

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

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

**Derwendeg Primary School  
Hengoed Road  
Cefn Hengoed  
Hengoed  
Caerphilly  
CF82 7HP**

**School Number: 6762097**

**Date of Inspection: 02 February 2009**

**by**

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Derwendeg 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 Derwendeg Primary School took place between 02/02/09 and 05/02/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Ian Kelly undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received **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. Derwendeg Primary School is community school which serves the village of Cefn Hengoed and its neighbouring villages. The local authority is Caerphilly and it controls admissions to the school. The school considers its catchment area to be economically disadvantaged and is sited in a Communities First area. There are almost 32 per cent of pupils registered as being entitled to receive free school meals which is much higher figure than the national average.
2. The school caters for children aged three to eleven years. At the time of the inspection there were 232 pupils on roll, including 22 part time nursery children. Almost 99 per cent of pupils come from English speaking homes. Welsh is taught as a second language.
3. The intake reflects the varying socio economic backgrounds of families. There are 23 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register (SEN) which is above the National average. There are three pupils who have a statement of SEN.
4. Children enter the nursery class in the September after their third birthday. Assessments undertaken on entry to the school indicate below average attainments for many children, especially in language skills.
5. There is a gender difference with nearly all year groups (apart from the current year 6 group) having more boys than girls; the school population is made up of 134 boys and 98 girls.
6. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark on 4 occasions, the Investors in People Standard on 3 occasions; it has been awarded the Healthy Schools Scheme and recently achieved the Eco-schools Silver Award. The head teacher was appointed in September 2002 and the school was last inspected in March 2003.
7. The school's motto is 'learning with and from each other to achieve success.' It has a list of clear and explicit aims.
8. Due to heavy snow, it was necessary to close the school to pupils for the second day of the inspection. When it re opened pupil numbers were depleted because of the adverse weather conditions. In order to ensure that judgements were secure, the inspection team gained further evidence from additional discussions with members of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators. An extensive scrutiny of pupils' work was undertaken across a wide range of subjects and additional documentation including schemes of work and planning was examined.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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9. The school's main priorities and targets for 2008/09 include:
- To ensure the achievement of good standards in literacy, mathematical reasoning and investigative science.
  - To ensure good standards in the foundation subjects of History, Design and Technology and Welsh, Key Skills & Bilingualism.
  - To embed assessment for learning strategies and develop and make effective use of subject portfolios.
  - To prepare for and effectively implement the Foundation Phase.
  - To prepare for and effectively implement the Revised Curriculum.
  - To improve pupil attendance.
  - To make effective use of the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) Award and Self Review Framework (SRF).

## Summary

10. Derwendeg Primary School is a good school which provides its pupils with good quality education. The school knows itself extremely well and its self evaluation processes and subsequent strategic planning and leadership are outstanding features.
11. The inspection team agreed with the school's self-evaluation in six of the seven key questions. In the other key questions a higher grade was awarded as the inspection team felt that although the school knows itself extremely well, it was cautious in applying its judgement in Key Question 5.

### Table of grades awarded

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

12. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed during the inspection are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
18%	75%	7%	0%	0%

13. These figures are well above those reported in the Chief Inspector' of Schools' Annual Report for 2007- 08 where standards are good (Grade 2) or better in 84 per cent of lessons observed.

### Subjects and/or areas of learning for Foundation Phase

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

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

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Art and design	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design and technology	Grade 1	Grade 1
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

15. In 2008 at key stage 1, despite a larger than average proportion of pupils being identified with Special Educational Needs, the results of the teacher assessments in English, mathematics and science were above the national average. The core subject indicator, which is the percentage of pupils attaining at least level two in English, mathematics and science in combination, was also above the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving a Level 3 was below national averages.
16. The 2008 results in key stage1 in English were in the top twenty five percent and in mathematics and science the top fifty percent of schools, which have a similar percentage of pupils eligible to receive free school meals.
17. In 2008, the Year 6 cohort had 35 percent of the pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs. Results in all core subjects were below national and local averages. However, the number of pupils achieving Level 5 in English and mathematics was higher than local averages. Comparison to similar schools is difficult as the school's free school meals (FSM) percentage is 0.1 per cent away from the next band and this cohort's performance would move up one quartile in all subjects and the core subject indicator to the top fifty per cent.
18. Overall there is an upward trend in the rolling averages for all core subjects, with the school's results exceeding those of the LEA. The percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected level for their age in all three subjects (the Core Subject Indicator) has generally been above national and local averages in two out of the last three years.
19. School data clearly shows that taking account of pupils below average starting points, the rate of progress made as pupils move through the school is very good. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in relation to their individual needs.
20. Pupils' standards and progress in the key skills of listening are outstanding across the school; speaking and reading are good. Numeracy and information communications technology (ICT) are also good. However, standards and progress in writing across the curriculum is less well developed.

21. Pupils' knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage, *Y Cwriculwm Cymreig*, is good in all year groups but pupils' bilingual skills do not develop consistently as they move through the school.
22. Pupils' personal, social, moral and wider development is good and their ability to work together is an outstanding feature.
23. Attendance rates for the past three terms average 91.5 per cent, which is lower than national rates of attendance for pupils of primary school age but in line with schools that have a similar number of children entitled to receive free school meals.
24. Despite the schools efforts, much of the absence is caused by a few pupils who have a high level of persistent absence, which has an adverse impact on the continuity of their education and the standards they achieve.

## The quality of education and training

### Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
22%	66%	12%	0%	0%

25. The figures are above those reported in the Chief Inspector of Schools Annual Report for 2007 – 2008 where the quality of teaching assessed was good or better (Grade 1 and Grade 2) in 83 per cent of lessons observed and outstanding (Grade 1) in 16 per cent of lessons.
26. Where teaching has outstanding features there are extremely good relationships and clear expectations of behaviour that provide a confident and positive atmosphere in which pupils' achievement flourishes. Very effective questioning techniques extend pupils' knowledge and understanding very well.
27. Overall, teachers successfully motivate pupils through the purposeful use of a range of teaching techniques and strategies. They promote positive attitudes to learning and support pupils' efforts with consistent praise and encouragement that helps to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
28. In the very few lessons where shortcomings were observed these include introductions to lessons that were overlong and tasks that did not sufficiently challenge all pupils. Teachers sometimes lack the confidence to sufficiently promote the development of pupils' bilingual skills.
29. Arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress are good. Marking celebrates the good work of the pupils and in the best examples the next steps in learning are clearly identified and shared with the pupils.
30. The curriculum is rich and vibrant, fully complies with statutory requirements, and equal access is provided to a broad and well-balanced range of learning

experiences. It fully meets the needs of all pupils. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social education.

31. There are good arrangements to ensure pupils well being whilst in the schools care. The school provides excellent personal support and guidance to pupils. Pupils' individual needs are well known to staff, and a carefully structured pastoral programme ensures these needs are met with sensitivity. The school's arrangements for the induction of pupils are successful.
32. The overall provision for learners with additional learning needs is outstanding. The monitoring of behaviour, attendance, punctuality and performance is thorough and rigorous and early intervention ensures any concerns are dealt with promptly.

### **Leadership and management**

33. The high quality leadership provided by the head teacher, governors and school staff are a key factor in bringing about improvements in standards of pupil achievement. High expectations and standards are promoted and there are shared values about learning, behaviour and relationships.
34. The head teacher has a clear vision and she provides exceptional leadership in terms of the strategic direction of the school. She knows the school extremely well and knows what it needs to do to sustain its high degree of success. There is strong support from the deputy head teacher and the senior team.
35. The governing body have a thorough knowledge of the school, its successes and its developmental needs. They work closely with the head teacher and senior management team to set the strategic direction of the school. Individual governors have key roles by linking with co-ordinators to view subject standards and development needs. This is an outstanding feature of their role.
36. The school's self evaluation report is extremely comprehensive and detailed, clearly identifying the various sources of evidence to support the outcomes for each of the seven key questions. It identifies strengths and areas for improvement and these are used to inform the priorities in the school development plan.
37. There is an outstanding attitude of review and self criticism among staff and very well informed governors. They all contribute to the process of self-evaluation and are well aware of its findings. The process follows a well established system that involves all members of staff, pupils, parents and governors. The views of all stakeholders are central to the evaluation process. These are outstanding features.
38. The school has very successfully addressed the key issues raised in the previous inspection report and provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

39. In order to improve further the school should:
- R1 Consolidate the very good practice across the school.
  - R2 Improve provision and raise standards in pupils' bilingual skills throughout the school.
  - R3 Improve standards in pupils writing skills across the curriculum.
  - R4 Continue to work with parents to increase attendance levels across the school.

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

## Standards

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

#### Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings.

40. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self evaluation report.

41. In the subjects inspected the standards of achievement are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
18%	75%	7%	0%	0%

42. These figures are well above those reported in the Chief Inspector' of Schools' Annual Report for 2007-08 where standards are good (Grade 2) or better in 84 per cent of lessons observed.

#### Subjects and/or areas of learning for Foundation Phase

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

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

44. Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are as follows:

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 1	Grade 1
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2

45. In 2008, the Year 2 cohort was made up of 21 boys and 9 girls. Despite a larger than average proportion being identified with Special Educational

Needs, the results of the teacher assessments in English, mathematics and science were above the national average. The core subject indicator, which is the percentage of pupils attaining at least level two in English, mathematics and science in combination, was also above the national average. The number of pupils achieving a Level 3 was below national averages.

46. The 2008 results in key stage 1 in English were in the top twenty five percent and in mathematics and science the top fifty percent of schools which have a similar percentage of pupils eligible to receive free schools.
47. In 2008, the Year 6 cohort was made up of 23 boys and 16 girls; 35 percent of the pupils were identified as having Special Educational Needs. Results in all subjects were below national and local averages. However, the number of pupils achieving Level 5 in English and mathematics was higher than local averages. The core subject indicator, which is the percentage of pupils attaining at least level four in English, mathematics and science in combination, was below the national average.
48. In 2008 key stage 2 pupils' results were in the bottom fifty percent when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. However, the school is almost within the next free school meal band. An additional 0.1 percent of entitlement would have moved this cohort's results into the next band where comparative figures would raise this cohort's performance up one quartile in all subjects, and the core subject indicator, to the top fifty per cent.
49. Apart from 2008, the rolling averages for the school, since 2006, at key stage 2, shows an upward trend in English, mathematics and the core subject indicator with science remaining steady.
50. There is a gender difference in nearly all year groups (apart from the current Year 6) with boys currently making up 58 per cent of the school population and girls 42 per cent. This makes comparative gender results difficult to assess. The gender difference is noted and recognised by the school.
51. School data clearly shows that taking account of pupils below average starting points the rate of progress made as pupils move through the school is very good. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in relation to their individual needs.
52. Pupils' numeracy and ICT skills at both key stage 1 and 2 are good. Across the school their skills of listening are outstanding and their speaking is good, but there are some shortcomings in pupils' extended writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils' are very successful in achieving their aims and apply their skills of number, research, problem solving and ICT to successfully completing tasks, for example in the *Maths Challenge week*.
53. Although the school has a positive attitude towards Welsh language development, pupils' bilingual skills are inconsistent across the school.

However, pupils knowledge of the heritage and culture of Wales in *Y Cwriculwm Cymreig* is good.

54. Overall, pupils' ability to work well together is an outstanding feature. Pupils' ability to consider and reflect upon their own learning and performance and strive to improve is developing very well. The consistent use of the Critical Skills approach, which focuses pupils' on working together, has been very successful in enabling the pupils to work collaboratively, listen, problem solve and make decisions on thinking tasks.
55. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are good and they demonstrate care and consideration for others. A clear code of conduct exists and pupils understand what is expected of them; they are aware of the consequences imposed for inappropriate behaviour and appreciate the need for class and school rules, which they perceive as fair. Pupils are friendly, sociable and relate well to staff, to visitors and to each other.
56. Almost without exception, pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy their work and play. They listen carefully to their teachers, co-operate willingly with adults and their fellow pupils, settle quickly to task and sustain concentration. This has had a positive influence on their standards of achievement and the progress they make. They are interested in their work, are keen to do their best and they take pride in their achievements which they readily share with others.
57. Attendance rates for the past three terms average 91.5 per cent, which is lower than national rates of attendance for pupils of primary school age but in line with schools that have a similar number of children entitled to receive free school meals.
58. Despite the efforts of the school much of the absence is caused by a few pupils who have a high level of persistent absence, which has an adverse impact on the continuity of their education and the standards they achieve.
59. The governing body is rightly concerned about the number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time. This has an adverse impact on the continuity of pupils' formal education and decreases overall rates of attendance for the school. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly.
60. Pupils' personal, social, moral and wider development is good. Pupils demonstrate a secure set of moral values, which provides them with a clear understanding of how they can contribute to their school, their community and to the wider world. Pupils display a growing awareness and respect for the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within society today.
61. The school is successful in preparing pupils for effective participation in the work place and the community.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

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

63. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
22%	66%	12%	0%	0%

64. The figures are above those reported in the Chief Inspector of Schools Annual Report for 2007 – 2008 where the quality of teaching assessed was good or better (Grade 1 and Grade 2) in 83 per cent of lessons observed and outstanding (Grade 1) in 16 per cent of lessons.

65. The outstanding features in teaching are excellent relationships and clear expectations of behaviour that provide a confident and positive atmosphere in which pupils' achievement flourishes. Very skilful planning and clear lesson objectives that capture pupils' interest, enabling them to be fully engrossed in their work and reluctant to finish at the end of the lesson.

66. Good features present in all teaching include effective questioning techniques that extend pupils' knowledge and understanding well. Imaginative use of different teaching strategies. Good opportunities for collaborative work that are matched sensitively to the needs of all pupils in the class including pupils with additional learning needs.

67. In the very few lessons where shortcomings were observed these include introductions to lessons that were overlong and tasks that did not sufficiently challenge all pupils.

68. In the early years' classes, all practitioners make good contributions to children's learning. Planning successfully incorporates the philosophies of the Foundation Phase. However, very occasionally opportunities to guide and stimulate children's learning experiences in order to promote their independent learning are missed.

69. Very detailed and collaborative lesson planning ensures parity of provision and good continuity with progression in teaching and learning that ensures the needs of individual pupils are fully met. Relationships between all staff and pupils are very good. This inspires pupils to achieve their very best in lessons.

70. Teachers are extremely well informed about recent developments in education and they have a very secure knowledge of the subjects and areas of learning that they teach. All staff are enthusiastic about professional development and

actively seek out the best and most up to date training. This has not only enhanced their own professional development but also has led to improvements in teaching and learning throughout the school.

71. Classroom assistants are used very effectively and have a significant impact on pupils' progress academically and socially.
72. All adults treat pupils fairly and equally and all pupils benefit from the same opportunities both in lessons and in the wider life of the school. They meet the English language needs of all pupils very well.
73. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to acquire a variety of experiences of Welsh life and culture. However, teachers in most classes make inconsistent use of incidental Welsh to provide good bilingual experiences for pupils across all key stages.
74. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress. New tracking systems have enabled even greater access to information regarding individual pupil progress. Systems and procedures have good features and no important shortcomings.
75. Assessment is regularly undertaken throughout the academic year in order to track the progress pupils make. This information is used well. Marking celebrates the good work of the pupils and in the best examples the next steps in learning are clearly identified and shared with the pupils.
76. Detailed analysis of data recorded is used appropriately to set measurable targets for improvements. The present good systems give a detailed picture of an individual pupil's achievements and attainment as they transfer from class to class or move on to the next stage of their learning.
77. In the Foundation Phase, children's progress is carefully monitored and evaluated across the areas of learning. Targets are identified and their learning needs sensitively addressed.
78. Comprehensive arrangements are in place to moderate Teacher assessments for year 6 pupils moving to high schools; effective use is made of closure days where pupils' work is viewed and evaluated.
79. The quality of the reports to parents is good. They are detailed, informative and personable. Sections relate to academic progress, personal development ways forward for the pupil to improve.

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

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

80. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report
81. Curricular provision meets all statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education. The provision for personal and social education, health education and sex education also meets requirements.
82. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.
83. Arrangements for implementing the Foundation Phase and the new curriculum orders are well under way, with the school rightly focusing on continuity and progression in the Foundation Phase of learning.
84. The overall quality and range of learning experiences made available to pupils is good with no important shortcomings. The broad and balanced skills based curriculum for pupils in key stages 1 and 2 is taught through a themed approach that offers pupils a very interesting range of learning experiences. The very well planned curriculum has many high quality features focusing appropriately on the development of basic key skills that pupils need before they undertake tasks and activities. This ensures that they make the most of their learning opportunities.
85. Very good opportunities to promote and apply learners' key skills are clearly indicated in daily lesson plans and schemes of work. Good quality provision for the development of pupils' thinking and personal and social skills is very evident. The school has a cohesive framework that successfully underpins the systematic tracking, planning and development of key skills across the curriculum. This is a growing strength of the school.
86. Pupils across key stage 2 enjoy their challenges; for example in *Maths Week* the challenges for pupils are planned so that they have tasks of applying their skills to real life situations and are required to draw on their various strategies to solve problems. This planning, provision and application of skills is an outstanding feature of the curriculum.
87. The innovative collaborative approach the school uses for planning learning activities in the different subjects or areas of the curriculum is a strong feature. Staff in different year groups and key stages have a very clear overview of pupils' expected progress throughout the school and this enables them to plan more effectively for pupils in a class where more than one age group is present.

88. In most areas the curriculum provides suitable activities to engage the more able and talented pupils and enable them to reach their potential. For example, in design technology in the detailed design and making of clothing associated with styles worn in the 1940's.
89. The school provides a wealth of enrichment and extra-curricular activities. All termly themes have a *WOW* activity (which is identified as an exceptional feature of the theme) for example, a visitor, a visit, a celebration or a presentation. There is also specialist tuition for pupils who wish to play a range of musical instruments. The school provides a variety of clubs during and after the school day. These are led by enthusiastic members of staff or members of professional sporting organisations. These clubs include rugby, football, netball, ICT and folk dancing. The school offers a range of dragon sports and has a successful sports reputation when competing against local schools. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to undertake a residential visit. Pupils are enthusiastic in their support of the clubs provided by the school. They enjoy taking part in concerts linked to the Eisteddfod choral singing with local choirs and creative instrumental music performances. The school makes a particular effort to ensure that all pupils are given an opportunity to take advantage of these educational experiences.
90. The overall provision for the development of pupils' personal, social, spiritual and cultural development is good with no important shortcomings. This is because the school is so active in promoting good values and attitudes in its personal and social education programme and daily life at the school. As a result, pupils have strong moral values and treat one another with consideration and respect.
91. The school's arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements. Daily acts of collective worship are held offering limited opportunities for pupils to reflect on matters that affect them and to contribute to their spiritual development.
92. Pupils' social skills are developed through the provision of very good opportunities for working together across the curriculum. Sporting links with other schools develop pupils' appreciation of the importance of working with others in a variety of situations.
93. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own school community through the memberships of the school council or the Eco Committee. Good consideration is given to their opinions. Pupils are given many opportunities to take positions of responsibility within the school such as a 'Playground Buddy'. Pupils are given further opportunities to show initiative through their efforts to raise money both locally and nationally.
94. The school actively promotes pupils' cultural development. Pupils are well aware of and appreciate the many characteristics of Wales as a nation and this is reflected in much of the work displayed in classrooms and corridors. Schemes of work reflect *Y Cwriwlwm Cymreig* well across the curriculum and provision is included in teachers' planning.

95. Pupils' cultural awareness is further developed through subjects such as art and design, geography and religious education. The planned topic undertaken throughout the school entitled 'Our World, My World' successfully underpins pupils' understanding of cultural diversity beyond the school gates.
96. There are shortcomings in the school's provision for developing pupils' bilingual skills in English and Welsh. In a few classes pupils receive regular encouragement to develop confidence in both Welsh and English, but in most classes infrequent and irregular use of incidental Welsh hampers pupils' development of fluency. There are sufficient bilingual signs and notices in some classes, but again this is inconsistent.
97. The head teacher and staff know pupils very well and are successful in tackling social disadvantage and stereotyping and in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. All pupils are valued equally and as individuals.
98. The standards in, and provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC) are good and the school makes good efforts to act in a sustainable way by minimising waste and reducing energy consumption. As part of the *eco schools award scheme*, the school has received the bronze and silver awards in recognition of its commitment to conservation and the environment.
99. Pupils understand the issues of pollution and global warming and the need to care for the environment. They are actively involved in a range of re-cycling and composting schemes and have a growing understanding of global citizenship.
100. Pupils have been actively involved in developing the external environment of their school, and gardening is an integral aspect of the life and work of the school. The whole school community is justly proud of the recognition it has received for its commitment to the local environment through its many successes in the *Caerphilly in Bloom* initiative.
101. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are good and continue to develop well. Pupils take part in enterprise activities where they design, make and sell goods for a profit. Pupils are involved in raising funds for the school and for charity and they are enthusiastic, enterprising and committed in their approach.
102. National priorities for lifelong learning are well reflected in the life and work of the school. The head teacher and staff are committed to the local community and work in close partnership with a range of local agencies, including personnel from *Communities First*, to secure the regeneration of the local community and to support children and their families.

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

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

103. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
104. The school provides good quality care, support and guidance for all pupils. Teaching and support staff know and understand pupils well and effectively monitor and support their educational progress, their social development and their personal well being.
105. The school works in full and productive partnership with a wide range of agencies and support services to ensure pupils' needs are carefully assessed and provided for. This multi-disciplinary approach is particularly beneficial for children in challenging and vulnerable circumstances.
106. The school enjoys positive partnerships with parents and carers. They feel valued and are confident their views are well considered by the school and acted upon.
107. The school also takes account of pupils' views and opinions and they have regular opportunities to contribute to decision-making within the school. The school council is a good forum for pupils to work together and develop their personal and social skills. Councillors undertake their duties seriously and they feel the school listens to them and often acts upon their recommendations. School councillors are good ambassadors for their school.
108. The school's arrangements for the induction of pupils are successful. The youngest children in the nursery class have settled well and staff offer very good pastoral care. Arrangements for moving up classes and transferring to secondary school are well-established and effective and ensure pupils settle quickly into their new environments with minimal disruption to their learning and personal well being.
109. The school provides excellent personal support and guidance to pupils. Pupils' individual needs are well known to staff, and a carefully structured pastoral programme ensures these needs are met with sensitivity. Pupils are confident in seeking the help and support of adults in the school; they are listened to and treated with kindness and respect.
110. The good quality personal and social education programme, drawn up in line with national recommendations, permeates the life of the school and provides pupils with many rich learning experiences. Aspects of personal and social education are having a positive impact on pupils' emotional, personal and social development, especially through the 'circle time' initiative.
111. The monitoring of behaviour, attendance, punctuality and performance is thorough and rigorous and early intervention ensures any concerns are dealt

with promptly. The school's policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are effective and consistently applied by staff.

112. The school has established effective procedures to encourage good attendance and punctuality, to ensure pupils' absence is adequately explained and to follow up situations when necessary. Regular and effective liaison takes place with the education welfare officer (EWO).
113. Class teachers monitor pupils' academic performance regularly and pupils are increasingly taking an active role in setting their own targets and understanding their own progress.
114. The school has clear policies and procedures to promote the health, safety, and well being of pupils, including risk assessment, which are monitored and implemented consistently by staff and the governing body. Pupils are well supervised at all times and clear procedures are in place to deal with any accidents and emergencies.
115. As part of the *Welsh Network of Healthy Schools*, the school is successful in promoting healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are encouraged to eat only fruit at break time, and fresh water is readily available throughout the school day. Pupils also benefit from a range of extra-curricular sporting clubs, which are very well supported.
116. The school has effective measures to deal with appeals and complaints and to promote the protection of children. The head teacher and staff work in pupils' best interests to safeguard their well being and protect them from harm. The head teacher has designated responsibility for child protection issues and ensures that all adults in the school are aware of the correct procedures to be followed and that training is regularly updated.
117. The overall provision for learners with additional learning needs is outstanding. The policy of early intervention is highly successful and the school complies with the Code of Practice and the framework for inclusive education. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works very effectively with class teachers, learning support assistants and the governor with responsibility for additional learning needs. The SENCO, works collaboratively with specialist support teachers and class teachers to formulate individual education plans. All interested parties keep the individual education plans records close at hand during the school day.
118. The school provides a thoroughly stimulating and accessible curriculum for those pupils with additional learning needs. Details of individual pupil's needs are clearly identified in teachers' planning, in most instances highlighted boldly in red text. Well focused and achievable targets are written in a child friendly manner and clearly understood by all parties concerned. The progress that pupils make towards these targets is meticulously monitored by the SENCO. This is an outstanding feature of overall provision. This maintains very high levels of momentum and good rates of progress are made by the majority of pupils.

119. The SENCO and class teachers are very active in encouraging parents to work with the school in support of their children. Parents are fully informed and involved in an effective partnership with the school to ensure that they can support their children's learning at home. During withdrawal sessions that involve individuals and groups of pupils for additional support, work undertaken is successfully linked to targets indicated on respective individual education plans. For example, the very well focused learning during 'Catch Up' activities and sessions where pupils are withdrawn for individual and group support in English. This is an outstanding feature of provision. The school rightly values the high quality support given by the local authority in terms of provision by the education psychologist, behaviour management support and a host of other support agencies.
120. The school's behaviour management programme is very good. It is effective for all pupils and is based on the positive recognition of pupils' achievements and success and is aimed at reducing oppressive behaviour. Support for these pupils whose behaviour impedes their progress is highly effective.
121. Good equal opportunities policies reflect the school's commitment to equality of access and opportunity for all. Gender equality is also promoted well. A clear race equality policy is in place and an appropriate action plan.
122. The school's behaviour and anti bullying policies are well explained and the strategies are appropriate, with the emphasis placed on encouraging and praising positive behaviour. Pupils make their own classroom charter, and set their own school rules. Pupils know what the school's procedures are, should any bullying occur.
123. The school has a suitable accessibility plan that takes account of the site and buildings. Appropriate provision is made for parents and carers with disabilities.
124. Pupils develop a very good understanding of diversity and gain an insight into other cultures through participation in celebrations, such as Chinese New Year. They take part in weekly curriculum enrichment activities and subjects such as music, dance and religious education.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

125. The findings of the inspection team do not match the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report as the inspection team judged there were significant outstanding features. These were in relation to the strategic leadership and explicit values and direction promoted by the school and the extent to which the governing body undertake their role.
126. Derwendeg School's motto is proudly displayed around the school and in its documentation: "learning with and from each other to achieve success". The school's mission statement and set of aims are built on firm values which underpin its philosophy and is clearly evident in practice. These explicit values underpin the whole ethos of the school and are an outstanding feature of its success.
127. The high quality leadership provided by the head teacher, governors and school staff are a key factor in bringing about very good progress in pupil achievement and school improvement. High expectations and standards are promoted and there are shared values about learning, behaviour and relationships.
128. The inclusive nature of the school promotes equality for all with mutual respect and a strong caring ethos. The head teacher, senior staff and governors are committed to ensure the school maintains its high standards and position in the community.
129. The head teacher has a clear vision and she provides exceptional leadership in terms of the strategic direction of the school. She knows the school extremely well and knows what it needs to do to sustain its high degree of success. There is strong support from the deputy head teacher and the senior team.
130. Curriculum co-ordinators undertake their roles conscientiously and work closely with colleagues to establish a good knowledge of where their subjects stand in terms of standards. This consistency of approach and teamwork between staff is an outstanding feature of the school.
131. Processes to set targets for end of key stages in years 2 and 6 are rigorous and effective. Excellent use is made of both internal and external data and teachers' own professional judgement. This target setting process is in place for pupils in all year groups and ensures very clear and measurable challenges for pupils that make a positive impact on the standards achieved.
132. National and local priorities are fully integrated into the school's strategic plan. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark four times and the

Investors in People (IiP) Standard three times. Staff make very good use of leadership training programmes with Swansea Metropolitan University (SMU) which demonstrates the school's commitment to distributed leadership development. The school has also been awarded Healthy Schools Status, the Eco Schools silver award and is working towards the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) Award.

133. All staff have clear areas of responsibility outlined in their job descriptions. There is an effective and thorough performance management process in place for both teaching and support staff. Staff's own professional development needs are clearly identified and there is good support and training to meet their individual objectives. Reviews are held twice yearly. The impact of professional development is evaluated by staff in their Learning Logs; the head teacher collates and feeds this information into the annual self evaluation report. This is an outstanding feature.
134. The school has fully implemented the workforce remodelling requirements and evaluated the impact it has had on standards and practices. The way the school has arranged planning, preparation and assessment cover for teaching staff supports the raising of standards in all subjects across the school.
135. The school works closely with its local High Schools and has an effective transition programme in place. Links with other schools within its cluster are strong and closure days are used to good effect in terms of moderating pupil outcomes and further development of transition projects. There are strong links with colleges of further education, and local community ICT classes and Family Learning groups.
136. The governing body have a thorough knowledge of the school, its successes and its developmental needs. They work closely with the head teacher and senior management team to set the strategic direction of the school. Individual governors have key roles by linking with co-ordinators to view subject standards and development needs. This is an outstanding feature of their role.
137. The governing body have named governors assigned to specific responsibilities and duties and appreciate the importance of their role as a critical friend to the school.
138. The governors are very supportive and aware of their responsibilities in setting the strategic development of the school. They are involved and contribute extremely well to both the School Development Plan and the self-evaluation report. They set targets for attainment in consultation with the head teacher and the LEA.
139. The governing body meets all regulatory and legal requirements.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

140. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
141. The inspection findings agree with the school's judgement in its self-evaluation in six of the seven key questions. A higher grade was awarded for Key Question 5 because there are a number of outstanding features which the school did not identify.
142. The school's self evaluation report is extremely comprehensive and detailed, clearly identifying the various sources of evidence to support the outcomes for each of the seven key questions. It identifies strengths and areas for improvement and these are used to inform the priorities in the school development plan.
143. There is an outstanding attitude of review and self criticism among staff and very well informed governors. They all contribute to the process of self-evaluation and are well aware of its findings. The process follows a well established system that involves all members of staff, pupils, parents and governors. The views of all stakeholders are central to the evaluation process. The school council is a good forum that allows pupils' views to be treated constructively.
144. The school's management structure closely defines the roles and responsibilities of all the areas and subjects for which members have a key responsibility.
145. A well organised rolling programme of classroom observations to monitor teaching and learning is in place and undertaken by the head teacher, deputy and subject leaders. Pupils' work and assessment results are very carefully scrutinised for trends and weaknesses and individual pupil's progress is regularly monitored through an effective tracking system. Each subject leader regularly reviews the area for which they are responsible and presents a detailed analysis of the findings including recent success and areas for future development.
146. The role of the foundation subject leader in the monitoring of teaching and learning is developing and the school acknowledges that there is still more work to be done to ensure progression of skills.
147. The school development plan is an outstanding document that clearly sets out responsibilities, costs and time and success criteria. It is continuously reviewed and monitored for progress by staff and governors. Consistent and measurable improvements over the last three years are a direct result of previous plans and actions detailed in the school development plan, for example the provision for design technology, art and design and music.

148. The school has very successfully addressed the key issues raised in the previous inspection report and improvements are clearly evident in areas that needed developing. Progress since the previous inspection has been significant. Outstanding examples are the work undertaken in the development of design technology throughout the school.

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

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

149. The findings of the inspection team match the findings made by the school in its self-evaluation report
150. The school is appropriately staffed with an effective team of qualified, experienced and specialist teachers and teaching assistants. Several new teachers have been recently appointed, including the deputy head teacher. Arrangements for the induction of new staff is good. Staff are effectively managed and deployed to enhance teaching and learning.
151. Staff are very well trained and take part in relevant and appropriate professional development. Teachers undertake relevant in-service courses to improve their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Training is appropriately linked to areas of school development and performance management. Teaching assistants have benefited from courses of various kinds. Teachers and classroom support assistants work together very effectively as a team to provide good quality education for pupils of all abilities. The school has a very strong team spirit.
152. The school administrator carries out the daily routines effectively and efficiently. The canteen staff, midday supervisors and cleaners all make significant contributions to the efficiency of the school and the sense of community. The caretaker carries out his duties in an exemplary way.
153. The school has a library, well equipped computer suite, many personal computers and every classroom has an interactive whiteboard, and these are used very well in most classes. These investments have had a positive impact on pupils' learning and successfully raised standards across the subjects generally.
154. The school has carried out appropriate developments regarding the outdoor area outside the nursery classroom for the Foundation Phase. A door has been widened and a ramp installed outside the reception class. Further work to enclose this outdoor area has already been approved.
155. The outside accommodation for key stage 1 and 2 provides a stimulating learning environment with a pond, butterfly garden, bird boxes, a greenhouse (partly made from recycled bottles) and climbing frames.

156. The school buildings are well maintained and effective use is made of all available facilities and space. However, the existence of a separate building for the nursery class makes it more difficult to develop a united ethos within the Foundation Phase. The hall is also a separate building, but the school ensures that all appropriate activities take place here and that whole school assemblies take place three times a week.
157. Learning resources are of good quality and readily accessible to staff and pupils. Recent acquisitions are in line with school priorities and suited to the age, ability and educational needs of pupils.
158. Displays in classrooms and corridors are used effectively as teaching resources. Good use is made of human resources from outside the school.
159. There are suitable arrangements in place to provide all members of staff with the required preparation, planning and assessment time and good use is made of this. The management of this has had a positive effect on subjects.
160. Workforce remodelling reforms have been fully implemented. Teaching and Learning Responsibility points have been implemented since 2005.
161. The head teacher, senior managers and governors regularly monitor the work of the school to ensure that spending decisions are matched to the school's priorities. Good use has been made of grants to further enhance provision for specific groups of pupils, eg RAISE. (Raising Attainment and Individual Standards in Education is a Welsh Assembly Government programme).
162. Subject leaders regularly review resources for their own subject areas. The school makes efficient and effective use of available finances. The school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Foundation Phase

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

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

#### Personal and social development, well being and cultural diversity

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

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

#### Good features

164. Nearly all children make good progress in their personal and social development, well being and cultural diversity. The vast majority leave their parents and carers happily and very quickly engage in their activities, where they show a good degree of involvement.
165. The majority of children develop good relationships with all practitioners and display a good degree of maturity in their dealings with others. They dress themselves appropriately for a variety of indoor and outdoor activities.
166. All children behave well and concentrate for suitable periods of time, taking turns and sharing resources well. Most display increasing independence and confidence when choosing their activities and are eager to find out and explore new experiences.
167. Older children show increasing maturity in their relationships with adults and other children and are confident in asking for help when needed. Most readily accept responsibility and show a good level of independence. They are aware of the need for personal hygiene and develop a good understanding of health issues. They willingly tidy the classroom at the end of activities, returning equipment and resources to the correct place.
168. They begin to develop a good knowledge and understanding of the culture of Wales and other wider cultures and faiths.

#### Shortcomings

169. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Language, literacy and communication skills**

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

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

### **Good features**

170. The youngest children engage well in discussion with practitioners and each other when choosing and taking part in various activities. In role-play and more formal settings most adapt their language well. Nearly all children produce effective pieces of writing throughout the day.
171. The majority write their own names with reasonable accuracy, most either trace or underwrite their own names, with a few making successful attempts at independent writing. Children display an enthusiastic interest in books, learn the names of the characters in the stories they enjoy and enjoy their content. They love stories and poems and are very keen to join in familiar ones.
172. They listen attentively during registration and answer questions appropriately. The majority participate well in small group discussions and their language skills develop well as a result.
173. The majority of older children make good progress in their language skills. They are beginning to understand what it means to be a good listener. They portray a character very well in role play, for example 'Bob the Builder', they ask imaginative questions and participate in sensible dialogue for a reasonable time. Older children speak clearly whilst describing their group work to the rest of the class.
174. Most older children sensibly compare and contrast two stories. They handle books well, illustrate booklets, and enjoy pictures and words. They confidently cut and stick pictures with the sound of the week, accurately sequence stories and use emergent writing linked to the theme of Houses and Homes well. More able children competently copy words and phrases. All children make good progress with their reading. The more able read confidently with expression and have good prediction skills. During *Fairy Tale Week* they competently read the story of Red Riding Hood and more able children successfully write letters from her to the class.

### **Shortcomings**

175. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Mathematical development**

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

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

### **Good features**

176. Children make good progress in using mathematics in their day to day activities and use correct mathematical terms. They develop their number skills well and are confident solving problems.

177. The youngest children develop a good understanding of number. They recall a good range of number songs and rhymes, using actions and appropriate fingers to count. Most select pictures and objects appropriately and repeat actions confidently. The vast majority reinforce their number skills in their daily activities through counting and matching patterns and shapes.
178. They talk effectively with practitioners and confidently use appropriate apparatus. They investigate weighing and floating and sinking. They confidently sort objects, giving sensible reasons for doing this. They use the outdoor environment effectively, using a wide range of materials well and they enjoy playing various games to reinforce their understanding of number and mathematical vocabulary.
179. The oldest children recognise numbers from 1 to 10 and the more able confidently count from 1 to 10 and add 4 and 6. The majority sensibly devise their own counting games using animals. They make a number display based on the theme of "houses made of bricks" and confidently talk about those numbers.
180. They can recognise and have a good understanding of the properties of 2D and 3D shapes. The majority have a good knowledge of the names and order of the days of the week as well as their birthday dates. They successfully weigh and measure different kinds of materials.

### **Shortcomings**

181. There are no important shortcomings.

### **Welsh language development**

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

**Reception: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

### **Good features**

182. Nearly all the youngest children progress well in their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language. They listen to and engage with songs and finger rhymes, such as 'Bore Da' enthusiastically. They respond well to daily greetings in Welsh and display cheerful responses to praise.
183. A minority of older children use the language in everyday situations, for example when they engage in simple songs or respond to greetings in Welsh.

### **Shortcomings**

184. Many older children do not use Welsh confidently and their repertoire of songs, rhymes and greetings is underdeveloped.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the world**

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

**Reception: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

### **Good features**

185. All children during snack time discussions and during 'Healthy Breakfast Week' gain a very good understanding of healthy and unhealthy foods.
186. Younger children show a keen interest in visitors to the school. During and following an architect's visit they begin to develop a good understanding of some of the vocabulary associated with that particular work. They ask sensible questions and use the appropriate vocabulary when drawing pictures following the visit.
187. Many investigate construction materials and realise tools can be used for different purposes. They use simple tools and techniques competently and appropriately and have a good awareness of health and safety issues.
188. They correctly notice the differences between features of the local environment. They confidently identify the buildings within the school grounds. Many develop a very good understanding of the essential features of successful growth in plants and animals.
189. Younger children develop their information and technology skills extremely well. They have a good understanding that devices can be given instructions. They use simple matching software independently. With support, they use a digital camera successfully to take pictures of the buildings and grounds in the area immediately outside the Nursery.
190. Older children quickly develop a secure understanding about the passage of time and are familiar with the order of routines of the school day. They competently compare and contrast bath night long ago with bath night today.
191. The majority have a good understanding that bulbs need to be planted in order to grow. They explore a range of materials and experiment with a variety of blowers developing a good understanding of which materials make the strongest houses.
192. Older children have an understanding of the features of the environment in the developing outdoor learning area.

### **Shortcomings**

193. Many older children lack confidence using information and technology equipment and their skills are underdeveloped.

## **Physical development**

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

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

### **Good features**

194. All younger children develop a good awareness of the need to be healthy. They control their body movements well, moving with good control and co-ordination appropriate to their age. They make good progress and develop their gross motor skills throughout the year by using the covered veranda area. They use a wide range of small and large apparatus confidently, showing a good awareness of space. Almost all confidently run, hop and jump on and off outdoor apparatus. All children enjoy and confidently use large wheeled toys. They display concern for other children when using them.
195. Older children have a good awareness of the need to warm up and cool down. They confidently use the space around them and show good levels of control when changing direction and speed. They move rhythmically to music and use their movements to express feeling well.
196. During Builder's Day they demonstrate increasing skill and control in the use of blocks and boxes whilst building a tower. Most make constructions successfully with large materials, such as cartons, long lengths of fabrics and planks.
197. Many quickly develop the skills to manipulate equipment effectively such as when they use jigsaws, scissors or crayons and pencils.

### **Shortcomings**

198. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Creative development**

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

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

### **Good features**

199. Younger children play expressively and creatively when taking part in role-play in the fruit shop or café. They act out roles such as a policeman or lady with confidence. Most children's cutting, moulding and sticking skills develop effectively and they safely use a wide range of media and tools. When creating a large floor picture of a wolf nearly all children successfully draw shapes and mix colours showing good independence.
200. They respond well to music and movement. Almost all sing a good range of simple songs from memory and clap simple repeated rhythms enthusiastically. Most explore quiet and loud sounds and learn to keep a steady beat well.

201. Many of the oldest children colour and paint realistic images well. Following a nature walk in the autumn, many further develop their techniques to make good quality collages. Most children explore texture, mix, shape, arrange and combine materials well to create their own images and objects. These express their ideas, feelings and memories, for example a forest for Red Riding Hood. They successfully solve challenges, for example making houses for the "Three Little Pigs".

### **Shortcomings**

202. Although there are no important shortcomings, a minority of older children have a limited understanding of shape, pattern and colour.

## **Mathematics**

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

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

### **Good features**

203. Pupils make good progress in counting and ordering numbers throughout key stage 1.
204. By the end of key stage 1 pupils have a good understanding of doubling and halving numbers to 20 and above. They also have a good recall of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables and a few use good mental strategies for adding and subtracting numbers.
205. Pupils in key stage 1 have a good knowledge of basic two and three-dimensional shapes. The more able successfully describe similarities and differences between the properties of different shapes.
206. Pupils with SEN make good progress in learning basic mathematical facts and use their knowledge effectively in well-structured problems.
207. Most pupils in lower key stage 2 correctly identify symmetry of simple 2 dimensional shapes. They have a good understanding how to reflect simple shapes using mirrors.
208. The majority of the pupils make good progress through key stage 2 in learning and applying multiplication and division facts. By the upper key stage 2 they respond very quickly and accurately to quick fire questions involving a combination of mathematical operations.
209. Key stage 2 pupils are developing a good mathematical vocabulary and use the appropriate terminology when discussing problems. They show a good understanding of the four rules of number and can explain that addition and subtraction, as well as multiplication and division are contrasting processes.
210. Most pupils set out written calculations very carefully and accurately.

211. In key stage 2 pupils continue to reinforce their work in mathematics with an increasing understanding of patterns and relations. They use mathematical terms and discuss features of polygons and shapes accurately.
212. In key stage 2 pupils' are very successful in their learning during Maths week; they regularly achieve the aims and apply their skills of number, research, problem solving and ICT to successfully complete the task.

### **Shortcomings**

213. Although there are no important shortcomings, a small minority of pupils in key stage 2 are not always accurate when dealing with place value.
214. More able pupils' application of space shape and measure is underdeveloped.

<b>Design technology</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

### **Outstanding features**

215. Pupils of all ages regularly succeed in producing original designs and making extremely good quality products from a comprehensive range of materials. They have a very well developed understanding of control technology and incorporate this into many of their design topics from initial design to final product. This is an outstanding feature.
216. Pupils of all ages effectively link their work in design technology with their studies in other subjects, producing work of a very high standard and clearly meeting 'fit for purpose'. Examples of this are the upper key stage 2 project linked to fashion in the 1940's that very successfully combined mathematics, art and design, science and history.
217. Pupils of all ages thoughtfully and successfully use a range of supporting information gathered from various sources to support their design and technology work. They generate a very good range of ideas, considering health and safety issues before producing drawings / patterns / recipes with detailed outline dimensions and sequence of manufacture. On completion of products, pupils reflect critically on their own work, making changes where necessary. Using appropriate descriptions and terminology pupils very successfully relate their own work to the context with which it is intended, such as various materials. For example, silk as a suitable dress fabric.
218. Most pupils in key stage 1 can discuss an existing and familiar product in terms of appearance and fit for purpose. Most confidently use a range of simple tools very successfully to manufacture three and four dimensional models. They use appropriate language and use detailed drawings to convey their original ideas.

219. In lower key stage 2 pupils make exceptionally attractive story books with moving parts. The final design then incorporates short written notes on how the task is to be completed. They are highly successful in producing labelled working drawings that clearly indicate the range of materials to be used.
220. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are successfully challenged to design a new line of attractive biscuits for Easter to boost current sale levels which have fallen by 20 per cent. Pupils successfully create logos, undertake a consumer survey, contrast and analyse data, research cost of ingredients, use spreadsheets to calculate the profit and design final packaging using a range of information and communication technology software. They are highly successful in combining a range of specific skills, clearly underpinned by high levels of enthusiasm based on knowledge and understanding.
221. Throughout the school there is strong evidence regarding the regular use of construction kits. An outstanding feature of all work undertaken is the use of the digital camera to record pupils' work from conception to completion. This valuable resource provides a wealth of well planned opportunities to discuss design implications and improvements.

#### **Good features**

222. Pupils pay good attention to detail and sensitively discuss their models. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual development.
223. The majority of pupils confidently experiment with their initial designs and learn from their mistakes. They willingly and maturely explain how they overcome their difficulties. For example, they rapidly discover the problem encountered when joining certain materials.
224. All pupils make strong connections with their work in mathematics and science. For example they understand rotation and realise that materials such as paper and fabric respond differently to the application of paint.

#### **Shortcomings**

225. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>History</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

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

#### **Good Features**

226. At both key stages, pupils carefully handle historical artefacts and take a keen interest in their visits to historical places. As a result, they develop a genuine empathy with events and people from the past.
227. Pupils throughout the school have a good understanding of timelines relevant to their designated study period and of their own personal milestones.

228. In key stage 1, pupils develop a good sense of chronology. They use their numerical skills to work out the passage of time well. Pupils have a good understanding that things change considerably over time and are able to order events and objects and express their thoughts about then and now.
229. Key stage 1 pupils handle objects and artefacts carefully and sensitively. They are able to name, talk about many famous personalities from the past, such as Roald Dahl.
230. Pupils throughout the school use a developing range of historical terminology. In key stage 2, pupils make good use of books, the internet and computer software to research information about the history of Wales and further afield.
231. Key stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of the key features about people who lived at different times in the past, such as the Stuarts and their visit to Llancaeach Fawr. They also investigate and develop a good knowledge of key local people in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Aneuin Bevan, and the impact their decisions made on our lives today.
232. They recognise significant features about different aspects of lives such as differences between homes, school and work.
233. Older pupils have a good grasp of which sources are primary and which are secondary and the importance of differentiating between fact and opinion. They sensitively consider the types of questions they need to ask and what makes a good question.
234. Older key stage 2 pupils have a good sense of chronology. Many can deduce the causes and effects of events under study.

### **Shortcomings**

235. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Art and Design**

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

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

### **Good features**

236. In most classes pupils produce a good range of art work that is exciting, vibrant and colourful. Throughout the school the majority of pupils use their sketchbooks to good effect as they confidently refine and evaluate their skills in line, tone and shading. Pupils are very enthusiastic in their approach to art lessons and are keen to participate.
237. In key stage 1 pupils make good use of a wide range of equipment, materials and techniques to create paintings, prints and collages. Most confidently experiment with colour, mixing shades and, by the end of Year 2, the standard

of painting and drawing is good overall. From an early age most pupils are well skilled in using computer art programs as a media.

238. Across the school pupils' creativity and understanding are greatly enhanced by the knowledge of well known Welsh artists. Most confidently make comparisons between methods and techniques used, for example when studying the work of Martyn Evans.
239. In upper key stage 2 pupils successfully investigate and produce good art work themselves from the differing style of Tingatinga Art. Most have a good knowledge of proportion and the accurate positioning of features such as the head, knees and feet and the creation of a blurred effect to represent movement. Many successfully transfer their drawings to polystyrene tiles in preparation for printing.

### **Shortcomings**

240. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Music</b>
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**Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

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

### **Good features**

241. The quality of singing is tuneful in both key stages. Pupils display enjoyment when singing well known hymns in morning assemblies. They know a good range of songs and pupils in key stage 2 show an increasing ability to sing in two parts, singing their parts well following the changes in tempo and dynamics.
242. Key stage 1 pupils begin to develop a good understanding of the basic music elements of pace, dynamics and rhythm. They repeat rhythm patterns correctly and keep a steady beat as they listen to, march or play percussion instruments. Key stage 1 pupils display a developing awareness and identification of various tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Their listening skills are good.
243. Key stage 2 pupils display a good sense of rhythm as they confidently clap and perform a series of more complex rhythm patterns. Most perform and accompany songs very effectively, accurately reading and interpreting a graphic score and playing accordingly. Pupils collaborate very well in designated group work.
244. Older key stage 2 pupils explain texture in written music, demonstrating a good awareness of drone and ostinato. Most pupils read musical notation with increasing confidence.
245. Throughout the school most pupils develop a good understanding and knowledge of composing using information and communication technology.

They confidently use strands within programs to enhance their compositions and skilfully incorporate musical elements in their finished work to illustrate, for example, the main events in *Bedd Gelert*.

246. Pupils throughout key stage 1 and key stage 2 show a developing awareness of the importance of appraising their own performance and those of others. They sensitively offer positive suggestions as to how to improve their compositions and performances.
247. Pupils' appreciation of Welsh music is promoted very well through listening to the music of Karl Jenkins. Pupils' performing skills are further enhanced through regular opportunities to perform in front of their peers, in assembly and when taking their music out into the local community.

### **Shortcomings**

248. There are no important shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection

The school is pleased to receive such a positive inspection report with its findings confirming that Derwendeg is a good school.

We would like to acknowledge the professional, fair and courteous approach of the inspection team. Faced by imposing weather conditions the inspection team worked scrupulously to ensure a rigorous examination of the work of the school.

The school is pleased that the inspection team agreed with the school's self evaluation report in six of the seven key questions and that in the other key question the inspection team identified significant outstanding features and awarded a higher grade.

The school is particularly pleased with the following findings:

- The quality of teaching and pupils standards of achievement observed in lessons during the inspection is above those reported in the Chief Inspector of School's report for 2007-2008.
- Pupils standards and progress in listening skills and their ability to work together are outstanding features.
- The school provides excellent personal support and guidance to pupils.
- The overall provision for learners with additional learning needs is outstanding.
- The innovative, collaborative approach the school uses for planning learning activities in the different subjects or areas of the curriculum is a strong feature.
- Self-evaluation processes and subsequent strategic planning and leadership are outstanding features.
- The school's motto 'Learning with and from each other to achieve success' is clearly evident in practice.
- The school has a very strong team spirit
- Progress since the last inspection has been significant. An outstanding example is the work undertaken in the development of DT.

The school will build upon the findings of this successful report to ensure it provides the highest quality of education for all its pupils. An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations in the report, most of which already feature in the School Development Plan. The development of pupils' bilingual skills and writing across the curriculum will continue to be focus targets in future School Development Plans. The school will continue to work with parents and the EWO to improve pupil attendance. The school is keen to put strategies in place to maintain, consolidate and further refine the very good practice across the school. This will be a key feature in future School Development Plan actions.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the recommendations will be sent to all parents and progress will be reported on in the governors' annual report to parents.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Derwendeg Primary School
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Hengoed Road, Cefn Hengoed, Hengoed, Caerphilly.
Postcode	CF82 7HP
Telephone number	01443 813138

Head teacher	Miss Lorraine Hunter
Date of appointment	September 2002
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Mark Williams
Registered inspector	Mr E. Ian Kelly
Dates of inspection	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2009 The inspection was severely affected by the extreme snow and cold that affected the whole of the country.

## 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	22 (11)	28	24	29	32	38	25	34	232

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	9	2	10

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	7.3:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26.25
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.11:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	86.5%	92.1%	90.4%
Summer 2008	83.0%	89.2%	91.5%
Autumn 2008	81.7%	93.2%	92.4%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	31.9%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix 3

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:		30		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	83	7
		National	-	3	14	63	20
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	83	7
		National	-	4	15	55	26
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	13	87	0
		National	-	5	16	67	11
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	83	7
		National	-	2	11	64	23
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	83	7
		National	-	2	11	65	22
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	7	87	7
		National	-	1	9	66	24

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

In the school	87	In Wales	80
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D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements  
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y6		39						
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	5	21	49	26
		National	-	-	-	-	1	4	16	50	29
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School									
		National									
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	49	28
		National	-	-	-	-	1	3	15	50	30
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	59	23
		National	-	-	-	-	-	2	12	52	32

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)

by teacher assessment		by test	
In the school	69%	In the school	
In Wales	74%	In Wales	

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

## Appendix 4

### **Evidence base of the inspection**

A team of four inspectors visited the school over twelve inspector days. The head teacher was a nominee and played a supportive and active role during the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- thirty two lessons or part lessons;
- Registrations, assemblies and acts of collective worship

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- Staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- Senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff;
- The local authority representatives;
- Groups of pupils;
- The school council and listened to pupils.

The team also considered:

- the school's self evaluation report;
- forty eight responses to the parental questionnaire;
- documentation provided to the school before and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work from all year groups and
- samples of pupils' reports

Post inspection meetings were held with the head teacher, staff, governing body and local authority representatives to discuss the outcomes of the inspection.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<b>Team member</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Mr Ian Kelly Registered Inspector	Context, summary and recommendations Key Questions 1, 2 and 5. Mathematics and History
Mr Peter Clark Team Inspector	Key Questions 2, 3 and 6 Art, Design Technology, Music, Music and SEN
Mrs Helen Smith Team Inspector	Key Question 7 Early Years and bilingualism
Miss Janet Warr Lay Inspector	Key question 4 Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3 and 4.
Miss Lorraine Hunter Nominee	Team support and contributions to team meetings.

### **Contractor**

Evenlode Education Ltd  
Little Garth  
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### **Acknowledgement**

The inspection team would like to thank the head teacher, staff, governors, pupils and parents of the school for their co-operation, flexibility and courtesy throughout the inspection