussions pupils say they generally get on very well and bullying is not usually a problem. They are very aware of what to do should it occur because of their involvement in devising school and classroom rules and the anti-bullying policy.
24. Pupils' development of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are good with outstanding features. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and respect equality and diversity.
25. At 92.6%, the average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is slightly below that of the LA, but slightly above the national averages. Most pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time at the start of the school day.

The quality of education and training

The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
31%	61%	8%	0%	0%

26. These figures compare most favourably with the national picture published in HMCI's latest Annual Report for 2006-2007, where the overall quality of teaching in primary schools was reported to be grade 2 or above in 80% in lessons. The percentage of grade 1 lessons is better than the 14% nationally. The percentages are a significant improvement on those of the previous inspection and are above the WAG 2010 target for teaching to be 80% Grade 2 or better.
27. The quality of education and training is good overall with outstanding features. The particularly outstanding feature in nearly all lessons is the positive working

- relationship among teachers, support staff and pupils, which fosters learning very effectively.
28. The teaching of children under five and pupils with SEN often displays outstanding features. Equal opportunities are promoted consistently and work is planned flexibly for the age and varied abilities of learners. The bilingual language needs of pupils are met very well in all classes, with the consistent use of incidental Welsh being outstanding.
 29. The best lessons observed include the following outstanding features:
 - High expectations, good pace and clear expectations motivate pupils very well; and
 - A wide and purposeful range of teaching and learning strategies meet pupils' individual needs flexibly and maintain their interest.
 30. Good features of teaching include:
 - Well prepared and conceived short-term planning;
 - Learning objectives are shared consistently with pupils;
 - Good opportunities for pupils to reflect on the work learned; and
 - Good pace and consistent use of positive praise.
 31. Shortcomings in a few lessons include:
 - Inconsistency in the way pupils and teachers engage in lessons.
 32. The overall quality of the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work, progress and achievement is good and arrangements for assessing the needs of children under five and those pupils with SEN is very effective.
 33. The good features of assessment include:
 - Effective use of assessment improves planning and identifies individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses;
 - There is an effective system for tracking pupils' progress; and
 - Marking and guidance show how pupils can make improvements.
 34. The school meets statutory requirements for the overall quality of the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work, progress and achievement. However, procedures for levelling pupils' work to review and monitor their progress reliably are insufficiently rigorous in their extent, breadth and range.
 35. An improving feature in the assessment process is the way in which pupils in KS1 and KS2 are involved in evaluating their own learning and their understanding of the purpose of assessment. They are more aware of what they can do to improve their performance, but there are inconsistencies in their involvement in assessing their own learning strategies and reflecting on their work to see how it can be improved.
 36. Annual reports to parents give a clear picture of pupils' achievements and skills in every subject with the majority of comments linked well to the areas of learning for the under-fives and NC subjects.

37. The education the school provides meets the learning needs and range of pupils very well and successfully ensures equal access to a broad and well balanced curriculum. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is reflected well in many areas of the school's work and pupils develop their bilingual skills very effectively. There is a wide range of extra curricular activities for pupils to join and they receive appropriate homework.
38. The effective emphasis on developing key skills logically across the curriculum is well planned to meet pupils' learning needs.
39. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and makes an outstanding feature of the school day. Learning experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
40. The school has a very positive partnership with parents and well-established links with the community, surrounding schools and colleges of further education. The school's partnership with industry is outstanding.
41. The contribution of the school to the well-being of pupils is good with outstanding features. Pupils are very well supported, guided and cared for. They feel happy and secure in school.
42. An outstanding feature of the school is the high quality of personal support and guidance for pupils. They have access to an effective personal and social education (PSE) programme, in line with national recommendations, which contributes significantly to the quality of support and guidance offered to pupils.
43. There are very effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality, behaviour and performance. There is an effective policy and sound procedures for child protection.
44. The quality of the provision, and early identification and intervention for pupils with SEN are outstanding features. Pupils attending the designated KS2 unit for pupils with MLD make very good progress. All SEN documentation is comprehensive, accessible, well organised and kept fully up to date.
45. The systems in place to deal with unacceptable behaviour, including all relevant policies with respect to behaviour, bullying and discrimination are outstanding. There are very effective policies for areas such as bullying, harassment, disability and fire prevention.

Leadership and management

46. The quality of leadership and management is good with outstanding features. The school's very well-understood mission statement, vision, aims, objectives, priorities and shared values provide an outstanding foundation for improvement and promotion of equality for all, which are reflected very well in its life and work.
47. The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are outstanding. She has continued to implement significant improvements since the previous inspection, which have resulted in steadily improving standards. Her decisive, yet caring leadership and her ambitious vision for the school provide a very clear strategic direction for the future within an open supportive culture. She is ably supported by the governors, school leadership team and subject leaders who carry out their responsibilities efficiently, confidently and productively.

Together they ensure all pupils and adults are fully included in all aspects of the school's life and work and take pride in the continued development of the school.

48. Outstanding arrangements, linked to realistic and time-related challenging targets set out in the very accessible school development plan (SDP), identify individual and whole-school training and development needs of staff, and provides a very effective vehicle for improving standards and the quality of provision.
49. The governors are closely involved in the life of the school and meet their responsibilities very well. Their strategic vision in identifying and implementing necessary priorities since the previous inspection is outstanding and instrumental in moving the school forward.
50. Leaders have a very secure and outstanding knowledge of the school and are very well informed about the areas for which they are responsible. This is evident in the very good self-evaluation report produced before the inspection, which provides a detailed, comprehensive, evaluative and accurate review of the school's strengths and areas where improvements need to be made.
51. This year's accessible SDP provides a focussed direction. It contains details of the priorities and targets for this school year and beyond which are appropriately time-related and measurable. Clear targets are prioritised and proper consideration given to the allocation of resources.
52. Outstanding features since the previous inspection are the improvements made to the fabric of the school building and steadily improving standards. Actions taken since the previous inspection have resulted in good and measurable improvements to the quality of the school's provision.
53. Staffing is very good with a sufficient number of well-qualified and experienced teachers to provide for the educational needs of all pupils. An outstanding feature is the ratio of adults to pupils, particularly in under-fives and KS1.
54. The school administrator, lunchtime catering staff, the caretaker and cleaners carry out their daily routines and a range of responsibilities efficiently and effectively.
55. The school buildings are old, but have been refurbished to a high standard. There is adequate accommodation and facilities for the number of pupils on roll.
56. Spending decisions are very well matched to the school priorities and match the schools objectives, in the school development plan. Overall, the school achieves very good value for money.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1** maintain the good and better standards in the subjects inspected; *
- R2** refine procedures for levelling standards in pupils' work; and
- R3** continue to improve arrangements involving pupils in setting targets to improve their work.

*Aspect identified in the school's SDP and self-evaluation report.

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

57. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
58. In the subjects inspected, standards of achievement in lessons were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
24%	70%	6%	0%	0%

59. Standards achieved in lessons are above the national figures quoted by HMCI's latest report for 2006-7, grade 2 or better in 80% of lessons, and the 10% at grade 1. The percentages are also above the WAG 2010 target that the quality of learning should be grade 3 or better in 98% of lessons.
60. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Standards in the six areas of learning:

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

61. Standards in subjects inspected:

Subjects	Nursery	Reception
Under-fives	1	1
	KS1	KS2
English	2	2
Mathematics	2	2
Welsh second language	2	1
Religious education	2	2
Physical education	2	2

62. Pupils, including those with SEN, achieve good standards in knowledge, understanding and skills. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning, succeed well regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic backgrounds and reach agreed targets and goals set by the school. Overall, these attributes have a good influence on the quality of their learning throughout the school, and particularly in the MLD class.

63. When the 2007 CSI for KS1 (pupils attaining at least level two in mathematics, science and English) is compared with Welsh national figures it is similar. When compared with similar schools over the past three years, namely those with a free school meal entitlement of between 16% and 24%, it is usually in the upper 50%.
64. When the 2007 CSI for KS2 (pupils attaining at least level 4 in all of mathematics, science and English) is compared with LA and national benchmarks, it is above the county and all Wales figures. When compared with similar schools over the last three years, there has been an overall improvement into the upper 50%.
65. The performance of boys compared with girls varies from year to year and no consistent pattern emerges due to the uneven number of boys compared with girls in each year, but the school's success in encouraging boys to have positive attitudes to work is very evident. The upwards trend of continuous improvement since the previous inspection and the manner in which most pupils, including the few who enter at a low baseline, achieve well and acquire new knowledge and skills is very good.
66. Children under-five make outstanding progress in the key skills of speaking and listening. They speak with assurance about their activities and listen intently to stories and to instructions. Their reading, writing, number and ICT skills develop well in nearly all the areas of learning. Their bilingual skills have outstanding features. Many use incidental Welsh naturally and confidently beside English. Their creative skills are good overall.
67. In KS1 and KS2, pupils' key skill of speaking across the curriculum is often outstanding and many speak clearly and with very good intonation. KS1 pupils' skill of listening is outstanding because they listen carefully and quietly, absorbing with interest what is being said by others. In KS2 listening is good overall. In KS1 and KS2 reading, writing, numeracy and ICT skills are good. In KS1 and KS2, pupils' bilingual skills are outstanding with both Welsh and English being used appropriately as an integral part of the school day. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate outstanding development in their personal and social skills by being polite, courteous and considerate. Pupils' creative skills are good in both KS1 and KS2.
68. Pupils in relation to their varying abilities, including those with SEN, achieve well, and make good overall progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage of their learning. They generally have a good understanding of the work they are doing and agree individual targets with their teachers to improve their performance, but there are inconsistencies in the way targets are set and the types of targets pupils have.
69. The 'Living Values' programme is firmly embedded in the school's work and as a result pupils make outstanding progress in the development of their personal, social and moral learning skills and wider development. Relationships and the respect pupils show to adults and each other are exemplary and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are major strengths.
70. Nearly all pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Teachers provide a wide range of stimulating activities and as a result, pupils enjoy coming to school.

- They work hard in lessons and are eager to please. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about their work and even the youngest children want to share experiences. Pupils co-operate and support each other very well, especially when working in pairs and small groups and at all other times. Nearly all sustain very good levels of concentration, make very good use of their time and persevere very well with tasks.
71. The foundations for good behaviour are laid very effectively in the Early Years. As a result, even the youngest children know what is expected of them. Pupils are friendly, polite and considerate. They relate extremely well to adults. Throughout the school, pupils willingly help their teachers and support staff, for example, by tidying up after practical sessions.
 72. Pupils move sensibly in and around the school. Behaviour in the hall during assemblies and lunchtimes is very good. Pupils enter and leave the hall quietly and take up their places quickly, making meal times very pleasant social occasions.
 73. Pupils work and play together very well and relationships with each other are very good. Older pupils are sensitive to the needs of their peers and the younger ones. An outstanding example is when Y5/Y6 trained Playground Pals lead activities in the playground at break times and lunchtimes. They willingly keep watch over the Friendship Stop to ensure that no one is friendless.
 74. In discussion, pupils say they generally get on very well with each other. Bullying is rarely a problem and they are very aware of what to do should it occur, because of their involvement in devising school and classroom rules and the anti-bullying policy. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They show very good respect for diversity and are very aware of equal opportunities issues.
 75. At 92.6%, the average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is slightly below that of the LA, but slightly above the national average. Attendance levels are rising because of recently introduced initiatives and there is evidence that individual class attendance for the week prior to the inspection ranged from 95% to 100%. Absences are caused mainly by illness. Holidays in term time adversely affect the overall rate. The school adheres properly to the appropriate WAG circulars.
 76. There have been no exclusions for many years and pupils on managed moves from other schools settle and progress very well in this school.
 77. Most pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time at the start of the school day, but a very few in most classes arrive late. They often miss the important start of lessons and the social time at the start of the day.
 78. Overall, pupils, including those with SEN, develop good independent, problem-solving and decision-making skills, but in mathematics in KS1 and KS2 problem solving is at an early stage. They are exceptionally well prepared for effective participation in the workplace through their roles on the School Council and ECO (ecology) Committee and the school's Meaningful Work programme.
 79. Children under five develop exceptional independent working skills. For example, even the youngest children change into physical education (PE) kit

- without assistance. They demonstrate and evaluate confidently their own and others' movements in dance. This is an outstanding feature.
80. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of the world of work and their place in the community, because they participate in a really good range of projects and events as well as visits to appropriate places.
 81. The school's Meaningful Work programme enables pupils in KS1 and KS2 to take responsibilities and contribute to the life of the school. Jobs, such as environmental care and attendance officers, milk delivery and shop assistants as well as bell ringers and Busy Bees Playmates, together with job descriptions are advertised. Pupils are given job descriptions upon which they base their formal applications, produce curriculum vitas (CV) and independent references and attend interviews for the posts. Photographs of the successful candidates are prominently displayed in the hall. Older pupils see themselves as dental hygienists. They run the Brush Bus initiative very well and help the youngest children brush their teeth after meals.
 82. Pupils throughout the school take their responsibilities very seriously and show great commitment to their roles. They are very proud of their school. Older pupils in the newspaper club write reports of their activities for publication in the school newspaper, 'The Blaengarw Blaze'.
 83. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging in the school and the community because they are involved in community events, such as the Blaengarw Carnival and the Parc Calon Lan project. They gain 'time credits', for example, through taking part in voluntary work that enhances the environment, such as litter picking, which supports the school's work on sustainable development.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

84. The inspection team's findings did not match the grade 2 given by the school in its self-evaluation report. In grading this key question, the team gave greater weighting to the quality of teaching in a significant number of lessons where there were outstanding features.
85. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
31%	61%	8%	0%	0%

86. These figures compare most favourably with the national picture published in HMCI's latest Annual Report for 2006-2007, where the overall quality of teaching in primary schools was reported to be grade 2 or above in 80% in lessons. The percentage of grade 1 lessons is better than the 14% nationally. The percentages are a significant improvement on those of the previous inspection and are above the WAG 2010 target for teaching to be 80% Grade 2 or better.

87. The quality of education and training is good overall with outstanding features. The particularly outstanding feature in nearly all lessons is the positive working relationship among teachers, support staff and pupils, which fosters learning very effectively.
88. The whole-school monitoring system and school based in-service training ensures consistency in the quality of approaches to teaching and are major factors in ensuring mostly high standards of teaching throughout the school.
89. The teaching of children under five and pupils with additional learning needs often displays outstanding features. Equal opportunities are promoted consistently and work is planned flexibly for the age and varied abilities of learners. The bilingual language needs of pupils are met very well in all classes, with the consistent use of incidental Welsh outstanding.
90. The best lessons observed include the following outstanding features:
- Very effective planning and preparation building on previous learning, with a clear structure to lessons;
 - High expectations, good pace and clear expectations motivate pupils very well;
 - Very effective monitoring and assessment of pupils' understanding and progress;
 - Teachers and support staff work as an effective team to provide very good quality assistance and help for pupils;
 - A wide and purposeful range of teaching and learning strategies meet pupils' individual needs flexibly and maintain their interest;
 - Work is planned appropriately for pupils with SEN as well as for those who are more able; and
 - Pupils are enthused to generate a range of ideas and be involved actively in their learning;
91. Good features of teaching include:
- Secure professional knowledge delivered skilfully to pupils;
 - Well prepared and conceived short-term planning;
 - Effective organisational strategies;
 - Clear exposition of learning objectives at the beginning of lessons;
 - Learning objectives are shared consistently with pupils;
 - Challenging work is set appropriately across the ability range with opportunities for pupils to work independently and co-operatively;
 - Use of a range of resources that challenge, motivate and engage pupils;
 - Good opportunities for pupils to reflect on the work learned; and
 - Good pace and consistent use of positive praise.

92. Shortcomings in a few lessons include:
 - Inconsistency in the way pupils and teachers engage in lessons; and
 - Protracted introductions to lessons.
93. Teachers throughout the school provide a stimulating environment for learning and in the majority of lessons make very good use of questioning in oral work to ensure that pupils understand learning tasks and maintain standards.
94. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEN play a full part in learning. They are supported exceptionally well by classroom assistants. Arrangements for teaching and organising pupils with SEN are highly effective and inclusive to ensure that they follow the requirements of the NC fully.
95. Teachers take every opportunity to encourage pupils to develop their bilingual skills and their commitment and enthusiasm has a significant effect on pupils' bilingual skills. The newly appointed curricular leader for Welsh second language has had a positive impact on the school's work in this area of the curriculum.
96. Teachers offer very good support and challenge to all learners and the quality of teaching has a clear and positive effect upon their progress and the standards they achieve.
97. The school has a clear policy on assessment, which is being implemented effectively and closely linked to teachers' planning. There is a strong culture among all teachers to measure pupil progress regularly and to ensure that their pupils are on track to meet the standards of which they are capable.
98. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process and strategies for assessment are very well matched to clearly identified purposes and learning objectives. The system is comprehensive and manageable and pupils' achievements and progress are recorded accurately and consistently.
99. The arrangements for assessing the needs of children under five and those pupils with SEN are very effective.
100. The good features of assessment include:
 - Assessment embedded in school practice ensures learning objectives are set and communicated clearly to learners;
 - Effective use of assessment improves planning and identifies individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses;
 - There is an effective system for tracking pupils' achievement and progress;
 - All learners are motivated to respond to questions; and
 - Marking provides pupils with guidance as to how they can make improvements in their work.
101. Weekly assessment is based on daily assessment jottings and clearly informs the next steps in learning. Assessment of performance is sufficiently regular and frequent to assist learners and enable teachers to track progress accurately.

102. The school meets statutory requirements for the overall quality of the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work, progress and achievement. However, procedures for levelling pupils' work to review and monitor their progress reliably are insufficiently rigorous in their extent, breadth and range.
103. An improving feature in the assessment process is the way in which pupils in KS1 and KS2 are involved in evaluating their own learning and their understanding of the purpose of assessment. They are more aware of what they can do to improve their performance, but there are inconsistencies in their involvement in assessing their own learning strategies and reflecting on their work to see how it can be improved.
104. Teachers' marking is usually helpful in guiding pupils on how to improve their work. In Y6, it is very detailed and accurate. Pupils across the school also get very good individual support from teaching assistants to keep them on track.
105. Very good strategies are in place for assessing pupils with SEN. Assessment is used well to ensure that all pupils are given appropriate levels of support in pursuit of the school's commitment to be fully inclusive. Pupils on the school's SEN register are provided with individual education plans (IEPs) of good quality and targets are consistently monitored and updated.
106. Annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements. They give a clear picture of pupils' achievements and skills in every subject with the majority of comments linked well to the areas of learning for the under-fives and NC subjects. Teachers provide suitable comments on PSE. The personal comments of teachers and those of the headteacher are appreciated by parents and pupils alike. Parents themselves are also given the opportunity to give written feedback on the report.
107. Parents' evenings are held termly and are well attended. Interim reports are sent to parents who do not attend the spring term meeting. Good links with parents of pupils with SEN or those in vulnerable circumstances ensure that they are well informed about their children's progress and how they can help them further.

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

108. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
109. The education the school provides meets the learning needs and range of pupils very well and successfully ensures equal access to a broad and well balanced curriculum.
110. The planned provision is coherent and flexible and meets statutory requirements in all areas of learning, subjects of the NC and religious education. Pupils receive sufficient homework as they progress through the school.

111. The provision of focused support for pupils' learning needs is very good. Pupils with learning difficulties, including those pupils in the MLD unit, are supported very well. This provision enhances standards and pupils make good progress.
112. There is an effective emphasis on key skills, which are checked to ensure pupils' learning develops logically. The provision is well planned to meet pupils' learning needs.
113. Pupils benefit positively from equal opportunities to participate in a wide range of extra curricular activities, including sports clubs, the school choir and recorder groups. A large number of pupils engage in these activities and gain valuable knowledge and skills, such as using a computer to produce the school's newsletter, 'The Blaengarw Blaze'.
114. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills is good with outstanding features.
115. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and the strong spiritual element is an outstanding feature of the school day. Learning experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The 'Living Values' programme, which is understood and practised by pupils and staff, is an outstanding feature and as a result, pupils socialise well and have a very clear sense of ownership and responsibility to the school, its environment and to one another.
116. They are made well aware of the variety of the cultures in the world. The school has a clear Welsh ethos and the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is promoted very well in many areas of the school's work, including history, geography and the study of Welsh artists and composers. The school's Eisteddfod on St David's Day includes a range of competitive cultural events as well as the traditional churning of the Bard and enhances pupils' understanding of the traditions and culture of Wales. Pupils develop their bilingual skills very effectively.
117. Communication with parents is very effective and the governing body's (GB) report to parents meets statutory requirements. The school has effectively developed the Healthy Schools Initiative, ECO schools and Bridgend Talk projects.
118. The school strongly promotes equal opportunities. Pupils, irrespective of their social background, gender, disability or ethnicity are positively included in all appropriate school activities.
119. The local environment is used well to enhance the curriculum. The school has achieved Green Flag Status with the ECO initiative and is involved with very effective recycling schemes. These experiences raise pupils' awareness of sustainable development, global citizenship and environmental issues effectively.
120. The School Council and ECO Committee have a high profile in the school. As a result, pupils develop corporate responsibilities and a strong sense of belonging to the school and wider community through their roles. They conduct surveys and make decisions on behalf of the classes they represent that support the school's work on healthy life styles. For example, representatives consulted with the canteen staff to introduce the salad bar at lunchtime and

- introduced the fruit only tuck shop. They manage a budget and make spending decisions such as the purchase of vandal-proof picnic benches.
121. Pupils have access to a PSE programme, in line with national recommendations, which contributes significantly to the quality of support and guidance offered to pupils. The school is successful in raising pupils' awareness of the world of work. PSE is well addressed by teachers and supported by the school nurse and local police.
 122. The school has a very positive partnership with parents. They are valued and seen as an integral part of school life and are actively encouraged and enabled to participate in a wide range of school activities. The headteacher knows parents and families very well and has a very strong commitment to them. As a result, a significant number of adults provide valuable weekly support in the school and with out of school activities, such as sporting events.
 123. Written communication with parents is very good and there is very good daily informal contact. Monthly newsletters provide parents with valuable information about the life and work of the school and contain examples of pupils' work. Termly headteacher's newsletters address concerns raised by parents and provide information about attendance targets and other achievements. They include, for example, responses to parents' questionnaires and consultations on policies, such as anti-bullying and the fruit snack for KS1 pupils. Termly curriculum overviews provide very useful information about subjects taught and ways in which parents can help their children.
 124. The hardworking Parents and Friends Association (PFA) organise fundraising and social events that provide generous financial support. The money is used to purchase valuable resources, such as interactive whiteboards and other equipment that support the pupils' learning and enhance skills. They support School Council and ECO-Committee initiatives, such as fundraising for outdoor equipment and the gardening club.
 125. The school has well-established links with the community, surrounding schools and colleges of further education. Pupils are involved in a wide range of inter-schools competitions.
 126. The school works very closely with the receiving secondary schools and provides valuable work experience and training for childcare and social care students and those following an alternative curriculum. The school has gained the Education Business Partnership (EBP) Award for work placements. The school is currently in discussion with an initial teacher training university to establish a partnership.
 127. Pupils are involved in community events such as the annual lantern parade. The community in turn support annual theme weeks, such as 'The International World Tour' and 'How Green is my Valley', that promote the school's work on sustainable development.
 128. The school's partnership with industry is outstanding. There is a well written industry policy and strong links with Careers Wales. A teacher is responsible for extending and maintaining industry links. The school has a very positive attitude to teacher placements. All the teachers have undertaken at least one industrial placement. They enhance their professional development and support their teaching and management skills well.

129. Experiences of the world of work start in the early years when children work with 'people who help us', such as the police and emergency services. The school's Meaningful Work Programme provides a valuable insight into the job market and the processes of successful applications and interviews.
130. Pupils benefit from a programme of visits to places of interest and employment, as well as working with professionals, such as theatre groups and taking part in technology workshops.
131. Y6 pupils gained valuable experiences of research, drama and television broadcasting through taking part in the BBC programme, 'Coal Stories'.
132. Y5 and Y6 pupils benefit from residential visits to outdoor pursuit centres, where they take part in a wide range of activities that further develop their independence, team building and good citizenship skills.
133. Pupils are successful in commercially sponsored competitions that raise their self-esteem, for example, they won the Junior Youth Public Speaking Competition and are successful in choral competitions.
134. The school benefits from sponsorship, for example, to provide sports kit and transport to events. Links with local shops support pupils' entrepreneurial skills because, for example, they negotiate the sale of the school's newspaper.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

135. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
136. The contribution of the school to the well-being of pupils is good with outstanding features. Pupils are very well supported, guided and cared for and feel happy and secure in school. Policies and procedures are in place and implemented very well to ensure staff and pupils know what is expected of them.
137. The school has a very positive relationship with parents, enabling it to know its pupils and their parents or carers very well. They are invited regularly to visit for formal meetings with teachers whenever they have concerns. There is very good daily informal contact, particularly in the early years. Pupils' views are taken into account through the very effective School Council. Councillors take their responsibilities seriously and feel they can make a real difference to their school. They have a clear agenda for future developments and feel the headteacher listens carefully to them and is prepared to act upon their recommendations.
138. Children transferring from the nursery and between key stages are made to feel happy and secure. Parents are provided with an appropriate introductory pack, which provides them with a wide range of information about the school. Pupils transferring during term time are encouraged to settle very well into school life and are offered a 'Buddy' system, including playground pals. An outstanding feature is the quality of the documentation, which ensures a seamless transition from home to school.

139. A notable feature is the 'The Living Values' programme, which is firmly established in the school's work and as a result pupils make very good progress in the development of their personal and social skills. An outstanding feature of the school is the high quality of personal support and guidance for pupils. The outcome of this is reflected in the pupils' caring, polite and often thoughtful demeanour.
140. The school promotes health and fitness for pupils effectively through a wide range of extra-curricular objectives and the fruit tuck shop. The Brush Bus dental routine for under-fives is carried out routinely in a fun and appropriate way. The School Council works effectively with the cook to suggest healthy options, such as the salad bar.
141. There are effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality, behaviour and performance.
142. Behaviour and attendance awards have a high focus in school and arrangements to encourage pupils to behave well are extremely effective. This is evident in the high standards of pupils' behaviour. Teachers and support staff apply policies for behaviour management consistently and all adults in the school are very good role models. All staff, including midday supervisors, are trained in positive behaviour management strategies. Pupils' behaviour is very closely monitored and when required, appropriate action is taken to support those who may experience difficulties. Incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with promptly and without fuss. In discussions, pupils say they are treated fairly.
143. Y6 pupils are trained in conflict resolution techniques. They have a role as Playground Peacemakers in maintaining positive relationships. Pupils are involved in devising class and school rules that are clearly displayed throughout the school. The School Council and Playground Peacemakers have been involved in developing the anti-bullying policy and presentation as part of the LA initiative 'Respecting Others Week'.
144. Very effective use is made of support services and local authority professionals. Pupils' attendance and punctuality is extremely carefully monitored. The school works extremely closely with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) in terms of attendance and welfare for families who give concern.
145. The school sets targets and works hard to encourage parents to send their children to school regularly and on time with a measure of success. Attendance is monitored daily and the classes with 100 per cent attendance are rewarded. Pupils with 100 per cent attendance are rewarded termly and at the year-end. There is evidence that the number of pupils with full attendance has more than doubled in the last three terms and that 11 pupils have achieved full attendance so far in this academic year.
146. There is an effective policy and good procedures for child protection. The headteacher is the nominated officer and all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.
147. The school knows its pupils very well, recognises the diversity of pupils' needs, and promotes inclusive education effectively.

148. The quality of the provision for pupils with SEN is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils attending the designated KS2 unit for pupils with MLD make very good progress. It is well equipped and the curriculum is purposeful, imaginative and stimulating. Pupils respond positively to the encouragement, challenge and praise they are given by its teacher, who is also the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo). Pupils with MLD integrate successfully into mainstream classes when appropriate and this has positive benefits for all. The needs of any pupils with a statement of SEN are being met according to requirements.
149. The school's SEN register is reviewed and updated in line with the Code of Practice Wales. All SEN documentation is comprehensive, accessible, well-organised and kept fully up to date. SEN records are useful working documents, the details of which are used successfully to monitor the progress of individual pupils and to provide appropriate support. This is an outstanding feature of the SEN provision.
150. Early identification and intervention for all pupils with SEN is another outstanding feature. The school uses a wide range of screening tests to ensure that any specific learning difficulties are identified early. This ensures appropriate teaching strategies and planning are in place for pupils to make expected progress.
151. All pupils with SEN have IEPs and have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum and they are very well integrated into the life of the school. IEPs are personal to pupils' needs and targets are discussed thoroughly. Progress in achieving IEP targets is closely monitored and reporting to pupils and parents is very effective in supporting progress.
152. Parents are informed of any concerns at an early age and encouraged to be fully involved in supporting their child's learning. They are offered very good support and clear advice in a way that is sensitive and purposeful. SEN reviews and parents' evenings are well attended by the parents of pupils with SEN and this is testimony of the school's very good efforts to involve them in their child's education programme.
153. The SENCo co-ordinates programmes for all pupils with SEN effectively as well as managing the teaching and learning of pupils with MLD in the Unit. The outstanding practice of the SENCo is recognised by the school, the LA and outside bodies.
154. LSAs are well deployed and trained; they make a significant contribution to the success of the school's SEN provision.
155. From Y3 to Y6, pupils with low reading ages or struggling readers are withdrawn for 'Catch Up' reading support delivered by a trained Learning Support Assistant. Y2 pupils receive additional support in withdrawal groups planned by the SENCo and Curricular Leader for English and are delivered by an LSA. These programmes have a positive impact on standards.
156. The headteacher, SENCo and designated governor are very supportive of the work of the learning support team and have responded positively to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to ensure the inclusion of all pupils with SEN.

157. The governing body makes effective arrangements to oversee SEN in the school. The governor for SEN has close links with the school on a daily basis and regularly supports the SENCo, staff and pupils with additional learning needs.
158. Links with outside agencies are good and effective use is made of additional support and guidance from the LA Access and Inclusion Service, Link Educational Psychologist, Communications Officer, Hearing Impaired Service and parent Helpers and Volunteers.
159. The school gives good consideration to promoting the further development of able and gifted pupils through planned extension work.
160. The school has well-planned and documented procedures for dealing with race equality, disability discrimination and equal opportunities. All pupils are encouraged and enabled to take part in the activities provided by the school. Pupils with disabilities and additional learning needs are fully integrated in all appropriate school activities and initiatives.
161. There are effective policies for areas such as bullying, harassment, disability and fire prevention.
162. There are no pupils with mobility disabilities currently attending the school, but there is a clear accessibility plan and action plan that takes account of the school site and buildings.
163. The school promotes diversity and equal opportunities extremely well. A very good range of activities is provided for pupils through personal and social and religious education. Initiatives, such as the Comenius Project and sponsorship of a boy in Zimbabwe, help to raise pupils' awareness of global citizenship and diversity. The school has been awarded the Intermediate International School Award.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

164. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
165. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report. Although this is higher than the grade 2 judgement given to Key Question 1, there is clear evidence to show that the effectiveness of the outstanding leadership and management has contributed significantly towards improving standards since the previous inspection.
166. The school's has a very well-understood mission statement. Its vision, aims, objectives, priorities and shared values provide outstanding foundations for improvement and promotion of equality for all and are reflected very well in its life and work.

167. The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are outstanding. She has continued to implement significant improvements since the previous inspection, which have resulted in steadily improving standards. Her decisive, yet caring leadership and her ambitious vision for the school provide a very clear strategic direction for the future within an open supportive culture. She is ably supported by the governors, school leadership team and subject leaders, who carry out their responsibilities efficiently, confidently and productively. Together they ensure all pupils and adults are fully included in all aspects of the school's life and work. They all take pride in the continued development of the school.
168. There are effective arrangements that take account of WAG priorities and local partnerships and consortia agreements, including the effective liaison with other schools in the cluster. The school is taking appropriate action to prepare and resource the forthcoming Foundation Phase.
169. Outstanding arrangements, linked to realistic and time-related challenging targets are set out in the very accessible SDP and identify individual and whole-school training and development needs of staff. They provide a very effective vehicle for improving standards and the quality of provision. Targets are being met successfully and subject leaders play an effective role in updating the curriculum, monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and tracking the standards being achieved in their subjects areas.
170. A particularly outstanding feature in the leadership and management of the school is the manner in which teachers have been given co-ordinator responsibilities linked to their strengths and interests. This has resulted in the introduction of many new and effective initiatives and developments for teachers, which are improving standards. Training priorities are linked closely to school and individual needs. There is a very strong commitment to undertake continuing professional development and this has a positive effect on standards.
171. The governors are closely involved in the life of the school and meet their responsibilities well. Their strategic vision in identifying and implementing necessary priorities since the previous inspection is outstanding and instrumental in moving the school forward.
172. The governing body is very aware of the importance of its role in supporting the well-being of the school. Its prudent monitoring of the quality of provision to match the needs of the school to ensure priorities for improvement are met are particularly effective to ensure an outstanding range of resources.
173. The governing body ensures important statutory requirements are met. It is very well-informed about the school's performance and progress. Governors oversee performance management procedures very effectively. These are pursued appropriately by the headteacher and subject leaders to promote their professional development.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

174. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report. This is higher than the grade 2 judgement given to Key Question 1, but recognition has been given to the many outstanding self-evaluation procedures that have been very effective in improving standards.
175. Leaders have an outstanding knowledge of the school and are very well informed about the areas for which they are responsible. This is evident in the very good self-evaluation report produced before the inspection, which provides a detailed, comprehensive, evaluative and accurate review of the school's strengths and areas where improvements need to be made. Arrangements relating these to priorities in the next SDP are very well established to give a coherent approach to school evaluation and improvement.
176. The views of all those involved in providing education are taken into account in the self-evaluation process. For example, the very effective arrangements to seek the views of pupils, parents, staff and governors are outstanding and are already incorporated effectively into the self-evaluation process to improve quality and standards.
177. Careful analysis is made of a range of data, including baseline assessments in reception classes and assessments, to track pupils' progress through the key stages. This is well developed and enables the school to identify accurately those areas in the curriculum where learners need to improve.
178. This year's accessible SDP provides a focussed direction. It contains details of the priorities and targets for this school year and beyond which are appropriately time-related and measurable. Clear targets are prioritised and proper consideration given to the allocation of resources.
179. The governors oversee self-evaluation appropriately through regular meetings with the headteacher and staff and through every day involvement with the school. They work together effectively to ensure priorities are supported through the adequate allocation of resources. Outstanding features since the previous inspection are the steadily improving standards and the improvements made to the fabric of the school building.
180. Actions taken since the previous inspection have resulted in good and measurable improvements to the quality of the school's provision. Standards in Welsh second language have improved considerably, particularly in KS2. The school has addressed the shortcomings identified in subjects and aspects in the previous report well. Consistency in lesson planning and the implementation of schemes of work is now well established. Teachers make effective use of assessments in planning, have improved the marking of pupils' work and set more precise learning targets.
181. The role of subject-leaders has been developed effectively, including those new to their roles. The school is now much more focussed towards staff development; the monitoring and evaluation of initiatives and whole-school priorities for improvement are more manageable.
182. The inspection team agreed with most of the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report. Where it disagreed, it was due to the school underestimating its effectiveness.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

183. The findings of the inspection team match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report. This is higher than the grade 2 judgement given to Key Question 1, but the efficient management of the wide range of resources has been outstanding in supporting and improving standards.
184. There are a sufficient number of well qualified and experienced teachers to provide for the educational needs of all pupils. An outstanding feature is the ratio of adults to pupils, particularly in the under-fives and KS1. For example, a number of parents and other voluntary helpers, including students from Bridgend College and local secondary schools, support the school. All staff are deployed very well and work together as an effective team to ensure the highly competent teaching of the NC. They have attended a wide range of professional development courses to support their curricular responsibilities.
185. The work of learning support staff is focused carefully to meet pupils' needs, particularly those with SEN and children under-five. They are very effective in working as part of a team alongside teachers to ensure pupils' good progress.
186. The procedures for the induction of staff new to the school are very good, with good guidance and support for newly qualified teachers.
187. The school administrator, lunchtime catering staff, the caretaker and cleaners carry out their daily routines and a range of responsibilities efficiently and effectively. The standard of cleanliness within the school is high.
188. The school buildings are old, but have been refurbished to a high standard. There is adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. The areas for nursery and reception children are of good size and the under-fives play in a safe and secure outdoor area that helps to promote their physical development. The school grounds are limited with no grassed areas for play or sport. However, careful planning and imagination ensures that the best possible use is made of the space with flowerbeds and seats. Both the school and the community make very good use of the basketball court.
189. The quality and quantity of resources for the teaching of the under-fives and for the subjects inspected are particularly good. They are all well organised, and stored and shared very well by all classes. In particular, pupils make very good use of the interactive white boards installed in every classroom. Pupils also benefit from a good range of educational visits to support their learning.
190. Spending decisions are very well matched to the school priorities and match the school's priorities in the school development plan. Overall, the school achieves very good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

191. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
192. Standards in the Under-fives are good with outstanding features.

Language literacy and communication skills

Nursery: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Reception: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

193. Nursery children's listening and speaking skills are very good. They listen carefully and speak confidently about their own experiences. They experiment with mark making, drawing and writing. Many children use recognisable letters to write their name.
194. In the reception class, children readily ask questions and respond exceptionally well to adults. They understand the elements of a good story using appropriate vocabulary, such as author, illustrator and characters.

Good features

195. Nursery children know and enjoy a range of songs and rhymes. They handle books correctly and know that words and pictures have meaning. They retell the story of Sally the Limpet by sequencing pictures.
196. Reception children's written work is often very well organised and neatly presented. They enjoy and make good progress in reading independently. Most sequence the events in a story and recall very well 'The Smallest Whale'.

Personal and social development

Nursery: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Reception: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

197. Nursery children develop very good relationships with adults and other children and show respect and care. They know routines very well and are confident and eager to explore new situations. They develop very good personal hygiene routines including the 'Brush Bus' teeth cleaning exercises.
198. Reception children are confident in carrying out their daily activities. They are very keen learners and concentrate and persevere very well until their tasks are completed.

Good features

199. Nursery children respond well to encouragement and are eager to please. They understand the need to choose activities and rotate happily between

tasks. They know there are high expectations of them when they attend collective worship.

200. Reception children work and play well together, take turns and co-operate well with each other and with adults. They use a wide range of Welsh words and phrases in their work and play. They take conscientious responsibility for their personal hygiene.

Mathematical Development

Grade 2: Good and no important shortcomings

Grade 2: Good and no important shortcomings

Good features

201. Nursery children sing a wide range of number songs and rhymes and join in the actions correctly. They count objects and many understand numbers to 10. Children understand the purpose of money, recognise real coins and role-play 'Siop Hufen La' (Ice Cream Shop) and 'Siop y Traeth' (Beach Shop).
202. In the reception class, children use numbers as part of their daily routine and sometimes in Welsh. Children enjoy mathematical games and their mathematical vocabulary is developing very well. They identify figures and write numbers correctly to record their work.

Shortcomings

203. There are no important shortcomings, but children occasionally have difficulty in describing what they discover in practical activities.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Nursery: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Reception: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

204. Nursery children know and understand that some materials can be waterproof. The level of wonderment and intensity of discussion, which ensues from investigating the effectiveness of different materials, is outstanding and contributes significantly to the quality of their learning.
205. Children in reception appreciate very well the clinging powers of the limpet through being actively involved in trying to shake off rolled up tape from their fingers. Most children are able to work independently and describe fabrics that are suitable for hot, wet and cold days. They sort these fabrics confidently and put them into appropriate sets.

Good features

206. Nursery children know and understand about a card they have received in the post. They discuss very well different places such as the seaside and countryside. A few children point out, on a map of the British Isles, a place that is near the sea or inland.

207. In the reception class children recall a range of exploratory experiences interestingly and appropriately. They use the computer with confidence including the interactive white board and have good co-ordination and control of the mouse.

Physical Development

Nursery: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Reception: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

208. In the nursery, children use a range of toys and equipment with increasing control. They demonstrate very good awareness of space and respond very well to non-verbal commands such as the sound of a tambourine. Children move confidently around the hall and have a very good recall of previous work and know high, low, and medium levels very well. They demonstrate a pincer grip using pegs and tidy away play equipment with minimum fuss.
209. Reception children are very confident and skilful performers during physical activities, and the manner in which they evaluate each other's movements is an outstanding feature.

Good features

210. Nursery children change independently for physical exercise and dance. They understand well the effect of exercise on their body and stretch and breathe sensibly during cool down sessions. They make sensible choices and volunteer to show their movements.
211. Reception children's co-ordination and dexterity develop well when they assemble a variety of playground construction toys and large play equipment.

Creative Development

Nursery: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Reception: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

212. In the nursery and reception class children join together to extend their creative development through dance and the manner in which they respond effectively to the music is outstanding.

Good features

213. In the nursery, children paint very well and use a range of materials and techniques to make pictures. They confidently use 'model magic' to create interesting textures and shapes using seashells.
214. The reception children role play the story of the 'Smallest Whale' very well and demonstrate what they do when he is stranded on the beach. They confidently use the computer to draw pictures of the 'Smallest Whale' and choose colours appropriately.

English

KS1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

KS2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

215. In both KS1 and KS2, all learners, including those with SEN make good and sometimes very good progress in relation to the targets set for them in literacy.
216. Pupils of all abilities in KS1 listen well and maintain high levels of concentration. They comment, make predictions and answer questions clearly and with increasing confidence. They describe confidently the stories they read and their experiences in and out of school.
217. Pupils in KS1 read well overall and confirm their understanding of text, make predictions and draw sensible conclusions from a book's cover, content and characters.
218. In KS1, standards in writing are good and pupils write for many different purposes. They are developing well as confident, independent writers. Their spelling and punctuation develops well.
219. Throughout KS2, most pupils listen attentively both to their teachers and to 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.
220. KS2 pupils speak effectively in paired and group work as well as various debating activities, which develop their confidence well. Year 6 pupils take part in 'Junior Youth Speaks', a public speaking competition, which refines their skills effectively. They participate well in discussions, put forward their views coherently and extend their vocabulary.
221. Standards in reading are good throughout KS2. Most pupils read with appropriate fluency, accuracy, expression and understanding according to their age and ability, and many achieve the expected level.
222. The majority of pupils at KS2 are able to talk about the books they have read and their favourite authors and explain their choices. They can summarise the plot of the book and describe the physical aspects of characters and their personalities. They are able to answer analytical and literal questions about an extract from a story very successfully.
223. Pupils in KS2 write for a range of purposes and for a variety of audiences. For example, they write play scripts, narratives, reviews, biography and poetry effectively.
224. Older pupils KS2 often use imagery well in their writing. They make good use of conventions such as grammar, spelling and punctuation and become more accurate and consistent in their use of speech marks and apostrophes.
225. KS2 pupils tackle tasks with interest and use dictionaries and thesauruses with confidence to explore meaning of words.
226. Handwriting of most KS1 pupils is well formed, well spaced and is generally neat for their ages.

227. By the time they are in upper KS2, most write in a clear, legible and joined hand and take pride in their work.

Shortcomings

228. There are no important shortcomings, but the quality of handwriting of many younger pupils in KS2 is variable.

Welsh second language

KS1 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

KS2 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

229. Older pupils in KS2 speak confidently with clear intonation and pronunciation. They thoroughly enjoy using the Welsh language where appropriate, including on occasions, when they play. Their correct and confident use of mutations and gender when conversing in the past and present tense is exceptional for their age.
230. KS2 pupils' confident participation in a range of dialogues is outstanding and they use a very wide vocabulary. They listen and understand very well, for example, they prepare for a fashion show and discuss and describe the clothes being worn in great detail to each other.

Good features

231. Pupils in KS1 and KS2 gain confidence in speaking Welsh as they progress through the school and make good progress in building on previously learnt vocabulary. They become familiar with everyday terms such as greetings and commands and respond appropriately in familiar circumstances, such as school assemblies and registration.
232. KS1 pupils are good listeners and understand and respond appropriately to a wide range of commands, praise and vocabulary as a natural part of the school day.
233. Pupils in KS1 make good use of Welsh as a second language in role-play situations where they express likes and dislikes confidently.
234. Pupils in KS1 enunciate with clarity and confidence, using an appropriate range of language patterns. They respond appropriately and politely to what they hear and show evident interest. They are very confident in counting to 20 and know a variety of colours in Welsh.
235. Pupils in KS1 read simple texts with increasing confidence. They read with good expression from a Big Welsh Book about Tedi Twt (Little Tedi) and have a good understanding of the context.
236. KS2 pupils listen very carefully to their teachers and to their peers and follow simple instructions in Welsh promptly.
237. Younger pupils in KS2 tell the time in Welsh accurately on and half-past the hour. They read, sequence and match Welsh sentences to pictures depicting

the main events in a typical school day confidently. The enjoy playing a wide range of games sensibly in Welsh, such as Beth ydy'r amser Mr Blaith (What's the time Mr Wolf)?

238. Pupils in KS2 make good efforts to engage in a range of developing dialogues when speaking in pairs and their development of written Welsh is good.

Shortcomings

239. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematics

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

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

Good features

240. In KS1 and KS2, pupils develop a good understanding of mathematical concepts through a range of mental and practical activities.
241. Younger pupils in KS1 have a good grasp of basic number and become confident through practical activities. Learners read, write and arrange numbers with increasing accuracy and use the mathematical language related to number correctly. They recognise the time on the hour.
242. Pupils in KS1 estimate, measure and weigh using different non-standard units and are familiar with simple fractions. They have good recall of the names of two-dimensional shapes, such as circle, triangle, and hexagon; they are well aware of their properties and differences and match the shape to its description confidently.
243. Younger pupils in KS1 recognise coins of different values, their shapes, colour and value well. They are very much aware that some coins are of greater or smaller values than others. They solve simple word problems and explain how the problem was solved coherently. They use money in real life situations and work out what coins are needed to pay for the shopping; for example, they take it in turns to visit a local shop to buy fruit for snack times. They record different ways in which the same amount of money can be represented with different coins.
244. Older pupils in KS1 count and sequence numbers from one to 20 confidently and identify odd and even numbers accurately. They understand and apply simple mathematical terms with increasing confidence when adding on in tens and they appreciate the relationship between adding and taking away.
245. Younger pupils in KS2 calculate and solve money problems accurately using the four rules. They know basic shapes and their properties and are familiar with line symmetry.
246. Pupils in KS2 use the four rules with increasing assuredness. They have a good facility with multiplication table facts and use a good variety of strategies in their mental work on multiplication. They collect a range of data, present it correctly, and make meaningful conclusions based on their work.

247. As pupils progress through KS2, they use a wider mathematical vocabulary, measure in standard units in length, weight and capacity and become increasingly accurate in estimating measures and quantities. They recognise more complex two and three-dimensional shapes and relate their properties well.
248. Older pupils in KS2 use a range of standard measures for quantities such as length, and weight well; for example, they measure area effectively including the area of regular and irregular shapes. Pupils measure time well, including 24-hour time and have a good grasp of capacity. They develop a good understanding of co-ordinates.
249. Older pupils in KS2 know about different types of angles and measure them in degrees accurately. They produce accurate line graphs and discuss positive and negative co-ordinates.

Shortcomings

250. There are no important shortcomings, but in both KS1 and KS2, pupils' application of their thinking skills to mathematical problems is at an early stage.

Physical education

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

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

Good features

251. Pupils dress appropriately for all physical activities and understand the importance and significance of 'warm up' and 'cool down' before and after exercise. They demonstrate a clear understanding of health and safety issues and make good progress, including those with SEN.
252. In gymnastics, pupils in KS1 and KS2 have good awareness of space, moving at different levels, speeds and directions. They use body parts effectively to make different shapes and work well in pairs.
253. KS2 pupils make good progress in developing their physical skills. In athletics they develop and refine basic techniques in running, throwing and jumping well. They increasingly achieve greater speed, height and distance.
254. Some pupils in KS2 practise and enhance their ball and team playing skills effectively through after school activities in rugby, netball and basketball, which improves significantly overall standards.
255. The majority of pupils by the end of KS2 achieve the standard expected of eleven year olds in swimming. In the last three years, the school has been champion of the Garw Valley School Gala.
256. Pupils develop good orienteering skills in a range of outdoor and adventurous pursuits on residential courses at Ogmere and Llangrannog. In the process, they understand well that participation in activities together is pleasurable and supports their social skills.

257. Pupils participate successfully at local and county level in a wide range of sporting activities and are members of a range of clubs outside school. Many achieve high standards in team games and pupils develop their understanding of good sportsmanship and co-operation by taking part.

Shortcomings

258. There are no important shortcomings, but pupils in KS1 seldom evaluate their own and others' performances in gymnastic lessons and a few pupils in KS2 do not sustain their efforts sufficiently to improve their skills in athletics.

Religious education

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

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

Good features

259. Pupils in both KS1 and KS2 show a good understanding of both Old and New Testaments. They also have an appropriate awareness of Christian worship, including festivals and celebrations. In both KS1 and KS2, pupils make very good use of artefacts and displays to further their awareness of other faiths.
260. KS1 pupils' knowledge and understanding of different festivals and beliefs develops well, for example, they appreciate and understand the significance of the baptism ceremony.
261. A role-play session by KS1 pupils in a local church extends their understanding of the significance of the festive to family life effectively, the artefacts used and the role of the vicar.
262. KS1 pupils compare customs related to the Jewish and Muslim religions with Christianity. Pupils across KS1, as a consequence, realise clearly that not all people have the same religious beliefs.
263. The KS2 pupils demonstrate an increasing awareness of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They know that Jews and Muslims refer to God as Jehovah and Allah respectively and understand the importance of the Holy Books, such as the Bible, the Torah and the Koran. Through the story of Mary Jones and her Bible, pupils develop an awareness of why the Bible is important to Christians in Wales and elsewhere.
264. Younger pupils develop a very good understanding of Judaism and the significance of the Seder Meal. A role-play session in class, tasting various foods to symbolise the meal extends their understanding well and most pupils answer questions appropriately.
265. Older KS2 pupils develop a good understanding of Islam. They are aware of the difficulties and sacrifices of the leader Mohammed. They understand many of the traditions associated with the mosque and Qu'ran and why Muslims called Mohammed the 'Messenger of God'.
266. The quantity and quality of written work is good in KS2 and pupils develop effective discursive skills in relation to moral issues and responsibilities to the community.

267. Pupils' understanding of Christianity benefits well from visiting Christian places of worship and knowing the local vicar. They generally use the correct vocabulary when discussing prayers, ceremonies and symbols from different faiths.

Shortcomings

268. There are no important shortcomings, but in KS1 and KS2 pupils' research skills of exploring and responding are insufficiently developed.

School's response to the inspection

The headteacher, staff and governors are pleased that the inspection has recognised Blaengarw Primary School as a vibrant, well organised school with many good and outstanding features.

We are delighted that the positive working relationships among teachers, support staff and pupils has been recognised as we believe these relationships contribute to our outstanding successes.

It is particularly pleasing that our improving standards have been recognised.

We strive to offer the best for our pupils and the inspection has confirmed we achieve, 'very good value for money'.

The recognition of our pupils as caring, polite and thoughtful is confirmation of the school's well thought out policy and practice.

An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations of the report. Recommendation one is already identified in our school development and improvement plan. The action plan will be communicated to parents.

The Annual Report to parents will report on progress the school is making with regard to the inspection recommendations.

The headteacher, staff and governors would like to thank the registered inspector and the inspection team for their professionalism and for the thoroughness of the inspection process.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Blaengarw Primary School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Station Street Blaengarw Bridgend
Postcode	CF32 8BA
Telephone number	01656 815550

Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Lugg
Date of appointment	January 2001
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Cllr Marlene Thomas
Registered inspector	Mr Phillip Edwards
Dates of inspection	21 – 23 April 2008

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	17	22	19	26	28	20	21	21	174

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	8	1	8.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	29:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	15:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	12:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2007	86	90	90
Autumn 2007	95	93	94
Spring 2008	96	92	94

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	18%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y2:					27
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	15	56	26	
		National	0	3	14	63	20	
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	15	48	37	
		National	0	4	15	55	26	
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	4	15	59	22	
		National	0	5	16	68	11	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	7	11	52	30	
		National	0	2	11	64	23	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	11	70	19	
		National	0	2	11	65	22	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	11	63	26	
		National	0	1	9	66	24	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment

In the school	81%	In Wales	80.1%
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D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y6:							27
			D	A	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	19	62	19
		National	0	0	0	1	4	16	50	29
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	7	37	56
		National	0	0	0	1	3	15	50	30
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	14	19	67
		National	0	0	0	0	2	12	53	32

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment

In the school	81%	In Wales	74.1%
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D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

- A team of four inspectors, who were present at the school for 8 inspector days, carried out the inspection. They were accompanied by a peer assessor for three days.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with staff, parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school.
- Parents completed 55 questionnaires which were analysed, and 97% of responses were positive.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff with responsibilities and support staff.
- School documentation and samples of pupils' work were examined.
- Inspectors observed 36 lessons or sessions in total.
- A sample of pupils' work from across the ability range in each year group was examined.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading, across the age range.
- Discussions were held with pupils, including the School Council, about their work and about the life of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during break periods, at lunchtimes and at the end and beginning of the school sessions.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and observed extra-curricular activities.
- Post inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and the GB.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Phillip Edwards Registered Inspector	Context, summary, recommendations and appendixes Key Questions 1, 5, and 6 Contributions to Key Questions 3 Mathematics and Welsh 2 nd Language
Mrs Joyce Chatterton Team Inspector	Key Questions 3 and 7 Under-fives and religious education
Mr David Morgan Team Inspector	Key Question 2 and contribution to Key Question 4 SEN, English and physical education
Mrs Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3 and 4
Mrs Margaret Lugg Headteacher and Nominee	Contribution to team meetings Preparation of the school's response to the report
Mr Alan Smith Peer Assessor	Contribution to team meetings

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff, pupils and parents of Blaengarw Primary School for their co-operation, hospitality and courtesy throughout the inspection.

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