

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Blaen-y-maes Primary School
Broughton Avenue
Swansea
SA5 5LW**

School Number: 6702082

Date of Inspection: 23/02/09

by

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Blaen-y-maes 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 Blaen-y-maes Primary School took place between 23/02/09 and 25/02/09. 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. Blaen-y-maes Primary is a community school for boys and girls aged three to eleven years. In total there are 167 full-time equivalent (fte) pupils on roll organised in eight classes. Thirty-two children attend the nursery part-time and there are 26 children in reception. The average class size is 21. There are 10.6 fte teachers, including the head teacher and one part-time teacher. There are ten learning support assistants (LSA).
2. The school is situated in Blaen-y-maes and serves a large housing estate on the outskirts of the City of Swansea. The majority of homes are local authority or social housing. The school describes the locality it serves as economically and socially disadvantaged. The area is a designated Communities First area.
3. Around 76 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is well above national and local averages. There is a high level of mobility with some attending the school for a short time. A small number are 'looked after' by the local authority. There are a few from ethnic minorities for whom English is an additional language. The first languages spoken include Urdu, Punjabi, Turkish, Chinese and French. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. English is the predominant language spoken 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 overall. Subsequent assessments indicate a significant number, around 51 per cent have additional learning needs (ALN). This is a higher proportion to that found in most primary schools. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN).
5. Since the last inspection in April 2003 the number on roll has declined but the number of staff and classes has not changed significantly. Some improvements, including the outdoor provision for the under-fives have been made and parts of the school, currently in a poor condition, are soon to be refurbished.

School's priorities and targets

6. The school states in its vision, which is implemented through a small number of whole school goals, that:

'We aspire that all our children become confident, secure, caring individuals who achieve personal successes. They are given every opportunity to achieve their full potential, develop a love of learning, acquire skills to become life long learners and the ability to make informed choices.'
7. The school development plan (SDP) for 2008 – 2009 includes targets to:
 - develop a skills based curriculum;
 - continue to improve links with the community;
 - encourage pupils to be reflective learners;
 - improve assessment through implementing 'skills ladders';
 - improve further levels of attendance;
 - refurbish parts of the building; and
 - improve school décor and the quality of displays to celebrate pupils' success.

Summary

8. The recently appointed head teacher successfully inspires a renewed sense of direction within Blaen-y-maes Primary School. Although educational standards are variable a majority of pupils build well on their prior achievements. Improved attitudes to learning are evident among most pupils and they respond well to the school's ethos of care and its expectation of success for all.

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 3
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

9. The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation in key questions four and five and awards one grade lower in key questions one, two, three, six and seven.

Standards

10. In 2008 the results of the Key stage 1 (KS1) National Curriculum (NC) teacher assessments were well below national figures in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools having more than 32 per cent free school meals, standards were also well below average.
11. In Key stage 2 (KS2) the 2008 results were well below national figures in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools they were below average in mathematics and well below in English and science.
12. In both key stages results have remained at broadly similar levels since the last inspection in 2003.
13. In forty-four lessons or parts of lessons, in the subjects and areas of learning inspected, standards of achievement were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
-	52%	41%	7%	-

14. These figures represent a decline compared with the last inspection in 2003. They are well below the figures published in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) Annual Report for 2007-2008, where standards in primary schools in Wales were reported to be Grade 2 in 84 per cent of lessons and Grade 1 in 12 per cent.

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

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

16. 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.

17. Children under-five make a good start in acquiring key skills in literacy, numeracy and information communications (ICT) and in developing bilingual competence.

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

Under-fives (Foundation Phase)	Overall Grade 2	
	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Grade 3	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 3
Science	Grade 3	Grade 3
Art and design	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

19. Levels of achievement for many pupils are hampered by their limited competence in the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT.

20. A majority of pupils steadily develop bilingual skills from a low base.

21. The under-fives make good overall progress but across both key stages the picture is mixed. The good progress made in some KS2 classes is often from a low starting point and is in some cases linked to pupils joining the school at different times.

22. In general, the high proportion of pupils with ALN make appropriate progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans (IEP). The progress of the few more able pupils is not always in line with their capabilities.

23. Behaviour is good overall and where lessons are interesting the majority demonstrate enthusiastic attitudes to learning. However, the development of pupils' independent learning skills is at an early stage of development.

24. Levels of attendance average 90.5 per cent for the last twelve months. This represents a significant increase since the time of the last inspection, but the annual rate remains below the national average and figures for similar schools. A minority of pupils are regularly late and their arrival often causes disruption to lessons.
25. Across the school pupils' personal, social and wider development progresses well. They demonstrate a good understanding of moral values, develop social skills well, have an appropriate understanding of equal opportunities and are increasingly aware of diversity in their own and the wider community.
26. Pupils are well prepared for effective participation in the local community but their awareness of the workplace is less well developed.

The quality of education and training

27. In forty-seven lessons or parts of lessons the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	49%	28%	13%	2%

28. These figures represent a decline compared with the last inspection in 2003. They are well 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.
29. Throughout the school members of staff establish good working relationships with pupils. Teaching in reception and Y5 is good and sometimes very good.
30. There is wide variation in the quality of teaching across both key stages. The most effective teaching is characterised by high expectations, rigorous planning and a brisk pace. Where teaching is less effective there are shortcomings in planning, the focus of teaching and the organisation of learning.
31. Members of staff have a good range of experience and subject knowledge. Recent training helps to ensure an increasing understanding of current developments in teaching.
32. The school is developing its lesson planning, but the extent to which teaching monitors pupils' progress and adapts provision to meet changing needs is better developed in some classes than others. The provision in Y5 is an exemplar.
33. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and discuss it with them, but learners' understanding of the purpose of assessment and their involvement in planning their own progress and improvement are at an early stage of development.
34. There are good arrangements for reporting to parents. The school meets statutory requirements for recording and reporting the achievements of pupils but there are shortcomings in the rigour of assessment and its use in improving learning. Regular assessments are implemented in English, mathematics and science but the provision in other subjects is at an early stage of development.

35. The curriculum includes sound overall provision to meet the range of pupils' needs and interests. The provision for the under-fives is firmly based on the Foundation Phase outcomes. Across both key stages the curriculum is broad and generally well balanced, but appropriate progression and continuity in pupils' learning is not always assured.
36. There is strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics, but opportunities to develop key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are seldom fully developed.
37. A very good feature of the curriculum is the provision made to broaden pupils' experiences, including the contribution of visitors, educational visits and a good range of extra-curricular clubs.
38. Pupils' personal, social and moral development is promoted successfully through a recently introduced framework for personal and social education (PSE). The moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' development are well promoted.
39. Daily assemblies include an appropriate act of collective worship, which meets statutory requirements and celebrates pupils' achievements well. However, opportunities to promote spiritual development are seldom developed fully within school life.
40. The school's partnership with parents, the community and other schools is good. It places strong emphasis on issues of community regeneration.
41. The school is successfully raising pupils' awareness of the importance of sustainable development in the world they live in, but provides only limited opportunities for work related education and entrepreneurial skills.
42. The attention given to ensuring pupils' well-being is a particularly strong feature. There are many good features in the quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils.
43. The quality of provision for the large number of pupils with ALN is good. The nurture groups are a particularly strong feature.
44. The provision to promote equal opportunities is good. The school takes good account of pupils' differing social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds and works hard to provide appropriate guidance to help ensure they are well integrated.

Leadership and management

45. The head teacher and senior staff, with the strong support of governors, are successful in establishing a renewed direction for the school this academic year. Positive values and key aims are clearly stated so that members of staff increasingly understand the purpose of initiatives being implemented.
46. The governing body (GB) is loyal to and strongly supportive of the school. The establishment of links between designated governors and curriculum leaders provides a good basis to increase the effectiveness of governors as a critical partner.

47. Although a systematic programme of monitoring is in place, self-evaluation is not yet securely based on first-hand evidence. This limits the impact on quality and standards.
48. Since September 2008 the head teacher has put in place a good range of initiatives to improve the quality of provision and raise standards of achievement. It is too soon to judge the impact of these initiatives. However, the effectiveness of planning for improvement since the previous inspection in 2003 is limited.
49. The school is well staffed and generally well resourced, but the effective use of ICT resources is not always assured. Financial resources are matched well to the school's key priorities
50. Since the last inspection there is a trend of relatively low standards and limited evidence of educational improvements. However, taking into account recent changes in educational leadership and the response of pupils, the school provides sound value for money in a challenging local context.

Recommendations

51. The head teacher, staff and governors, with the support of appropriate agencies should:
 - R1 improve progress and raise standards in subjects and areas of learning where shortcomings are identified;
 - R2 improve pupils' competence in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT;
 - R3 continue to improve attendance and punctuality;
 - R4 continue to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and ensure the effective use of assessment in planning and improving learning;
 - R5 continue to develop strategic management, prioritise key targets in the school development plan and link action planning and monitoring to first hand evidence in order to ensure that staff training and curricular initiatives become embedded.

Recommendations three and four are included 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

52. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school judged this key question Grade 2. The inspection did not find sufficient evidence of good standards to support the grade awarded by the school. Shortcomings are identified in English, mathematics and science.
53. In 2008 the results of the KS1 NC teacher assessments were well below national figures in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, having more than 32 per cent free school meals, standards were also well below average in all three subjects.
54. In KS2 the 2008 results were well below national figures in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, they were below average in mathematics and well below average in English and science.
55. The school was successful in exceeding its targets for end of key stage attainment in 2008. Around sixty per cent of last year's Y6 pupils received their entire primary education at the school. The remainder were on roll for a much shorter period and this impacts on the school's overall results.
56. In both key stages results have remained at broadly similar levels since the last inspection in 2003. These figures reflect the high proportion of pupils with ALN and the low starting point for a significant percentage of pupils when they first attend school. This is evident in baseline assessments in nursery and reception that show the full range of attainments is represented in each cohort. Recent figures in reception show an improving trend in attainment.
57. The school's NC results in both key stages indicate limited improvement since the last inspection in 2003. The most recent results indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining expected levels in English, mathematics and science is about the same as in 2003.
58. Analysis of NC results over recent years shows an established trend of difference in attainment on the basis of gender. Girls outperform boys by a significant margin. In both key stages there is some improvement in the most recent figures.
59. In forty-four lessons or parts of lessons in the subjects and areas of learning inspected standards of achievement were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
-	52%	41%	7%	-

60. These figures represent a decline compared with the last inspection in 2003. They are well below the figures published in HMCI's Annual Report for 2007-2008 where standards in primary schools in Wales were reported to be Grade 2 in 84 per cent of lessons and Grade 1 in 12 per cent.

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

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

62. 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.

63. The under-fives make a sound start in the acquisition of basic and key skills in literacy, numeracy, and ICT. Children in nursery steadily build up their skills and in reception many achieve well. Initial competence in bilingual skills develops well, particularly in reception.

64. Overall standards for the under-fives and in the five subjects inspected in both key stages are judged as follows:

Under-fives (Foundation Phase)	Overall Grade 2	
	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Grade 3	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 3	Grade 3
Science	Grade 3	Grade 3
Art and design	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

65. The first hand evidence of inspection matches well the results of NC teacher assessments in English, mathematics and science. Compared with the judgements reported in the last inspection, good overall standards in the under-fives and in art and music are maintained. The current judgements in English and mathematics represent a decline.

66. Achievement for many pupils is hampered by limited skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT. This is particularly evident in KS1 and, although progress improves well in KS2, the level of competence of a majority of pupils in using key skills remains limited.

67. A majority of pupils steadily develop bilingual skills from a low base. Many show that they understand more words and phrases than they can speak but the majority has limited oracy skills.

68. Pupils achieve similar standards regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. The small number of 'looked after' pupils and those whose first language is neither English nor Welsh make generally good progress towards the personal and educational goals set for them.

69. Progress is variable as pupils move through the school. The under-fives make good overall progress. Across both key stages the picture is mixed. There is evidence of good progress in some KS2 classes. This is often from a low starting point. There is good evidence of the positive impact of intervention strategies, such as 'nurture groups' and reading skills programmes.
70. In general, the high proportion of pupils with ALN make appropriate progress towards the targets set in their IEPs. Progress is good where pupils benefit from structured programmes, often in the context of small withdrawal groups.
71. Assessments indicate the attainments of a few pupils are above average, but the progress these pupils make is not always in line with their capabilities.
72. In both key stages most pupils' understanding of their learning tasks, including their awareness of targets and assessment strategies as a means of helping them to understand how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve, are at an early stage of development.
73. By the end of KS2 pupils have made good progress towards fulfilling their potential and are well prepared for the next stage of their education in creative subjects, including art and music. However, the level of competence of many in basic and key skills falls short of adequate preparation for the next stage of their education.
74. The foundations of good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning are promoted well with the under-fives. Children progress well in their personal development, they behave well and a majority learn to work with appropriate independence.
75. Across both key stages, where lessons successfully engage pupils' interest, they demonstrate enthusiastic attitudes to learning. Once inspired, most are well motivated and work hard with good effort and sustained concentration. However, where lessons lack sufficient challenge and the pace of work is slow, the level of interest drops.
76. Behaviour is good overall. All but a very few pupils in KS1 and KS2 move around the school in an orderly manner and are quiet and attentive during whole school occasions, such as assemblies. There is some boisterous behaviour during playtimes and, although the dining room is noisy, most pupils behave sensibly. Most older ones behave well in lessons but in some younger classes a minority sometimes disrupts learning for the majority.
77. Levels of attendance average 90.5 per cent for the last twelve months. This represents a significant increase since the time of the last inspection. Attendance rates rose further to 92.8 per cent in the autumn of 2008, but even so the annual rate remains below the national average and figures for similar schools. A minority of pupils are regularly late and their arrival often causes disruption to lessons.
78. A minority of older pupils in KS1 and younger pupils in KS2 sometimes find it difficult to work with an appropriate level of independence. Their acquisition of independent learning skills, including decision making and problem solving, are at an early stage of development. Older pupils in KS2 demonstrate an increasing ability to plan and organise their work effectively. Their study skills develop well from a low base.

79. Across the school pupils' personal, social and wider development progresses well. The majority work well together and learn to show consideration for others. They demonstrate a good understanding of moral values, such as honesty and fairness, and develop social skills well. Most are polite and courteous to staff and visitors.
80. Most pupils demonstrate, in their words and deeds, an appropriate understanding of equal opportunity issues as a natural part of everyday life in their school. They are increasingly aware of the diverse nature of their own and the wider community and show a sound understanding and appreciation of different religious beliefs and cultural traditions.
81. Pupils are well prepared for effective participation in the local community, but their awareness of the workplace is less well developed.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

82. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school judged this key question Grade 2. Although school leaders are aware of the wide variation in teaching, this was not stated in the self-evaluation report.
83. In forty-seven lessons or parts of lessons the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	49%	28%	13%	2%

84. These figures represent a decline compared with the last inspection in 2003. They are well 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.
85. Teaching in reception and Y5 is good and sometimes very good. The LSAs make a positive contribution to learning and teaching throughout the school. This is particularly evident with the under-fives and the nurture group.
86. There is wide variation in the quality of teaching across both key stages. The most effective lessons are characterised by high expectations, rigorous planning and a brisk pace. Where lessons are less effective, there are shortcomings in planning, the focus of teaching and the organisation of learning.
87. Throughout the school members of staff establish good working relationships with pupils; this helps them to learn and enjoy their success in lessons. The strong emphasis placed on promoting equal opportunities and addressing issues of gender is a good feature.
88. Members of staff have a good range of experience and subject knowledge. Training

opportunities help to ensure an increasing knowledge of current developments in teaching. For the under-fives teaching is securely based on foundation phase principles, but across both key stages there is variation in confidence and competence in teaching key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. It is taking a little time for strategies, such as thinking and problem solving to become established.

89. Lesson planning often identifies appropriate objectives and in effective lessons these are shared with pupils in terms that they understand. In some cases this extends to discussion of the skills to be developed.
90. Taken overall, the emphasis placed on developing basic skills in English and mathematics is good. Teaching in the nurture groups is a good feature. However, the use of guided reading strategies to develop skills in literacy is not always fully effective in some younger classes.
91. Across the school there is a strong commitment to promoting bilingual skills. There is a good level of consistency in some classes but, although practice is developing well, the picture is mixed across both key stages.
92. The school is developing its lesson planning and good practice is evident in some classes. The frameworks used provide scope for evaluation, but the extent to which teaching monitors and reviews the progress of groups and individuals and adapts provision to meet changing needs is better developed in some classes than others. There are important shortcomings in some younger classes.
93. The provision in the Y5 class is an exemplar where planning and monitoring successfully ensures that learning meets individual needs. Marking and assessment for learning strategies are used well so that evaluations of progress inform the next steps in learning and teaching.
94. The school meets statutory requirements for recording and reporting the achievements of pupils. A range of data, including baseline and end of key stage teacher assessments, is analysed to check whether pupils make the expected progress during their time in school and to compare results with similar schools. The school is aware that boys perform less well than girls and it is adapting its provision accordingly.
95. Across the school strengths outweigh shortcomings in the rigour of assessment and its use in improving learning. A range of standardised tests is used appropriately to monitor pupils' progress and a recently introduced electronic tracking system is enabling the school to use data more effectively to plan for improvement.
96. Assessment tasks are implemented each half term in English, mathematics and science. Although these are correctly marked, the results are not linked to NC levels and records seldom identify clearly what pupils have achieved. The arrangements in other subjects are at an early stage of development.
97. There are suitable arrangements across a cluster of local schools to ensure the moderation of end of key stage teacher assessments. Furthermore, the school has recently introduced training to improve the accuracy of its teacher assessments.

98. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and discuss it with them. Written comments are positive, but seldom indicate ways to improve or identify what has been learned. Pupils' understanding of the purpose of assessment and their involvement in planning their own progress and improvement are at an early stage of development. In some classes, they evaluate work orally, but arrangements to set and review individual targets are not yet fully established.
99. There are good arrangements for reporting to parents that meet statutory requirements. The school encourages parents to attend meetings each term to discuss their child's progress. Annual reports are informative and meet the needs of parents very well. These include a visual representation of what pupils know, understand and can do in addition to the text. The school has recognised the need to include targets for improvement clearly in the text as well as by means of a grid.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

100. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school judged this key question Grade 2. Although the inspection team endorses the good initiatives being implemented, it finds there are shortcomings in some aspects of provision.
101. The school makes sound overall provision to meet the range of pupils' needs and interests. This provision is equally accessible to all pupils and is broadly in line with statutory requirements. The provision made for the under-fives and for pupils with ALN, especially when catered for in nurture groups, are particular features, but there are shortcomings in some classes in the quality and range of the learning experiences provided.
102. Planning for the revised curriculum in the Foundation Phase is developing well and the provision for the under-fives is clearly based on these principles. The learning experiences provided for nursery and reception age children are structured effectively and successfully meet their educational needs.
103. Across both key stages the curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. Appropriate schemes of work are in place in all NC subjects and religious education, but planning is not always sufficiently rigorous to ensure appropriate progression and continuity in pupils' learning.
104. In KS1 thematic planning is being developed with subject skills linked to the areas of learning in the Foundation Phase. In KS2 planning is being restructured around 'skills ladders' in the light of the latest curriculum orders. This work is at an early stage of development.
105. There is strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics. Planning is generally effective in KS2, but there is wide variation in KS1. The picture is similar in promoting key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Although key skills are identified in planning, opportunities to promote these are seldom fully developed across the curriculum.

106. A very good feature of the curriculum is the provision made to broaden pupils' experiences. Visitors to school include artists and writers and music, theatrical, and dance groups. A good range of lunch hour and after school clubs, including ICT, aikido, football, dance, cookery, gardening, recorder, percussion and choir are provided.
107. The curriculum is enriched through a varied programme of educational visits, including residential experiences at Ty Borfa and Llangrannog for pupils in Y5 and Y6. This provision makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' learning and social skills.
108. Pupils' personal, social and moral development is promoted successfully through a recently introduced framework for PSE. The provision includes circle time and is enhanced effectively by activities such as those provided by the police education liaison service.
109. The values that the school promotes are successful in providing a framework for good behaviour, consideration and respect to which pupils can aspire. In discussion, older pupils clearly indicate that they understand the difference between right and wrong.
110. Daily assemblies are broadly Christian in character and include an appropriate act of collective worship that is in line with statutory requirements and celebrates pupils' achievements well. However, opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development, for example, through guided reflection within the life and work of the school, are seldom developed fully.
111. Pupils develop their social skills effectively as a result of working regularly with retired professionals from the local community who act as volunteers. This has the additional benefit of helping pupils develop a greater respect for the contribution of older members of society.
112. Pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility for others. The 'playground pals' scheme ensures that conflicting views can be mediated successfully and that no pupil is without a friend at playtime. Members of the school council take their responsibility to represent their peers seriously. Parents' views expressed before the inspection, confirm that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.
113. Pupils' cultural awareness is developed well through participating in the Abertawe Festival and the St David's Day celebrations in the school and in other community concerts and performances. The cultures of pupils who have joined the school from other countries are celebrated with enthusiasm.
114. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is promoted effectively. A wide range of topics and school activities contribute well to pupils' understanding of Welsh culture and heritage. Bilingual signs are appropriately displayed around the school and most members of staff take up opportunities to promote the use of incidental Welsh in day-to-day activities, such as registration and assemblies.
115. The school's partnerships with the local community, the receiving secondary school,

the local cluster of primary schools and higher education institutions are effective and successfully enrich the life and work of the school. A good range of links with the community ensure that the school makes a valued contribution to the life of the local community and in turn is supported well by residents.

116. There are well developed transition arrangements with the receiving secondary school that help to ensure that pupils transfer to the next phase of their education with confidence. The school has established a mutually beneficial partnership with a local university and several further education institutions and provides training opportunities for student teachers and those pursuing vocational courses.
117. The school has no planned approach for the provision of work-related education. It does not have an established relationship with an education business partnership and, while it does have links with some business organisations, it is not making full use of these to enhance pupils' learning inside and outside the classroom.
118. The school actively tackles social disadvantage amongst its pupils by ensuring they all have an equal opportunity to participate and achieve in the daily life and work of the school. No pupil is prevented from participation in an activity for financial reasons. The school works diligently to ensure its pupils' life expectations are widened by proactively challenging issues of social or gender stereotyping.
119. Through a stimulating and interesting programme, introduced in September 2008, the school is successfully raising pupils' awareness of the importance of sustainable development in the world they live in. In this short time, the eco committee has introduced a range of initiatives involving recycling and reducing energy consumption. However, the school has yet to complete a whole school audit prior to ensuring that education for sustainable development and global citizenship is embedded across the curriculum.
120. The school provides only limited experiences for its pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills, such as problem solving and decision making, that will be essential in their future personal and working lives. Opportunities to develop the fruit tuck shop, involve the school council and eco committee and promote mini-enterprise schemes are missed.
121. The school places a strong emphasis on issues of community regeneration. This is evident for example, in the recent establishment of the 'Flying Start' initiative in the school. In the past the school has concentrated on the support and guidance of pupils and consequently initiatives to encourage them to take more responsibility for their own learning and to develop the skills and enthusiasm for learning throughout their lives have received a lower profile. The current head teacher recognises the need to promote lifelong learning skills more effectively.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

122. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. There are many good features in the quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils.

123. The school plans and manages its care arrangements for pupils very well. It effectively involves appropriate agencies, including a national charity, and works successfully in partnership with them to provide a high level of pastoral care and educational support for pupils and their families.
124. The attention given to ensuring pupils' well-being is a particularly strong feature. Links with the police, social services and both health and education professionals are well established. The small number of pupils 'looked after' by the local authority is well supported through designated members of staff, who liaise regularly with carers and supporting professionals. The school seeks and receives effective support for pupils whose first language is not English or Welsh; these pupils integrate well.
125. The school works well with its parents in providing the support and guidance their children need. Parents are very appreciative of this and feel that their views are valued in this regard.
126. Pupils also have the opportunity to influence their life in school through the school council. Members express the belief that their views matter and indicate that they have been instrumental in shaping recent changes within the school.
127. There are good arrangements in place to help children settle into nursery. Pupils who join the school later are provided with a buddy or mentor to help them understand procedures. New pupils say that they settle in easily because other children are friendly and welcoming.
128. The school gives high priority to ensuring that all pupils receive the very best personal support and guidance that can be provided. Teachers know their pupils very well and respond sensitively to their particular needs and individual circumstances. This care and concern for pupils permeates every aspect of school life. The school has recently introduced a more formal planned approach to PSE that has had a very positive impact. The school provides very good quality sex and relationships education and health education.
129. Pupils are well cared for before school at a breakfast club where they are given healthy food and drinks. The school escorts a number of pupils to other childcare venues after they have attended after-school clubs.
130. The school is involved in the Healthy Schools' initiative and pupils can explain the importance of eating a healthy diet.
131. There are effective procedures for the analysis, monitoring and promotion of attendance and punctuality. The weekly class incentive scheme and overall focus on the importance of attendance has captured the imagination of pupils. There is also a very good system, run in close co-operation with the educational welfare officer, for working with families of pupils who are poor attendees or frequent latecomers. Overall, there is exemplary provision in this area, which has resulted in a rise in attendance by two percentage points in the last six months compared with the previous six. This has been assisted by the way the head teacher has encouraged parents to discuss with her any difficulties they face in this regard.
132. There is a very clear set of procedures for behaviour management combining a

system of rewards, which encourages pupils, with one of sanctions that deters; together they serve to ensure generally good behaviour around the school. However, these procedures are not always consistently implemented during lessons in some classes.

133. There are appropriate procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, although too little use is made of this information to guide pupils' learning in some classes.
134. The head teacher has overall responsibility for the health and safety of everyone working in and visiting the school. She discharges this responsibility with due diligence with the support, in particular, of the caretaker and a dedicated governor. Regular audits are carried out of the building and grounds and risk assessments are carried out where appropriate.
135. The school is making considerable efforts to ensure its pupils develop a healthy lifestyle and, importantly, understand the reasons for doing so. Pupils in KS1 can purchase fruit daily, while those in KS2 are able to buy from the fruit tuck shop. The school kitchen provides a good range of nutritious meals and some seasonal fruit and vegetables are grown in the garden area for pupils' consumption. The use of water bottles is encouraged in the classroom and good hygiene is promoted through activities such as regular teeth brushing in KS1. The importance of exercise is introduced in the Foundation Phase through a wide range of play equipment and reinforced throughout the school in the choice of sporting clubs.
136. The head teacher is the designated person for child protection and the deputy head teacher provides cover in her absence. Both have received appropriate training, as have all members of staff, who are aware of their responsibilities in relation to issues that may arise.
137. The quality of provision for pupils with ALN is good. The school effectively identifies pupils making insufficient progress or raising concerns. Appropriate intervention strategies are implemented, parents are involved at an early stage and referrals are made promptly to outside agencies where necessary. Furthermore, the school has begun to identify more able or talented pupils and to set specific targets for them.
138. The provision for pupils with a statement of SEN is in line with pupils' needs and arrangements for an annual review are appropriate.
139. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) works effectively with teachers to provide good support for pupils with ALN. An appropriate register of ALN is maintained and suitably detailed IEPs are implemented at the school action and school action plus stages of the Code of Practice. There are systematic arrangements to review progress towards the targets set in IEPs and parents are invited to contribute.
140. The provision of nurture groups for pupils with a range of developmental needs is a particularly strong feature. The teacher liaises very well with mainstream class teachers to ensure that activities undertaken in the nurture group match the objectives for the rest of the class but at a level commensurate with pupils' individual needs. The nurture group benefits from a recently developed sensory room and the

implementation of play therapy for vulnerable children. Regular monitoring of pupils' progress ensures that reintegration into mainstream classes is achieved when appropriate.

141. Pupils with challenging behaviour that disrupts their progress and that of others are generally well supported by the school and outside agencies. Appropriate individual behaviour plans (IBP) are implemented and targets are reviewed frequently with the children concerned.
142. The provision to promote equal opportunities is good. The school takes good account of pupils' differing social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds and works hard to provide appropriate guidance to help ensure they are well integrated.
143. The school is proactive in promoting gender equality; this is a particularly strong feature of its work. All activities are open to boys and girls and the school actively encourages non-stereotypical choices. It challenges peer pressure and the perception that activities like the choir are only for the girls. It also works diligently to raise girls' career aspirations and to challenge the influence of modern celebrity culture.
144. In line with its statutory duties the school implements an appropriate race equality policy and action plan. The provision includes suitable arrangements for dealing with any incidents. It works hard to eliminate oppressive behaviour, racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment. It positively promotes good manners, consideration and respect.
145. There is an effective anti-bullying policy and pupils are aware of who they should speak to if they have a problem. Although incidents of oppressive behaviour are few the school is rigorous in its response to those incidents that occur from time to time. When asked about bullying, younger and older pupils state very clearly that there are no bullies in the school because the teachers deal with them. They show that they understand the difference between arguments and oppressive behaviour.
146. An appropriate disability equality scheme and action plan has been established recently so that the school meets its legal responsibilities. There are currently no pupils with physical disabilities attending the school.
147. Staff and pupils celebrate diversity and warmly welcome and value pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils speak about their friends from other cultures with affection and respect. They are accepting of differences in beliefs and customs and are eager to ask questions about their friends' differing lifestyles and are clearly fascinated by the answers.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

148. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. This reflects the positive impact of the recently appointed head teacher in energising a culture to raise aspirations and promote success.
149. The head teacher and senior staff, with the strong support of governors, are successful in establishing a renewed direction for the school this academic year. Positive values, key aims and broad objectives are clearly stated so that members of staff increasingly understand the purpose of initiatives being implemented. They convey a strong sense of purpose and commitment in their work but more time is needed for current initiatives to become embedded and impact on standards.
150. Equal opportunities are at the heart of the schools' values and aims and this is well reflected in its life and work. The school's commitment to combating social disadvantage is commendable.
151. Good emphasis is placed on national and local priorities. This is particularly evident in the development of the early years curriculum that reflects Foundation Phase principles well. In line with national guidance a review of curricular planning is underway across both key stages.
152. Although the school was successful in exceeding its end of key stage targets for attainment in 2008, there is little evidence of the school's sustained success over recent years in setting and meeting realistic and challenging goals across its work.
153. Appropriate arrangements, in line with statutory requirements, are in place to improve the performance of members of staff. The arrangements for professional review and appraisal are systematic and the head teacher makes good use of the information gained in planning school improvements. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of recent initiatives as training in specific teaching strategies, for example, has not had sufficient time to become embedded in the school's work.
154. The GB is loyal to and strongly supportive of the school. The head teacher keeps them well informed about the performance of the school and the establishment of close links between designated governors and curriculum leaders provides a good basis to increase the effectiveness of governors as a critical partner.
155. The GB is appropriately involved in endorsing policies and considering key documents. Its stewardship of financial resources is good. However, it has yet to formalise its contribution to monitoring and aspects of the present SDP are insufficiently precise to enable it to assess value for money.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

156. 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 found some shortcomings in the rigour of self-evaluation and the effectiveness of planning for improvement over time.
157. There are appropriate systems in place to enable leaders and managers to gather information to evaluate standards and quality. Some aspects have been established for about two years, but others have only recently been implemented. Although a systematic programme of subject monitoring is in place, evaluations are not yet securely based on first-hand evidence of standards and this limits their impact on quality and standards.
158. The self-evaluation report is a comprehensive document, but the accuracy of the judgements made is varied. Insufficiently rigorous analysis of strengths and weaknesses in standards and teaching limits its effectiveness in focusing on school improvement. The inspection team agrees with the overall judgements in key questions four and five and awards one grade lower in key questions one, two, three, six and seven.
159. The views of members of staff are sought in formal and informal ways and those of pupils are conveyed well through the eco and school councils. Although the school has a good relationship with parents, no formalised arrangements, such as a questionnaire, have been implemented recently to seek their views although this has been done in the past. Similarly, there are no formalised arrangements to seek the views of community groups, although the GB is in a good position to represent local views.
160. A culture of self-evaluation is becoming established. The current head teacher has refined the SDP to provide greater focus on a smaller number of key targets. This is improving the effectiveness of the plan in developing greater understanding of school improvement issues among members of staff and promoting their involvement in self-evaluation arrangements.
161. The SDP for 2008/9 was formulated prior to the appointment of the present head teacher. It identifies a very wide range of issues for improvement but lacks rigour in setting precise targets; the absence of sufficiently detailed plans of action limits its usefulness in evaluating the school's improvement.
162. The current head teacher, with the support of governors, ensures that key priorities for improvement are supported well through the adequate allocation of resources.
163. Since September 2008 the head teacher has put in place a good range of initiatives to improve the quality of provision and raise standards of achievement. It is too soon to judge the impact of these initiatives, although improvements in behaviour and attendance are already evident. However, the effectiveness of planning for improvement since the previous inspection in 2003 is limited. On the one hand

improvements in security have been made, reporting to parents is now good and attendance rates are much improved, but important issues relating to standards, teaching and self-evaluation remain unresolved.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

164. 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 that the use of some resources is not always fully effective.
165. The provision of teaching staff is good in relation to the number of pupils on roll and teachers have sufficient expertise to teach the whole curriculum. A good number of support staff work closely with teachers to enhance learning. The school secretary provides admirable administrative support and the caretaker ensures, with her cleaning team, that the school is always extremely clean and tidy.
166. The school implements the requirements for workforce remodelling appropriately. In general, the way in which the school has arranged planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time works well and has a positive impact on standards. In addition to PPA, senior members of staff receive reasonable additional time to undertake leadership roles.
167. Learners have access to appropriate learning resources. The indoor and outdoor provision of resources for the under-fives is good. In KS1 and KS2 there are sufficient resources, but access to a wide enough range of books, to computers and to practical aids to learning are sometimes limited.
168. The accommodation provides a suitable setting for effective teaching and learning. The extent of the accommodation is generous for the number of pupils on roll and imaginative use is made of surplus classrooms to enhance provision and respond to community needs. There are ICT, music and art rooms, a library, two halls and specialist areas for the nurture group, including a sensory room.
169. The exterior fabric of the building is in a poor state and the refurbishment of some former classrooms is underway. The interior of much of the school is bright, clean and provides an environment that is conducive to learning. Attractive displays on the walls do much to promote pride in pupils' achievements.
170. The improvement in security, following the concerns raised at the last inspection, have ensured a significant reduction in vandalism, although the playing fields, which are extensive, are still open to members of the public and animals. Major improvements have been made to the outdoor learning environment for the under-fives and this is having a significant impact on children's personal, social and learning skills.
171. In general, efficient and effective use is made of learning resources as a whole within the class bases. This is most evident in the under-fives and in some classes in the main building where resources are accessible and used well by pupils. Although the provision of ICT is good, the use of this equipment is not well established in all classes.

172. The deployment of teaching and support staff is appropriate. Good use is made of peripatetic staff to raise standards in, for example, music and physical education. There are appropriate arrangements to promote the professional development of teachers, but it is too soon to judge the impact of recent initiatives. Some members of support staff are undertaking further training to improve their qualifications and expertise and several volunteer to run school clubs. The contribution of support staff to learning is well managed in the under-fives and the nurture group, but their contribution in other classes is not always fully developed.
173. The financial resources available to the school are generally matched closely to both the priorities identified in the SDP and the school's plans for the professional development of staff. The GB monitors income and expenditure regularly. The school is proactive in securing considerable additional sources of funding, including a range of educational grants and funds raised by the parents' association. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure best value in the purchase of goods and services and curriculum leaders regularly audit resources in their subjects.
174. Since the last inspection there is a trend of relatively low standards and limited evidence of educational improvements. However, taking into account recent improvements in educational leadership and the response of pupils, the school provides sound value for money in a challenging local context.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under-fives

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

175. The quality of relationships with adults and with other children is good. In nursery, children develop their social skills steadily, often from a low base. They begin to show tolerance and through established routines quickly learn appropriate behaviour for different situations.
176. Children in reception develop good levels of self-confidence. They show appropriate tolerance towards their peers, learn to respond to reason and show increasing respect as they develop their understanding of what is fair and unfair. They learn appropriate behaviour for different situations and concentrate particularly well on a variety of tasks for short periods.
177. Children in nursery and reception enthusiastically explore both indoor and outdoor environments, are confident in seeking help where needed and develop appropriate skills, as they engage in new learning experiences, for example, when hunting for mini beasts and playing on the 'construction site.' Secure routines guide children

well in taking turns, sharing resources and exercising self-control. All take appropriate responsibility for personal hygiene and safety and begin to understand that changes happen to their bodies, such as when they exercise.

178. Children participate enthusiastically in activities, such as, tabletop tasks and imaginative role play. They learn to treat plants, animals and artefacts with care and they respond positively to a variety of cultural and linguistic experiences, including celebrating festivals. Children in reception listen attentively to stories from the Bible and other faiths.

Shortcomings

179. There are no important shortcomings.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Nursery: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
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Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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Good features

180. Both nursery and reception children's skills in speaking, listening and communication develop well from a low base. Younger ones increasingly listen to and respond to instructions and older ones respond very well. All attentively listen to and enthusiastically enact fairy tales, for example 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears.' They have opportunities to hear traditional stories from Wales and around the world. Older ones handle books appropriately.
181. Younger children gain greater confidence in communicating their needs. Older ones confidently engage with adults and respond positively to questions. A few pose questions in discussions and a majority develops initial word building, reading and writing skills well. They show a clear understanding that text carries meaning.
182. In other contexts both older and younger children perform a good repertoire of familiar songs and rhymes with enthusiasm. They develop mark making skills well through using a good variety of mark making implements.

Shortcomings

183. In nursery a minority of children lack confidence and competence in speaking and listening. They sometimes find it hard to express themselves in structured situations.

Mathematical development

Nursery: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
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Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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Good features

184. Both nursery and reception children make a sound start in understanding basic mathematical concepts and developing early numeracy skills. Younger ones sing and count numbers one to three in English and Welsh and older ones count out loud and join in familiar number rhymes, songs and games with enthusiasm. They develop the concept of numbers one to ten well and recognise the use of numbers in everyday contexts. They show increasing understanding of patterns and readily identify common two and three dimensional shapes.
185. Older children develop the concepts of more and less, bigger and smaller and begin to develop an appropriate understanding of one to one correspondence. They use mathematical language in appropriate contexts, match repeating patterns and develop a sound understanding of the purpose of money.

Shortcomings

186. Nursery children's early numeracy skills, including matching numbers and developing their mathematical vocabulary through practical activities, are underdeveloped.

Welsh language development

Nursery: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

187. Both nursery and reception children become familiar with everyday vocabulary in Welsh within daily routines. Older ones respond well to greetings during registration and are attentive when thinking about the weather. They show that they understand more words than they can speak and some begin to repeat familiar words, phrases and chants within daily routines. They count to at least four and name colours with increasing accuracy. They show interest in the content of Welsh books and develop appropriate oracy and mark making skills in response to bilingual materials.

Shortcomings

188. In nursery children's oracy skills are limited.

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

189. Nursery children energetically explore and experiment indoors and outdoors. They correctly name a number of common animals and further their knowledge of the vet's surgery through role play. A few use ICT with their teacher and build towers and bridges with construction materials and the majority gain confidence in identifying

changes in the weather. In the outdoor environment children enthusiastically 'look after' the garden and hunt for mini-beasts.

190. In reception children talk enthusiastically about their experiences. They readily engage in role play to enact familiar stories and learn to operate the compact disk (CD) player in the 'magic room' and a few use ICT confidently to match numbers to ten. They know about changes in the weather and the seasons and the work of machines and people on a construction site. The more able know that bees sting and confidently describe how they get nectar from flowers to make honey. They explore the concepts of mixing and texture as they enthusiastically make porridge and they confidently describe changes before and after cooking.

191. Older ones confidently name the main parts of their body, begin to use a variety of information sources, including the computer, and identify differences between materials.

Shortcomings

192. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Nursery: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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Good features

193. In nursery children appropriately develop co-ordination and manipulative skills as they experiment with a wide range of materials including different papers, sand and dough. They respond well to adults in the garden and when role playing 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' on the bridge.

194. In reception children develop good awareness of their bodies and of their growth. They develop spatial awareness and move confidently around the classroom, hall and outdoor areas. They make good progress in fine manipulative skills through using small tools, such as crayons and scissors.

195. Both nursery and reception children have suitable opportunities to increase control of their bodies when engaging with a range of structured play resources in the indoor and outdoor areas. Older ones develop their skills when pedalling, hopping and skipping; they follow instructions to develop balance and body control particularly well and demonstrate good awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies.

Shortcomings

196. In nursery children's body control and co-ordination skills are underdeveloped.

Creative development

Nursery: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
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Reception: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

197. In nursery children experiment appropriately with paint, glue, dough and printing materials. A few mix paint and correctly name the colours white, red and blue when using chalks for mark making. They have a developing repertoire of songs and action rhymes.
198. In reception children are encouraged to make choices and to experiment with instruments. They enthusiastically join in with a range of songs within daily routines and acquire a good repertoire of rhymes and action songs. A few imitate the music played on a CD with percussion instruments. They make a variety of imaginative models and pictures using a range of materials and create foods using play dough, for example.

Shortcomings

199. In nursery children do not develop sufficient competence in a range of creative skills.

English

Key stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

200. Across the school pupils extend their vocabulary appropriately from a low base and gain confidence in speaking. Many pupils in Y1 speak enthusiastically, for example, when discussing instructions for tasks. A minority of pupils in Y2 speak confidently and clearly and use appropriate vocabulary when responding to questions. They express themselves competently when discussing their work and some recall the sequence of events in a story, for example, 'Stick Man' by Julia Donaldson.
201. The listening skills of a majority of pupils develop well across both key stages. This is evident from the way that they listen to adults, use the listening stations during reading sessions and follow their teachers' instructions.
202. In KS1 a majority of pupils know the sound and name of each letter and identify rhyming words in a chosen text. They are aware of alphabetical order and a few can use a dictionary. Most slowly build up their reading, writing and spelling skills from a low base. A few write their simple recollections independently.
203. In KS1 previous work indicates that more able pupils are beginning to write in structured sentences. They steadily develop the skills of instructional and report writing.
204. Across KS2 pupils develop their literacy skills well. In structured contexts the majority develop speaking and listening skills well. The more able pupils have a basic understanding of nouns, adjectives and verbs and readily identify these in different texts.

205. A minority of pupils in KS2 are competent readers and use mainly word recognition strategies. A few use phonic strategies well. During reading sessions they develop their reading and comprehension skills appropriately through a variety of tasks including guided reading and using ICT.
206. In Y3 most pupils successfully identify compound words and show a basic understanding of using words in context. In Y4 more able pupils successfully plan and draft a persuasive letter. A majority use connectives correctly and vary the structure of their sentences.
207. A majority of pupils in Y5 have a sound understanding of alliteration, metaphor and simile and readily identify nouns, adjectives and verbs in a chosen text. They successfully create suitable lines for a poem using the structure of the poem, 'The Magic Box' by Kit Wright.
208. In Y6 a majority of pupils develop their skills in narrative writing appropriately. The more able use reading skills well to identify and categorise connectives and successfully write structured sentences.
209. Previous work indicates that a minority of pupils achieve good standards in a range of writing, including well structured stories, poems, letters and both factual and instructional texts.

Shortcomings

210. A significant minority of pupils in both key stages lack the skills to decode words; few use contextual cues to help them self-correct and those gaining confidence in reading often read mechanically, lack fluency and expression and find it hard to read unfamiliar texts.
211. In both key stages many pupils do not engage with a wide enough range of texts in order to promote the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
212. The majority of pupils in both key stages have underdeveloped skills in spelling and writing; they seldom develop the skills of writing in a sufficient range of contexts.
213. Across the school pupils do not progressively develop the skills of handwriting. The standard in handwriting is sometimes poor with incorrect letter formation and the presentation is untidy.

Mathematics

Key stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
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Key stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
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Good features

214. A minority of pupils in Y1 correctly count forwards and backwards to 10 using a number stick. They begin to place and order the numbers correctly using a number line and know and name the basic properties of a square, rectangle, triangle and

circle. With adult support, they begin to identify left and right turns correctly.

215. Around half of pupils in Y2 add and subtract numbers to 20 with growing accuracy and they simply describe the properties of common two dimensional shapes. Many of them correctly recognise and name a hexagon, octagon and pentagon.
216. A majority of pupils in Y3 have a good understanding of place value when adding and subtracting two digit numbers. A few more able pupils confidently complete calculations including three digit numbers and accurately record a number that is 100 more or less than a given three digit number.
217. Most Y3 pupils begin to use simple multiplication tables successfully to make mental calculations. A few know how to calculate a half or a quarter of 24 using division by 2 or 4. They are aware of the value of different coins and most correctly select suitable coins to make £2. Most measure a range of objects fairly accurately in centimetres and recognise, measure and correctly label right angles on a drawing.
218. A majority of pupils in Y4 have a good understanding of shape. They correctly identify a variety of two dimensional shapes and understand that the sizes of the angles vary. They are aware that some are bigger than a right angle whilst others are smaller. They successfully differentiate between equilateral and isosceles triangles and most succeed in constructing equilateral triangles and a few correctly construct isosceles triangles using straws.
219. Most pupils in Y5 develop confidence in using inverse operations. They begin to use this knowledge to check their work and show increasing understanding that there are different ways of arriving at an answer. Their basic addition and subtraction skills are sound and they successfully use their knowledge of place value to order numbers and a few more able pupils correctly multiply and divide by 10 and by 100.
220. Most pupils in Y5 correctly solve mathematical problems involving money or shapes and begin to explain their answers correctly. They successfully interpret basic data from a range of graphs, including bar and tally charts, and information tables.
221. A majority of pupils in Y6 successfully round numbers to the nearest 100 and 1000 and use a range of calculation methods with growing confidence. More able pupils use their knowledge of place value to correctly round off decimals.
222. Many pupils in Y6 understand the rotation of shapes. They correctly state how many turns will be needed to return to the starting position. They examine a variety of nets to accurately predict which will create a cube. They begin to correctly calculate the area and perimeter of a range of shapes.

Shortcomings

223. In both key stages pupils' numeracy skills are underdeveloped. Their understanding of number patterns and relationships is limited and many lack sufficient confidence in the recall of number bonds and tables.
224. In KS1 most pupils' competence in the skills of counting forward and back, of ordering numbers and of making simple mental calculations are underdeveloped.

225. In KS1 pupils' skills in problem solving, measurement and recording data are at an early stage of development.
226. In KS2 shortcomings in numeracy and problem solving skills remain and around half of pupils lack sufficient competence in using and applying mathematical skills in a range of situations.

Science

Key stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
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Key stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings
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Good features

227. In Y1 pupils demonstrate an appropriate awareness of different materials such as cotton, wool and acrylic. They know that some fabrics come from plants and some from animals and some are man-made. In exploring the textures of wool that has been knitted, woven or crocheted, they realise that different processes produce different results with the same basic material. They make felt from fleece and observe that materials change as a result of adding water, pressing, rolling and drying. In an investigation to discover the material best able to absorb spilled liquid, they understand that kitchen roll is more efficient than plastic or paper.
228. Pupils in Y2 develop their understanding of how sounds are produced by vibration. They know that vibration travels through the air and they can cause a snare drum in one part of the classroom to vibrate in response to the striking of a drum in another part of the room. They experiment confidently with a number of conventional and improvised musical instruments to observe the different kinds of sounds made by striking, plucking, shaking and blowing.
229. In Y3 pupils investigate a variety of materials including bubble wrap, cling film and newspaper to discover which provides the best insulation for a balloon filled with water and frozen. They make sensible predictions and plan their test. They record the results and interpret their findings effectively.
230. Pupils in Y3 and Y4 have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy snack. They identify meat and fish as proteins and different kinds of bread as carbohydrate. They understand well that cheese contains fat and fruit and vegetables contain vitamins. They are confident in identifying the different food groups and explaining why humans need a balanced diet that contains all groups in order for them to grow, develop and stay healthy.
231. Some Y4 pupils have an appropriate understanding of the nutritional information provided on a range of crisp packets. They give examples of carbohydrates, fats and proteins and understand that some foods such as fruit are high in fibre content. They begin to understand that crisps containing the lowest level of fat are the healthiest.
232. In Y5 pupils conduct an investigation into what affects the size of shadows. They investigate a range of materials including acetate, bubble wrap, shiny and tissue

paper, nylon and net to discover which are transparent, which are translucent and which are opaque. They have a good understanding of the enquiry process that involves initial prediction, recording of results of repeated tests and the interpretation of data.

233. Most pupils in Y6 have an appropriate understanding of the elements of a fair test. They know that only one variable may be changed at any time, and tests need to be repeated to give valid results. They develop a good understanding of how forces can make things speed up, slow down or change direction. They know that friction affects the speed of the fall of parachutes that have differing surface areas.
234. In Y6 pupils understand that living organisms move, reproduce and are sensitive to change and that they need nutrition, excrete, respire and grow. They know that humans have different kinds of teeth that serve different purposes and they draw and label a diagram of a human tooth.

Shortcomings

235. Across both key stages pupils' skills when presenting the results of their findings in a variety of ways are limited.
236. In both key stages pupils' grasp of the significance of the investigations they conduct is not anchored securely in the context of scientific knowledge.
237. Pupils' independent skills in planning and conducting an investigation are underdeveloped across both key stages.

Art and design

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

Good features

238. Many pupils in Y1 draw and paint well. Their pictures show a developing awareness of colour, pattern and shape and their drawings of their peers are often skilful. They demonstrate a clear understanding of the use of cool colours in their winter scene compositions.
239. In Y1 many pupils select printing materials with growing confidence and use them skilfully to create patterns. They experiment successfully with different ways of applying paint, explore a range of printing techniques independently and competently work in three dimensions to make recognisable clay faces.
240. Many pupils in Y2 demonstrate well developed skills when working in three dimensions. They design and make clay tiles to represent their school and creatively arrange natural materials in response to a story, basing their work on spiral sculptures seen when visiting an exhibition.
241. In Y2 many pupils use coloured pencils skilfully to create a garden landscape.

242. Pupils in Y3 study the work of established artists, for example, Augustus John. They discuss with some understanding the shape of his figures, the colours he used and the feelings his work conveys. Many successfully capture a similar mood in their own work.
243. Many pupils' work in Y3 shows a good understanding of proportion when drawing a human figure. They demonstrate good control of pencils, charcoal, chalk and pastels and experiment skilfully with light and dark tones. Their use of charcoal and chalk in a portrait of a miner is particularly effective and when representing sunflowers they use techniques such as collage successfully.
244. In Y5 many pupils experiment enthusiastically with different types of paper using a range of folding, tearing and crushing techniques to skilfully create texture and depth to their work. They take great pride in creating collages from their earlier drawings.
245. Many pupils in Y5 competently represent shadow using drawing pencils when creating a still life picture. They use paint to good effect when recording a composition of fruit; they thoughtfully evaluate the effectiveness of the background colour and skilfully design, make and decorate clay pots.
246. Most pupils in Y6 use acrylic paints effectively to create texture. They skilfully build up layers of thick paint to raise the surface and successfully recreate some of the earthy tones used by Kyffin Williams. A few pupils produce skilful drawings of Welsh landscapes using charcoal effectively to create a sense of drama and isolation.

Shortcomings

247. There are no important shortcomings.

Music

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

Good features

248. In both key stages pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the three elements of music, and are confident to compose, perform and evaluate a simple sound sequence.
249. Pupils in both key stages sing a varied repertoire of songs, hymns and rhymes with enjoyment and enthusiasm. They sing accompanied and unaccompanied with increasing control of pitch, diction and dynamics.
250. In both key stages pupils have a good knowledge of a range of Welsh music and composers, including songs, hymns and orchestral music.
251. In KS1 pupils succeed in keeping the rhythm and tempo of a number of songs; they sing audibly and 'silently' effectively in response to a pop-up puppet conductor. They accompany some of the songs with body percussion well.

252. Most pupils in Y1 clap the rhythm of 'This Old Man' steadily and around half repeat a four beat rhythm using tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They succeed in following a simple graphic score.
253. In Y2 most pupils choose appropriate instruments and compose and follow a simple graphic score to tell the story of Llywelyn and Gelert. They perform their sound picture well, using a range of percussion instruments. They identify high and low pitch and slow and fast tempo.
254. Pupils in Y3 compose a simple sound sequence using the pentatonic scale to accompany the singing of 'Old Macdonald had a Farm'. They identify the notes E, D and C confidently, and use a variety of glockenspiels to play phrases. They follow the conductor well and keep a steady rhythm together. Some pupils maintain an ostinato on drums.
255. In Y4 most pupils identify Suo Gan as an example of a lullaby. They recognise changes in rhythmic patterns, and perform a variety of rhythms in their groups separately and together, keeping the beat and tempo effectively. They show a good understanding of the kinds of sounds produced by a range of instruments by choosing triangle, shakers and tambourines that are suitable for the song.
256. In Y5 most pupils respond creatively to a musical stimulus through drawing. They compose a simple sequence of sounds in response to a story using appropriate instruments. Their performance demonstrates increasing control of tempo and dynamics and they evaluate their work well.
257. Pupils' learning in music is enriched effectively across the school by frequent opportunities to perform in seasonal celebrations in the community and in a good range of competitions. The skills of those pupils who receive recorder lessons and peripatetic percussion tuition make a very worthwhile contribution to all pupils' understanding of music.

Shortcomings

258. There are no important shortcomings in pupils' performing and composing skills, but their knowledge of musical terms such as dynamics, tempo, texture, pitch and timbre and of music from other traditions and cultures is limited.

School's response to the inspection

259. The inspection findings recognise that the school promotes a positive attitude to learning and that the children respond well to the school's ethos of care and its expectation of success for all.
260. We are pleased that the inspectors judged the school's endeavours to broaden the children's experiences to be a very good feature, as are its partnerships with parents and the local community. We are especially pleased the emphasis given to ensuring children's well-being and the quality of care, support and guidance provided is seen as a strong feature of the school. In addition we are pleased that the support of the GB to the school is recognised and that the curriculum provides overall sound provision to meet the range of children's needs and interests.
261. An action plan will be put into place to address the recommendations in the report. Improving our curriculum planning for children's key skills, making wider use of data available to improve the effective use of assessment in planning and improving learning and tightening up some school procedures to improve attendance and punctuality are aspects that we believe we can confidently address.
262. Where it is possible to do so, staff and governors will address the recommendations before the end of the school year. Raising children's standards in subjects and areas of learning where shortcomings are identified is a major priority for us. We will make every effort to provide more opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge and skills in these areas so that they can help children to achieve higher standards. Pleasingly, inspectors identified many elements and procedures in the school that will help us address some shortcomings by sharing good practice more widely.
263. The governor's annual report to parents will report on the progress we are making in addressing the inspection recommendations.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Blaen-y-maes Primary School
School type	Primary including Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Broughton Avenue Blaen-y-maes Swansea
Postcode	SA5 5LW
Telephone number	01792 583366

Head teacher	Mrs. Beverley Phillips
Date of appointment	1 st September 2008
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Councillor Grenville Phillips
Registered inspector	Mr. Michael T. Ridout
Dates of inspection	23 rd – 25 th February 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	16	26	18	21	19	22	23	22	167

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	10	1	10.6

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	15.75 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	21
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.33 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	78.4	83.4	89.3
Summer 2008	75.5	86.4	89.3
Autumn 2008	79.4	84.0	92.8

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	76
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	8

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:		21			
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	N	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	-	4.8	19.0	38.1	28.6	9.5
		National	0.2	0.1	3.5	13.8	63.0	19.4
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	-	4.8	19.0	28.6	38.1	9.5
		National	0.2	0.1	2.4	10.7	62.8	23.8
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	-	4.8	14.3	42.9	28.6	9.5
		National	0.2	0.1	4.1	14.9	55.2	25.5
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	-	4.8	19.0	42.8	33.3	0.0
		National	0.2	0.1	4.8	15.9	67.8	11.3
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	-	4.8	-	33.3	61.9	0.0
		National	0.2	0.1	2.0	10.9	65.2	21.6
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	-	4.8	-	42.9	52.4	0.0
		National	0.2	0.1	1.6	8.5	66.3	23.4

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment

In the school	38.1	In Wales	80.7
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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 7 year olds will attain level 2.

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y6:		24					
Percentage of pupils at each level										
			D	N	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	-	-	-	-	20.8	25.0	37.5	16.7
		National	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	-	-	-	-	16.7	16.7	50.0	16.7
		National	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	-	-	-	-	0.0	33.3	50.0	16.7
		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	54.2	In Wales	75.5
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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, spent the equivalent of ten inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

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

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- 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;
- forty-eight responses to a parents' questionnaire, 96 per cent of which 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 and deputy head teacher, the staff and governors. A representative of the local education authority attended the meeting 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? Under-fives and English.
Mrs. Jan Marsden Team inspector	Assessment aspect of KQ2. Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? Mathematics and art.
Mrs. Rhiannon Harris Team inspector	Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? 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? Science and music.
Mr. Ted Tipper Lay inspector	Aspects of Key Questions: 1, 3, 4 and 7
Peer Assessor	None was appointed by Estyn
Mrs. Beverley Phillips 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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