

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Blaentillery Primary School
Bridge Terrace
Cwmtillery
Abertillery
Blaenau Gwent
NP13 1LD**

School Number: 6772170

Date of Inspection: 08/06/09

by

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Blaentillery 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 Blaentillery Primary School took place between 08/06/09 and 10/06/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Michael T. Ridout 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. Blaentillery School is a community primary for boys and girls aged three to eleven years. In total there are 75 full-time equivalent (fte) pupils on roll organised in four classes. There are 14.5 (fte) children under five, eleven of nursery age and nine in reception taught in one class. The average class size is 19. There are 5 (fte) teachers, including the head teacher, and two part-time teachers. There are three learning support assistants (LSA).
2. The school is situated in the former mining village of Cwmtillery, near the town of Abertillery, in Blaenau Gwent. It serves the village of Cwmtillery but some families come from further afield. The locality is a Communities First Area and has a mixture of rented and owner occupied housing. The school states that the area has many features of economic disadvantage.
3. Around 31 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is above national and local averages. There are no pupils 'looked after' by the local authority. A few are from ethnic minority backgrounds and none learn English as an additional language. No children speak Welsh naturally; English is the predominant language and the school teaches Welsh as a second language.
4. Baseline assessments indicate that children's attainment on entry covers the full range and is below local averages in some areas of attainment. Subsequent assessments indicate around 30 per cent of pupils have special educational needs (SEN). This is a higher proportion to that found in many primary schools. No pupil has a statement of SEN.
5. Since the last inspection in July 2003 the number on roll has decreased with a consequent reduction in the number of classes. The extent of accommodation provides well for the present four classes and, in preparation for the Foundation Phase, improvements have been made to the outdoor environment.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's motto is 'Leaping to Success' and its work is guided by a number of wide ranging aims published in the school development plan (SDP). The plan for 2008 - 2009 sets goals to:
 - implement a topic/theme based curriculum in key stage 2 (KS2);
 - work towards a Foundation Phase approach in Early Years and key stage 1 (KS1);
 - raise standards in writing, handwriting and in mathematical thinking skills;
 - review provision for information and communications technology (ICT) and SEN;
 - raise standards in Welsh second language, history and geography;

- continue to work towards eco school accreditation and become a global partnership school;
- work with governors to develop their involvement in school life; and
- create a library, paint the computer suite and quiet room, develop the early years garden, repaint playground markings and provide play equipment at playtimes and lunch time.

Summary

7. Blaentillery School is at the heart of the local community; it provides a broad and relevant curriculum and a caring and supportive learning environment. Overall standards of attainment have declined in recent years, but a majority of pupils in KS2 achieve good standards in most of the subjects inspected.

Table of grades awarded

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

8. The inspection team agreed with the school's self-valuation in key questions three and four but awarded one grade lower in key questions one, two, five six and seven.

Standards

9. In 2008, the results of the KS1 National Curriculum (NC) teacher assessments were just above national figures in mathematics and below in English and science. In comparison with similar schools they were average in mathematics and science and well below in English.
10. In KS2 the 2008 results were above national figures in science and below in English and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools results were well above average in science, average in mathematics and well below in English.

11. In interpreting these results and making comparisons with the local and national picture it is important to note that the number of pupils in each cohort is small. However, the trend in the overall results is a significant factor. In both key stages, compared with 2003, the proportion attaining at least expected levels in English, mathematics and science is lower. In general girls outperform boys in both key stages.
12. In twenty lessons or parts of lessons observed standards in the areas of learning and the subjects inspected were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5%	65%	25%	5%	-

13. These figures represent an improvement compared with the last inspection in 2003, but they are below the figures published in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) Annual Report for 2007-2008, where standards in primary schools in Wales are reported to be Grade 2 or better in 84 per cent of lessons and Grade 1 in 12 per cent.
14. Standards in the seven areas of learning for the under-fives were judged as follows:

Areas of learning:	Nursery	Reception
Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity	Grade 2	Grade 2
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 3	Grade 3
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh language development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2

15. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.
16. Overall standards for the under-fives and in the subjects inspected were judged in both key stages as follows:

Under-fives (Foundation Phase)	Overall Grade 2	
Subjects:	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Grade 3	Grade 2
Science	Grade 3	Grade 2
Information communications technology	Grade 3	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious Education	Grade 3	Grade 3

17. Compared with the last inspection standards are similar in the under-fives and in KS1. In KS2 standards have improved in English, science, history and ICT, but declined in religious education.

18. Children under-five make a good start in acquiring key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT and in developing bilingual competence.
19. There are good features and shortcomings in pupils' achievement in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. In KS1 competence in using key skills is underdeveloped, but in KS2 pupils' confidence and skills progress well. The picture is similar in the development of bilingual skills.
20. Progress is variable as pupils move through the school. The under-fives advance well, but in KS1 the picture is mixed; in KS2 a majority make good progress.
21. Those with SEN make good overall progress towards the targets set for them in individual education plans (IEP), but the achievement of more able pupils is not always in line with their capabilities.
22. Pupils' progress well in their personal, social, moral and wider development. They take on appropriate responsibilities and older ones develop the skills of citizenship well. They acquire a good understanding of equal opportunities and show appropriate respect for diversity.
23. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good, but in KS1 they have too few opportunities to work with appropriate independence. In KS2 pupils show a good capacity to work independently.
24. Attendance rates for the past three terms average 91.4 per cent, which is below national figures and those for similar schools. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored.
25. Pupils' are well prepared for participation in their community and develop a good awareness of the world of work.

The quality of education and training

26. In twenty lessons or parts of lessons the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5%	55%	35%	5%	-

27. These figures represent an improvement compared with the last inspection in 2003 but they are below the national picture as published in HMCI's Annual Report 2007-2008, where the quality of teaching is reported to be Grade 2 or better in 83 per cent of lessons with 16 per cent having outstanding features.
28. Members of staff successfully establish good working relationships with pupils. The contribution of LSAs to teaching is good.
29. Where teaching is most effective good subject knowledge and expertise, high expectations and good lesson management ensure a brisk pace that keeps pupils' involved and on task. On occasions, however, teaching is less effective. In such cases the pace and rigour of tasks is not sufficiently matched to pupils' needs.

30. The frameworks used for lesson planning allow opportunity to evaluate learning, but the use made of assessments to adapt tasks in line with prior knowledge and skills is not always well enough developed to ensure progress is maintained.
31. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment and reporting. The quality of reports to parents is good. A range of assessments is undertaken in English, mathematics, and science, but procedures are less rigorous in most other subjects.
32. There are both good features and shortcomings in the marking of pupils' work and the guidance provided to help them improve their work.
33. The overall quality of the educational provision meets the range of pupils' needs and interests well and is in line with statutory requirements. The curriculum is equally accessible to all pupils including those with SEN. The provision for the under-fives and in KS2 is developing particularly well.
34. In KS1 and KS2 the curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. Good emphasis is placed on pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics and on developing key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum. The provision is good in KS2 but less consistent in KS1.
35. A good feature of the provision is the wide range of extra-curricular activities, visitors and educational visits that enrich learning.
36. The provision for pupils' personal and social education (PSE), including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements.
37. The provision to promote pupils' bilingual skills is good overall and Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is generally well promoted
38. The school has effective partnerships with parents, other schools and the local community; much good work is evident in promoting awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship.
39. There are many good features in the quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils. The school offers a safe and happy environment and relevant policies are in place to help ensure their health, safety and wellbeing.
40. Procedures for the early identification of SEN are good. Effective support is provided in small withdrawal groups, but the targets identified in IEPs are not always taken fully into account when planning class work.
41. The quality of provision to promote equal opportunities is good and pupils' awareness of cultural diversity is well promoted.

Leadership and management

42. Leadership is successful in providing clear direction through positive values in the pastoral aspects of provision.
43. The strategic organisation of the school, together with the impact of recent training is successful in promoting improvements in learning and teaching, although some variations remain. The leadership role of most teachers impacts well in this regard.
44. The governing body (GB) is strongly supportive of the school, but its role as a critical partner and in monitoring provision remains at an early stage of development.
45. The framework used for self-evaluation is a good basis for further development. However, although the role of teachers in monitoring standards is developing well, planning for further improvement is not always closely enough linked to first hand evidence.
46. The provision of staff, learning resources and accommodation is good, but the use made of accommodation in KS1 is limited.
47. The total time available for lessons in KS2 is below that recommended by the WAG.
48. The school budget is carefully planned and financial resources are allocated in line with the school's main priorities.
49. Taking account of current improvements in standards in KS2, the maintenance of good overall standards in the under-fives and weighing these factors against a decline in the school's performance in both key stages since the last inspection, the school's effectiveness has reduced overall in recent years. However, the positive impact of the current provision on standards places the school in a stronger position to demonstrate effective value for money.

Recommendations

The school with the support of appropriate agencies should:

- R1 improve progress and raise standards in areas of learning and subjects where shortcomings are identified*;
- R2 improve achievement further in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT and continue to enhance bilingual skills;
- R3 improve the progress and achievement of more able pupils;
- R4 raise overall levels of attendance;
- R5 build on good practice to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and ensure the effective use of assessment to plan and improve learning;
- R6 ensure the effectiveness of strategic management, clearly prioritise targets in the SDP and monitor the impact of initiatives.

* some elements of this recommendation are noted in the SDP.

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

50. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question Grade 2. There is an overall decline in standards of attainment since the last inspection, but although a majority of pupils in KS2 achieve well in much of their work, some shortcomings remain.
51. In 2008 the results of the KS1 NC teacher assessments were just above national figures in mathematics and below in English and science. In comparison with similar schools they were average in mathematics and science and well below in English.
52. In KS2 the 2008 results were above national figures in science and below in English and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools results were well above average in science, average in mathematics and well below in English.
53. In interpreting these results and making comparisons with the local and national picture it is important to note that the number of pupils in each cohort is small. However, the trend in the overall results is a significant factor. In both key stages, compared with 2003, the proportion attaining at least expected levels in English, mathematics and science is lower, but in KS2 results in mathematics have steadily improved since 2004 and in science since 2006.
54. The school's success in meeting or exceeding its end of key stage targets is variable in recent years. In 2008 it exceeded its KS2 targets in mathematics and science, but missed them in English and in the proportion attaining at least the expected level 4 in all three subjects. Analysis of the school's results shows an established trend of difference in attainment on the basis of gender. In general girls outperform boys in both key stages.
55. In twenty lessons or parts of lessons observed standards in the areas of learning and subjects inspected were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5%	65%	25%	5%	-

56. These figures represent an improvement compared with the last inspection in 2003, but they are below the figures published in HMCI's Annual Report for 2007-2008, where standards in primary schools in Wales are reported to be Grade 2 or better in 84 per cent of lessons and Grade 1 in 12 per cent.

57. Standards in the seven areas of learning for the under-fives were judged as follows:

Areas of learning:	Nursery	Reception
Personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity	Grade 2	Grade 2
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 3	Grade 3
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh language development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2

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

59. Overall standards for the under-fives and in the subjects inspected were judged in both key stages as follows:

Under-fives (Foundation Phase)	Overall grade 2	
Subjects:	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Grade 3	Grade 2
Science	Grade 3	Grade 2
Information communications technology	Grade 3	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious Education	Grade 3	Grade 3

60. Compared with the last inspection standards are similar in the under-fives and in KS1. In KS2 standards have improved in English, science, history and ICT, but declined in religious education.

61. Children under-five make a good start in acquiring key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT and in developing bilingual competence.

62. There are good features and shortcomings in pupils' achievement in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. In KS1 competence in using key skills is underdeveloped but in KS2 pupils' confidence and skills progress well. The picture is similar in the development of bilingual skills.

63. Progress is variable as pupils move through the school. The under-fives advance well, but in KS1 the picture is mixed; in KS2 a majority make good progress.

64. Those with SEN make good overall progress towards the targets set for them in their IEPs, but the achievement of more able pupils is not always in line with their capabilities.

65. In KS1 pupils' understanding of what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve is at an early stage of development. In KS2 the use of targets and self-assessment strategies is helping to develop this aspect.

66. By the end of KS2 a majority of pupils make good overall progress towards fulfilling their potential and they are appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education.
67. The foundations for good behaviour and attitudes to learning are in place in the under-fives. Children are encouraged to become independent, responsible pupils' and to complete a task before moving on to the next one.
68. In KS1 the extent to which pupils are motivated and work productively is variable, but in KS2 good effort and concentration are consistent features. Older ones have very positive attitudes and show enthusiasm in their work. They behave well, listen to their teachers and are keen to do their best.
69. In KS1 pupils generally behave well, but a minority sometimes lacks effort and concentration during lessons.
70. Attendance rates for the past three terms average 91.4 per cent, which is below national figures and those for similar schools. The school has set a target of 91.6 per cent. There is no unauthorised absence. This indicates that parents do not take more than the allowed ten days holiday in term time and they do not withdraw their children for unacceptable reasons. Punctuality is good with few pupils arriving late to school enabling lessons to start on time.
71. In KS2 pupils work with appropriate independence and develop well the skills for lifelong learning. Working independently is less evident in KS1. Pupils are over reliant on following directions rather than thinking for themselves.
72. Pupils make good progress in their personal, social and wider development. They take on appropriate responsibilities and older ones develop the skills of citizenship well. They develop a strong sense of right and wrong, show a strong sense of fair play and are generally considerate, caring and courteous towards others.
73. Pupils have a good understanding of equal opportunity issues and through events such as World Book Day gain increasing awareness of the diversity of cultures within society. They are well prepared for participation in their community and develop a good awareness of the world of work.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

74. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. This is because of the wide variation in the quality and effectiveness of teaching found during the inspection.

75. In twenty lessons or parts of lessons the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5%	55%	35%	5%	-

76. These figures represent an improvement compared with the last inspection in 2003 but they are below the national picture as published in HMCI's Annual Report 2007-2008, where the quality of teaching is reported to be Grade 2 or better in 83 per cent of lessons with 16 per cent having outstanding features.
77. Where teaching is effective good subject knowledge and expertise, together with high expectations and effective lesson management, ensure a brisk pace that keeps pupils involved and on task. Several of the lessons observed in the under-fives and in KS2 provide exemplars of best practice in motivating and involving pupils.
78. On occasions, however, teaching is less effective. In such cases the pace and rigour of tasks is not sufficiently matched to pupils' needs and the learning tasks are not clearly enough explained.
79. Members of staff successfully establish good working relationships with pupils. The contribution of LSAs to learning and teaching is good when their work is well managed by the teacher. This is especially evident in the under-fives.
80. Overall, members of staff have a good range of subject knowledge and through recent training are becoming familiar with current developments in primary practice, including the foundation phase principles. However, it is taking a little time for strategies such as assessment for learning and skills based approaches, to become embedded.
81. Members of staff successfully promote equality of opportunity and for the most part the promotion of bilingual skills is good but there is a lack of consistency in KS1. The picture is similar in developing the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills within learning.
82. Good overall progress is evident in adapting the provision for the under-fives and pupils in KS1 to reflect the seven areas of learning. In the under-fives the focus of learning is clearly defined and teaching is effective, but on occasions in KS1 teaching is over directed; too little emphasis is placed on guiding pupils to engage fully in a range of activities, to develop appropriate independence and to ensure they build up their skills through first hand experience.
83. In KS2 teaching sets high expectations, praises success and manages lessons so that pupils understand what is expected of them. In a few lessons, however, less rigour in guiding the learning results in a slower pace and a loss of direction in the work. For example, this was evident in lessons in English and ICT.
84. In general, lesson planning identifies clear objectives, but these are not always developed to match pupils' needs or communicated sufficiently clearly so that the purpose of tasks is understood.

85. Overall, a good range of teaching methods and organisational strategies is used, but in KS1 the available resources to secure the active involvement of pupils are not always fully utilised. This is particularly the case when enquiry and recording skills are not fully developed.
86. The frameworks used for lesson planning allow opportunity to evaluate learning, but the use made of assessments to adapt tasks in line with prior knowledge and skills is not always well enough developed to ensure progress is maintained.
87. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment and reporting. An appropriate baseline assessment is rigorously implemented and the results are used well to identify individual needs. A range of assessments is undertaken in both key stages, including the regular assessment of pieces of work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These are annotated and form a useful record that exemplifies individual progress.
88. Appropriate arrangements are in place for end of key stage teacher assessments and to ensure the moderation of teacher assessments through working with other schools. Assessment procedures in other subjects are less well developed.
89. Practitioners working with the under-fives and pupils in KS1 make daily assessments by observation. In the best practice these observations are clearly linked to the skills developed and the information is used well to inform further planning. However, in KS1 these evaluations are not always sufficiently focused.
90. In KS2 some good examples of focused assessments and the use of this information to guide the next steps in learning are evident in English. This practice provides an exemplar, but in general this aspect is not as well developed in other subjects.
91. Pupils' understanding of the purpose of assessment and their involvement in planning their own progress and improvement is at an early stage of development. Although targets in literacy and numeracy are recorded in 'learning diaries,' these are not rigorously enough linked to the next steps in learning.
92. Pupils' work is generally marked regularly and where the 'two stars and a wish' pattern is used this provides helpful guidance to pupils. However, the use of this strategy and the provision of constructive comments to indicate what needs to be improved lack consistency.
93. The arrangements for reporting attainment and progress meet statutory requirements. Parents have opportunities to discuss their child's progress both formally and informally and they receive end of year reports that inform them well about progress in all subjects. Appropriate targets indicate the way forward in the core subjects.

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

94. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report because there are many good features in the school's curricular provision.
95. The overall quality of the educational provision meets the range of pupils' needs and interests well and is in line with statutory requirements. The curriculum is equally accessible to all pupils including those with SEN. The provision for the under-fives and in KS2 is developing particularly well.
96. Children under five engage in a wide range of relevant and stimulating learning experiences, both indoors and outdoors. These first hand experiences promote new learning well and enhance their curiosity and independence. The provision successfully promotes basic and key skills in line with foundation phase principles.
97. In KS1 and KS2 the curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. The school's long term curricular planning is in a transitional phase as it adapts provision in line with the foundation phase and the skills based curriculum. Schemes of work are being developed to reflect the thematic approach adopted. As a consequence planning is derived from different sources, but although this ensures flexibility the elements of consistency, coherence and progression are not yet assured. This is most evident in KS1.
98. Taken overall, good emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics and on developing key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum. The provision is generally good in KS2 but is less consistent in KS1.
99. A good feature of provision is the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided. These include art, netball, football, a fitness club and a cooking club. Pupils from Year 1 to Y6 may participate and a high percentage does so regularly. These activities broaden their knowledge, interests and skills and contribute well to their personal development.
100. Learning experiences are successfully enriched through planned visits to places of historical, geographical and cultural interest both locally and further a field. Examples include, a farm in Brecon, the amphitheatre and museum in Caerleon and the Museum of Welsh Life at Saint Fagan's.
101. The provision for pupils' PSE, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good and reflects well the school's PSE framework. A number of visitors, including the local community policeman, the school nurse, the fire service and road safety officers, enhance this programme well. Topics addressed include safety, substance misuse, vandalism and bullying, street corner culture and sex education.

102. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own actions and to demonstrate considerate behaviour. Adults provide good role models and set a good example of positive and thoughtful behaviour that promotes those basic human values that they consider essential to the development of character. The school strongly fosters positive attitudes to learning and nurtures the skills of independence, inter-dependence and perseverance. All pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and they raise considerable sums of money regularly for charities.
103. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and contributes to pupils' moral development well. However, there are few opportunities to reflect on issues raised in assemblies or in lessons. Acts of worship are broadly Christian in nature and through lessons in religious education pupils are positively encouraged to respect other religious traditions.
104. The provision to promote pupils' bilingual skills is good overall, but there is less consistency in KS1. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is generally well promoted in both key stages with good opportunities to learn about Welsh myths and legends as well as famous people and events; pupils also enjoy folk dancing. A successful feature is the annual residential course at the Urdd site in Cardiff attended by older pupils. They visit Cardiff Castle, the Senedd, Cardiff Bay, Techniquest and the National Museum of Wales. These experiences effectively enrich pupils' understanding of Wales and its culture.
105. A good feature is the extent to which pupils' experiences are enriched by effective partnerships with parents, the community and other agencies. The 'Friends of Blaentillery' runs social events and raises valuable funds for the school. Parents are encouraged to accompany their children on educational visits and to attend family literacy courses provided at the school. In a few cases this has resulted in parents pursuing non-vocational qualifications.
106. Links with the community are good. Members of the community visit the school to share their experiences and pupils visit a residential home and attend services in the local church. The school choir sings at a local supermarket to raise money for charity every Christmas. The local vicar is a regular visitor as are other clergy from different churches.
107. The school has beneficial partnerships with other schools and education providers. It offers placements for students studying at a further education college and work experience opportunities for students attending the local comprehensive school. There is an established partnership with a teacher training university and students are regularly received on placements and are well mentored by the head teacher.
108. Good emphasis is placed on enabling pupils to meet a range of visitors who help them find out about the jobs of 'people who help us' in the community. Furthermore, a teacher has undertaken a literacy project based at a nearby regeneration site, which benefits the curriculum.
109. Strong emphasis is placed on tackling social disadvantage and promoting inclusion in all school activities.

110. Pupils are very aware of the need for sustainable development and talk with enthusiasm about the eco bronze award the school has won and the initiatives in place for recycling. This is a strong feature of the provision.
111. Pupils are beginning to develop entrepreneurial and other skills needed to support economic development. For example, older ones develop problem solving skills through a curricular project and participate in fundraising activities. Furthermore, the fruit shop they help to run offers opportunities to learn about retailing and to understand budgeting, profit and loss.
112. The school does much to ensure that pupils gain an appropriate grounding in the skills essential for them to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to community regeneration in later life. The provision of homework for older pupils is appropriate in this regard. The school works hard to ensure pupils' experiences reflect the national priorities promoted by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

113. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report because there are many good features in the quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils. The school offers a safe and happy environment and relevant policies are in place to help ensure pupils' health, safety and wellbeing.
114. The school plans and manages care and support arrangements effectively and appropriate partnerships have been developed with a range of external welfare agencies.
115. The school has a positive partnership with parents and carers. It listens to their views and works closely with them to ensure appropriate levels of support and guidance for their children. In the pre-inspection consultation and questionnaire parents expressed high levels of satisfaction in response to every question. An appropriate home-school agreement establishes mutual responsibilities and expectations.
116. The school takes good account of pupils' views through the school council. Their peers elect members and they ably represent their views, thoughts and opinions about a range of issues. Suggestions are given due consideration and some changes have resulted from the council's involvement.
117. The school's arrangements for the induction of pupils are successful. The under-fives settle quickly and they receive a high quality of pastoral care. The induction booklet provided for parents is a particularly good feature. Pupils who join the school at a later stage also settle well and transition arrangements for those in Y6 are effective. A co-ordinated programme of visits and shared information prepares them well so that they look forward with confidence to the next phase in their education.

118. Good quality personal support and guidance is offered to pupils. Members of staff know pupils well and respond quickly and sympathetically to their needs. The school's framework for PSE is consistently implemented and is well reflected in the very positive relationships between pupils and adults. This is a notable characteristic of the school.
119. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and there is a first-day response to any absence. The requirements for recording absence are met, but the monitoring procedures are not as rigorously applied to children of non-statutory age where attendance is sometimes sporadic. However, the school seeks to maintain parental awareness of their responsibilities in helping to ensure good attendance and punctuality, for example through its newsletters.
120. Pupils' behaviour and performance is appropriately monitored. Good achievement, behaviour and examples of courtesy and kindness to others are recognised and rewarded through a weekly 'celebration' assembly.
121. The school is diligent in assuring the healthy development, safety and wellbeing of pupils. Appropriate risk assessment procedures are implemented and members of staff have received training in First Aid. The provision made to promote the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle is a good feature. A successful breakfast club is in place and healthy eating is encouraged.
122. The GB has endorsed an appropriate policy for child protection and the procedures followed are in line with guidance provided by the local education authority (LEA). However, the details of designated officers and procedures within the school are not specified as part of the policy. The head teacher has received appropriate training about child protection and is diligent in ensuring members of staff are reminded of their responsibilities in this regard.
123. Procedures for the early identification of SEN are good. Following identification, pupils' achievement and progress are systematically monitored. The procedures followed are in line with the Code of Practice. An appropriate register is maintained and parents are kept well informed; they are encouraged to attend reviews and support their child's level of achievement at the relevant stages of support.
124. Pupils are provided with appropriate IEPs that give helpful information to support progress towards targets. These are stated in observable, measurable terms that are regularly monitored and reviewed. However, there is little evidence that the targets and strategies identified in IEPs are taken fully into account when class work is being planned.
125. The provision of support in small groups, often delivered by a LSA, makes a significant contribution to the programmes of work. These sessions often focus well on identified targets for improvement.
126. Appropriate procedures are in place to support pupils whose behaviour may impede their progress and that of others. The school is particularly successful in promoting good behaviour.

127. The quality of provision to promote equal opportunities is good. The school takes appropriate account of pupils' differing backgrounds and needs and with the support of relevant agencies, where necessary, endeavours to ensure appropriate levels of support and guidance. For example, this is evident in the additional support provided for pupils with linguistic difficulties.
128. The school is proactive in promoting gender equality and challenging stereotypical choices and expectations. Its policies and procedures seek to promote tolerance, respect, kindness, fairness and acceptance of difference so that, irrespective of gender, social, ethnic or linguistic background pupils are treated equally.
129. The school is aware of its responsibilities to promote good race relations. It has an appropriate policy and action plan, including suitable measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, bullying, discrimination and all forms of harassment.
130. An appropriate disability equality scheme is in place. This demonstrates the reasonable adjustments to be made in order to improve access to the curriculum and the premises. However, the GB recognises the innate problems of the site for wheel chair users as the school is built on a steep hillside.
131. Through appropriate policies and plans to promote awareness of diversity pupils are encouraged to recognise, value and respect the diversity of people and cultures. The school's approach is exemplified through displays, circle time activities and school assemblies.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

132. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. The inspection team awarded one grade lower as standards have dipped since the last inspection and recent improvements in standards and provision are not yet securely embedded.
133. Leadership is successful in providing clear direction through positive values in the pastoral aspects of provision. The school's aims are clearly reflected in its caring, supportive and purposeful ethos. Day-to-day managerial arrangements and routines are well known and securely established with effective teamwork among the staff.
134. There are both strengths and shortcomings in educational leadership. The strategic organisation of the school, together with the impact of recent training, is successful in promoting improvements in learning and teaching, although some variations remain. The leadership role of most teachers impacts well in this regard.
135. There is strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and enabling pupils to achieve their potential. The school's success in meeting its goals for improvement

is variable. This in part results from a lack of sufficiently detailed strategic planning to help ensure initiatives are embedded.

136. The school takes appropriate account of national and local priorities. There is currently a clear focus on raising standards and, through its links with partner schools and the community, the school is alert to the need to continue to raise pupils' aspirations.
137. Based on a range of assessment information the school sets suitably challenging end of key stage targets for attainment, but its success in meeting these targets is variable.
138. The arrangements for teachers' performance management are in line with statutory requirements. In addition, through discussions, the head teacher appraises the professional needs of members of staff and uses the information appropriately to promote their professional development.
139. The GB is strongly supportive of the school. Discussion with governors and documentary evidence indicates that it is over reliant on information provided by the school. Its role as a critical partner in setting the school's strategic direction and in monitoring the effectiveness of provision remains at an early stage of development.
140. The GB is successful in meeting its statutory obligations and is well supported by the LEA and the head teacher in setting and monitoring the school's annual budget.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

141. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. This is because the inspection team found shortcomings in the rigour of self-evaluation and the effectiveness of planning for improvement over time.
142. The school is well informed about performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers each have several subject areas of responsibility and are becoming more knowledgeable about standards across the school, but the use made of data and other assessments to plan for improvement is underdeveloped.
143. The framework for self-evaluation recently used by the school is a good basis for further development. The self-evaluation report is a comprehensive document and identifies a range of strengths and shortcomings. The inspection team agreed with the school's self-valuation in key questions three and four, but awarded one grade lower in key questions one, two, five six and seven.
144. The head teacher undertakes lesson monitoring and teachers produce subject reviews that contribute to the SDP. However, these procedures are not yet sufficiently based on first hand evidence of standards.

145. The views of pupils, staff and other interested parties, including parents and governors, are taken into account on a day-to-day basis and through formal meetings and occasional questionnaires. However, such arrangements are not formalised within an established process of self-evaluation.
146. The role of teachers in monitoring and evaluating standards of work is developing well; they gain a sound overview and identify areas to be developed. The head teacher supports governors well in understanding the school's strengths and needs.
147. The SDP sets an appropriate range of goals that address both school and national priorities; these have appropriate success criteria and timescales. The SDP is reviewed annually and new targets set.
148. Adequate resources are allocated to support the priorities identified in the SDP and the school has been successful in obtaining additional funding to raise standards in literacy and numeracy; this has had a positive impact.
149. Since the last inspection standards have improved in English, science and ICT in KS2; they are maintained in the under-fives, but shortcomings remain in KS1. Compared with 2003 there is an overall decline in the school's performance. However, this inspection reveals the positive impact of recent good work in improving provision and raising standards in some classes.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

150. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. This is because the use of resources is not always fully effective.
151. There are sufficient experienced and suitably qualified teachers and support staff who possess appropriate expertise to teach all aspects of the curriculum. The practitioner to pupil ratio is good. The small number of administrative and ancillary staff make a positive contribution to the school's ethos and the LSAs enhance learning well.
152. The use made of resources for workforce re-modelling is effective and provides continuity in teaching for pupils. Teachers make good use of the non-teaching time provided for planning, preparation and assessment tasks. In addition appropriate time is provided to reduce the impact of a range of tasks in accordance with statutory requirements.
153. Learning resources are well cared for and readily accessible to pupils and they meet the demands of their experiences well. They are of a good standard and enhance the quality of work in most subjects. All classrooms have a computer and there is a well equipped computer suite. The library is newly refurbished and contains a range of attractive books in good condition.
154. The provision of accommodation is good and provides a suitable setting for effective learning and teaching. Good use is made of the outdoor learning environment for the

under-fives in particular. The buildings are enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work that celebrate their achievements. The caretaker ensures that the school and grounds are well kept. There is access to a nearby community field for sports.

155. At present the head teacher shares an office with the administrative assistant but this means there is nowhere private for her to meet parents or visitors. The school is to consider making minor changes in the use of space to create an office.
156. In the under-fives and in KS2 good use is made of the accommodation, but in KS1 insufficient use is made of the available classrooms and work areas. This reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of learning and makes it difficult to develop provision in line with foundation phase principles.
157. The total time available for lessons in KS2 is below that recommended by the WAG. The length of lesson periods is uneven in both key stages and this sometimes contributes to a slow pace of learning. This also contributes to variable standards and reduces the school's efficiency and effectiveness.
158. The organisation of classes and the deployment of members of staff are appropriate. Regular use is made of the hall, library and ICT suite but there is some variation in the extent to which ICT is used to support learning in KS1. Recent arrangements for the professional development of members of staff are beginning to have a positive impact although initiatives have yet to become securely established.
159. The school budget is carefully planned and financial resources are allocated in line with the school's main priorities. Some details of planned expenditure are included in the SDP and the provision of resources is reviewed annually. The most recent auditors' report in May 2009 made a number of recommendations to strengthen the school's financial procedures and the school's response indicate that prompt action has been taken to resolve the issues identified.
160. Taking account of current improvements in standards in KS2, the maintenance of good overall standards in the under-fives and weighing these factors against a decline in the school's performance in both key stages since the last inspection, the school's effectiveness has reduced overall in recent years. However, the positive impact of the current provision on standards places the school in a stronger position to demonstrate effective value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under fives (Foundation Phase)

Overall Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity

Nursery: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

162. Children of both nursery and reception age make good progress in personal and social development. They relate well to one another and play well together in both pairs and in small groups. They take turns well and understand the need to wait for their turn when playing a game. Reception children concentrate particularly well on a given task. Almost all are purposefully occupied throughout the sessions.
163. All children develop appropriate independence. They select equipment to play with on the carpet, put their own aprons on for messy work and wash their hands when dirty and before eating their snack. A majority of children help to tidy up at the end of the session and take care to put things away in their correct places.
164. Children listen and respond to stories from other cultures, from the Bible and from other religions. Their celebrations of St David's Day help them develop awareness of the traditions of Wales.

Shortcomings

165. There are no important shortcomings.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Nursery: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Reception: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

166. Both nursery and reception children develop their skills in speaking and listening, often from a low base. Nearly all make good progress during their time in the nursery. Most converse simply and respond appropriately to others. All listen

attentively during story time and most listen to and follow instructions well. During circle and story time many offer their own ideas and ask questions.

167. Both nursery and reception children recall and join in with familiar songs and nursery rhymes and enjoy learning new ones. They sit quietly to listen with enjoyment to stories and at least half recall and retell the main features of a story they have heard. They enjoy mark making and a majority are able to make meaningful marks using a range of implements on appropriate surfaces. The more able in the nursery and most in reception identify initial phonic sounds and successfully pick out pictures with a given initial sound from a selection of three.

Shortcomings

168. Many children have a limited range of vocabulary and this restricts their speaking skills.

Mathematical development

Nursery: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

169. Most children enthusiastically join in familiar number songs and rhymes. Older ones try to show the correct number of fingers with increasing success as they sing. All join in counting together to ten and many older ones count a few objects reliably.
170. Children in reception and more able ones in nursery explore liquids by filling and emptying containers. With the support of adults they use the terms full and empty correctly and begin to recognise the concepts of more and less.

Shortcomings

171. There are no important shortcomings.

Welsh language development

Nursery: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

172. Nursery and reception children respond well to a wide range of Welsh words and phrases used within daily routines. They demonstrate through their positive responses that they understand more words than they can speak. Almost all join in singing familiar Welsh songs and rhymes well and a majority learn appropriate

vocabulary through contributing to daily discussions about the weather. All confidently respond to greetings and most use Welsh during registration.

173. Most make good attempts to copy the speaking modelled by adults and many older ones independently name colours. Older and younger ones confidently join in chanting numbers to ten.

Shortcomings

174. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Nursery: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

175. Children understand that living things should be treated with care and concern and that there is a need to care for the environment. Through planting and observing the growth of plants, for example, they have a good awareness that plants need water and light to grow. They begin to develop a sense of time. They are aware of the days of the week and of differences in the seasons of the year.
176. Nursery and reception children enjoy the many different activities provided for them. They investigate and confidently explore new experiences both indoors and outdoors and are eager to find out more. For example, they experiment with different bubble making implements and explore the effects of blowing hard and gently.

Shortcomings

177. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Nursery: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

178. Most children handle small equipment with appropriate dexterity. They use mark-making tools and equipment with increasing competence, for example when modelling and shaping dough or making marks with paint.
179. Nearly all children follow instructions well, for example to perform 'moving on water' movements and a very few use push and slide movements well. Most make good use of space when participating in physical activities in the outdoor area. They

develop awareness of their bodies and move with increasing control and co-ordination. Older children pedal around the outdoor area on bicycles with increasing control.

Shortcomings

180. There are no important shortcomings.

Creative development

Nursery: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

181. Both nursery and reception children work effectively with paint and other creative media. They use a variety of techniques with increasing skill and understanding. Through performing creative movements and action songs, many develop a good awareness of rhythm and sounds. They sing a variety of songs and rhymes demonstrating a good knowledge of the words and content. They have fun when exploring rhythm in music and they use a range of musical instruments well to make different sounds. They understand loud and quiet sounds, play quickly or slowly and almost all stop on command. Through role play they increasingly develop their imagination and confidence.

Shortcomings

182. There are no important shortcomings.

English

Key stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Good features

183. In KS1 most pupils steadily develop their speaking skills in a range of contexts including role play. They listen well for short periods and a few confidently ask and answer questions. For example, they recall the questions they prepared for Florence Nightingale and appear confident speakers and listeners in structured situations.

184. In KS2 the majority of pupils develop good skills in speaking and listening. For example, younger ones confidently discuss the issues raised in stories and older ones distinguish between open and closed questions as they structure their plan for an interview. They express themselves with conviction and extend their vocabulary well.

185. In KS1 most pupils steadily develop an appropriate awareness of phonics and begin to use this knowledge to decode unfamiliar words with increasing confidence. They read from a suitable range of books and enjoy talking about the texts they have read.
186. In KS2 pupils maintain good progress in reading and by the end of Y6 most read accurately and with increasing understanding and fluency. They have a good understanding of the features of fiction and non-fiction texts and they distinguish between different genres and confidently express preferences, such as for favourite authors.
187. In KS1 pupils practise letter formation, begin to recognise the spelling patterns in words and become familiar with the conventions of writing, such as how to structure a sentence. They describe accurately the events and characters from stories that have been read to them. A few older pupils write well structured sentences and make increasing use of punctuation, including speech, explanation and question marks.
188. In KS2 pupils extend the range of their writing to include letters, stories, recounts, persuasive texts and factual pieces. In Y3 and Y4 most pay close attention to behaviour and characteristics when writing portraits of characters and in Y5 and Y6 most have a good understanding of connectives and develop a good understanding of how to improve their writing as they plan, draft and re-draft their work.
189. The scrutiny of pupils' previous work reveals a range of good quality extended writing, especially in Y5 and Y6. Pupils gain competence in a number of different styles. The majority structure their writing well, know how to record direct speech and organise their writing in paragraphs. Across the key stage handwriting and presentation skills develop well.

Shortcomings

190. In KS1 a minority of pupils have yet to develop the skills of active listening. They use a limited range of vocabulary and lack the skills of taking turns to speak, such as in a group or class situation.
191. A minority of pupils in KS1 do not read a sufficient range of texts and use a limited number of strategies to help to them gain fluency in reading.
192. Progress in spelling and writing skills is too slow for most pupils in KS1.

Science

Key stage 1 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Good features

193. In Y1 and Y2 pupils have a good knowledge of the main parts of a plant and readily identify the necessary conditions for plant growth. They acquire a good understanding of the life cycle of a butterfly and through observation find out about the development of young chicks.
194. The scrutiny of previous work and discussions with representative pupils in Y1 and Y2 confirms that they have a good understanding of the variables in planning an investigation. They make sensible predictions about possible outcomes; for example they know that materials can change when heated or cooled and that they float or sink.
195. Pupils in Y1 and Y2 have a basic understanding of a simple electrical circuit and a few know that using two batteries will cause the light bulb to shine more brightly. They know which appliances at home and in school are electrical and match objects to the correct source of electricity.
196. In Y3 and Y4 most pupils show a good awareness of gravity and of the force that is exerted in pushing and pulling objects. They understand that friction slows the movement of objects and that forces cause things to quicken, slow down and change direction.
197. Pupils in Y5 and Y6 have a good knowledge of the variety of plants in a woodland habitat and understand the process of pollination. They have good skills in using a 'key' to help them identify plants and minibeasts.
198. Previous work and discussions with pupils in Y3 and Y4 confirm they have a good understanding of light and shadows and are knowledgeable about the main organs of the human body. They develop the skills of investigation well. In Y5 and Y6 pupils confidently describe different habitats, show a good understanding of the principles of fair testing and give examples of their predictions when undertaking investigations.

Shortcomings

199. There are no important shortcomings.

Information communications technology

Key stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

Good features

200. A few pupils in Y1 and Y2 demonstrate good mouse control and develop appropriate keyboard skills. They select font style and size independently and know how to edit text on the screen.
201. When using a graphics program a minority of pupils in Y1 and Y2 select different tools and colours to create an image with appropriate independence.

202. With support pupils in Y1 and Y2 work well in pairs using a database program to enter information about their peers' eye colour and they follow commands to create simple graphs that they print.
203. Pupils in Y3 and Y4 log on to the computer system confidently and open personal folders to retrieve previously saved work. They modify text confidently to create a desired effect and successfully select and paste pictures into text.
204. Pupils in Y3 and Y4 use a multimedia program well to present research findings about different aspects of Roman life and they skilfully use a graphics package to create a picture in the style of an established artist.
205. Pupils in Y5 and Y6 confidently use selected internet sites to research cross curricular topics and show good skills in presenting their findings in a variety of ways including graphs, tables, simple spreadsheets and annotated reports.

Shortcomings

206. In KS1 many pupils' basic keyboard and mouse control skills together with their skills in following on-screen instructions and saving, printing and retrieving their work are underdeveloped.
207. In KS1 many pupils' skills in word processing, using modelling and simulation programs and in handling information are insufficiently developed.

History

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

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

Good features

208. A majority of pupils in Y1 and Y2 demonstrate a secure knowledge of historical terms such as 'in the past' and 'a long time ago.' They understand that Samuel Pepys' diary is an important source of historical information and they show a good sense of chronology when placing pictures of different modes of transport in order.
209. In discussions a few pupils recall numerous facts about the work of Florence Nightingale. For example, they confidently speak about conditions in the hospital in Scutari during the Crimean War. They also speak knowledgeably about how the Great Fire of London started in Pudding Lane and describe well the characteristics of homes and how people lived in the 17th century.
210. A majority of pupils in KS2 have a good knowledge of the mining industry in Wales following a visit to 'Big Pit.' In particular, they demonstrate a good understanding of how different children's lives were in those days.

211. Across KS2 many pupils know much about the Tudor period. They portray differences between the lives of the rich and poor through role play and confidently describe domestic life when talking about their models of Tudor houses. They also have a secure knowledge about clothes and food and the contrast between the lives of the rich and poor in Roman times.
212. Discussion with older pupils confirms that they understand a great deal from their study of the Second World War. They have a secure knowledge of its dates and know much about what happened to evacuees from interviewing the residents at a local old people's home. They speak knowledgeably about the Blitz and have a mature insight into the effects of the Holocaust from their study of the diary of Anne Frank.
213. The scrutiny of previous work indicates that older pupils' ability to communicate their knowledge and understanding of the past is well developed. They use primary and secondary sources well and develop good enquiry skills.

Shortcomings

214. There are no important shortcomings in pupils' historical knowledge and skills relating to the periods they study, but in KS1 knowledge of Welsh history is underdeveloped.

Religious education

Key stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

215. Pupils in KS1 listen to some stories from the Bible and are aware of some Christian traditions. Visits to local places of worship and visits from clergy support their understanding of the current work of the Christian church.
216. In Y3 and Y4 pupils begin to make personal responses to show their understanding of the ways in which people follow their faith through their studies on Christian pilgrimage and the rules of Buddhism.
217. Pupils in Y5 and Y6 briefly consider the teachings of Christianity, Sikhism and Judaism and have a developing understanding of the effects that faith has had on the lives of individuals. For example, as part of their studies into the Second World War they research into the life of Anne Frank and Corrie Ten Boom.
218. Pupils in Y5 and Y6 show a good understanding of the need for rules as they think about commitment and responsibility.

Shortcomings

219. Pupils in KS1 have very limited experience and understanding of the importance of religion in the lives of believers and seldom reflect sufficiently upon the value of relationships or consider their position in the worldwide family.
220. In both key stages pupils do not study different religions in sufficient depth to enable them to develop sufficient understanding of how faith impacts on the lives of individuals.

School's response to the inspection

221. The GB, head teacher and staff welcome the inspection report and note its findings.
222. Governors are pleased the inspection team identified the following:
- the school provides a broad and relevant curriculum and a caring supportive learning environment;
 - in KS2 standards have improved in English, science and ICT since the last inspection;
 - good emphasis is placed on basic skills in English and mathematics and on developing key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT;
 - much good work in promoting awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship;
 - effective partnerships with parents, other schools and the local community;
 - the provision for pupils' PSE, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good;
 - a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visitors and educational visits enriches learning well;
 - there are many good features in the quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils and
 - the school strongly fosters positive attitudes to learning and nurtures the skills of independence, inter-dependence and perseverance.
223. The school's post-inspection action plan will be drawn up by staff and governors and will address all the recommendations of the report. A copy of the plan will be sent to all parents. The governor's annual report to parents will indicate the progress we are making in response to the inspectors' recommendations.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Blaentillery Primary School
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Bridge Terrace Cwmtillery Abertillery Blaenau Gwent
Postcode	NP13 1LD
Telephone number	01495 212412

Head teacher	Mrs. Judith Cleaves
Date of appointment	1st September 1997
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr. Glyn Smith
Registered inspector	Mr. Michael T. Ridout
Dates of inspection	8 th – 9 th June 2009

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	11	9	7	14	6	10	10	8	75

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	4	2	5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	15 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	n/a
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	19
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.25 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer	87.0	90.7	90.7
Autumn	90.7	87.9	92.5
Spring	88.5	89.2	91.0

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	31
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 2008		Number of pupils in Y2	8
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of key stage 1 was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included			
Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment			
In the school	75.0	In Wales	80.7

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008					Number of pupils in Y6:	16				
Percentage of pupils at each level										
			D	N	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	50.0	43.8	6.3
		National	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	25.0	56.3	18.8
		National	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	75.0	25.0
		National	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.5	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	50.0	In Wales	75.5

D represents pupils who have been disapplied under sections 364 - 367 of the Education Act, or pupils for whom teachers were unable to provide an assessment.

N represents pupils not awarded a level for reasons other than disapplication.

W represents pupils who are 'working towards' level 1, but have not yet achieved the standards needed for level 1.

N.B. The general expectation is that the majority of 11 year olds will attain level 4.

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Four inspectors, together with the school's nominee and a peer assessor appointed by Estyn, spent the equivalent of six inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- twenty lessons or part lessons, across areas of learning and NC subjects;
- registrations, assemblies, acts of collective worship and a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

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

The team also considered:

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

After the inspection, the team held meetings with the head teacher, the staff and governors. A representative of the LEA attended the meetings with governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr. Michael T. Ridout Registered Inspector	Context Summary Recommendations Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve? Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment? Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management? Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards? Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources? English and science.
Mrs Mary Dyas Team inspector	Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? Assessment aspect of KQ2. Under-fives, information communications technology and religious education.
Mrs. Branwen Llewelyn Jones Team inspector	Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? Resources aspect of KQ7. History.
Mrs. Rhiannon Boardman Lay inspector	Aspects of Key Questions: 1, 3 and 4.
Mr. Robert Williams Peer Assessor	Observing lessons and taking part in discussions.
Mrs. Judith Cleaves Head teacher and nominee	Liaison with inspectors, contributions to team discussions and the school's response.

Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to thank the governing body, staff, parents and pupils of the school for their co-operation, assistance and courtesy before and during the inspection.

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