

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

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

**Fairoak Nursery School  
Church Road  
Newport  
NP19 7EJ**

**School Number: 6801005**

**Date of Inspection: 27 April 2009**

**by**

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**Date of Publication: 01 July 2009**

**Under Estyn contract number: 1123208**

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Fairoak Nursery 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 Fairoak Nursery School took place between 27/04/09 and 29/04/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Stephanie James 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 a **full** 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

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Context</b>	1
<b>Summary</b>	3
<b>Recommendations</b>	7
<b>Standards</b>	8
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	8
<b>The quality of education and training</b>	11
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	11
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	13
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	17
<b>Leadership and management</b>	21
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	21
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	23
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	24
<b>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</b>	26
Foundation phase	26
<b>School's response to the inspection</b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	
1 Basic information about the school	
2 School data and indicators	
3 National Curriculum assessments results	
4 Evidence base of the inspection	
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	

## Context

### The nature of the provider

- 1 Fairoak Nursery School is located on the eastern side of the City of Newport in a densely populated area not far from the city centre. There have been some significant changes to the school population since the last inspection. More children now come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, with a number of families living in supported housing. There has also been an increase in the need for intervention by support agencies such as family literacy, basic skills and social services. However, sixty per cent of children attend from outside the nursery's catchment area as a result of parental choice.
- 2 The nursery caters for children aged three to four years. On the first day of the inspection, there were 73 children on roll, including two 'rising threes' who were starting school for the first time. Another three 'rising three' children joined during the inspection week, but are not included in the total of 73 on roll. Nearly all children attend part-time for either the morning or afternoon session. Although its intake represents a wide range of ability, the school reports that increasing numbers of children have social and/or behavioural problems and a minority have complex linguistic needs. Forty-seven per cent of children have below average skill levels on entry according to the school's baseline assessments.
- 3 Seventy-three per cent of children are of white ethnic origin while twenty-seven per cent come from a range of ethnic minority communities. Eighty-three per cent of all children in the school speak English at home. Other languages spoken at home by children include Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Hindi, Thai, Luganda, French, German, Dutch, Polish and Slovak. No child speaks Welsh as a first language. Nine children receive support in learning English as an additional language.
- 4 At the time of the last inspection in January 2003, the school shared a head teacher with Rockfield Nursery School. The current acting head teacher was appointed in September 2008 for two years and is solely responsible for the leadership and management of Fairoak Nursery. A 'Flying Start' group for two year olds, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, operates on the same site under the overall management of the head teacher. This provision did not form part of the inspection. Most of these children enter the nursery when they are three. Breakfast and lunch clubs were started in the nursery in December 2008.
- 5 There are two full-time teachers including the head teacher. In addition, there are two full-time and six part-time teaching assistants, two of whom were appointed in April 2009 to support the new group of 'rising threes'. A part-time member of staff who gives specialist support to children learning English as an additional language on one afternoon a week was appointed at the same time.

- 6 The nursery achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time and the Healthy Schools Award in 2008. It also gained the Eco Schools' Green Flag status in March 2009 in recognition of its commitment to conservation and the environment.

### **The school's priorities and targets**

- 7 The main aim of the school is to help children "grow in confidence and develop a passion for learning that will stay with them forever". Its mission statement is: 'Actively Engaging Lively Minds'.
- 8 Main priorities in the school's development plan for 2008 to 2009 are the further development of:

#### **Basic skills of literacy and numeracy**

##### **Equalities and Inclusion:**

the Building Learning Power initiative;  
the 'One Step at a Time' programme;  
the Disability Equality Plan;  
monitoring of Individual Learning Plans;  
identification and monitoring of more able children;  
challenge of stereotypes.

#### **Welsh development and bilingualism**

##### **Early Years/Foundation Phase:**

the outdoor environment/forest school;  
use of observation for assessment;  
the project approach and skills ladders across all areas of learning; and  
key workers' confidence in the use of assessment.

## Summary

- 9 Fairoak Nursery is a very happy school where all members of staff work knowledgeably and enthusiastically, under the excellent leadership of the acting head teacher, to provide a rich and varied range of relevant, enjoyable learning experiences that successfully promote high standards of achievement. There are many outstanding features in the quality of its provision. The nursery fully achieves the key aim summarised in its mission statement: 'Actively Engaging Lively Minds'.

### Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	Grade 1
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	Grade 1
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	Grade 1
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	Grade 1
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 1

### Standards

- 10 All children make good progress in the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills, but many make outstanding progress. Boys make at least as good progress as girls. Children identified as having special education needs (SEN) make excellent progress relative to their abilities. Children learning English as an additional language make extremely good progress in developing their understanding and use of English. More able children flourish in all areas of learning, but also in terms of special talents they may have.
- 11 In the sessions or activities observed during the inspection, standards were judged as follows:

### Grades for standards

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
45%	55%	0%	0%	0%

- 12 The percentage of sessions where standards were awarded grade 2 or better is much higher than the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in his most recent report. In 2007-2008, 12 per cent of standards in

primary schools inspected in Wales achieved a grade 1, 72 per cent achieved grade 2 and 15 per cent achieved a grade 3.

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

### Standards in Areas of Learning

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity	Grade 1
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Grade 1
Mathematical Development	Grade 1
Welsh Language Development	Grade 2
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Grade 1
Physical Development	Grade 1
Creative Development	Grade 2

- 14 Standards and progress in children's use of the key skills of speaking, writing and use of numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) are good with outstanding features. Their use of the key skills of listening and reading are good with no important shortcomings. Nearly all children listen attentively in small group situations but a minority find it difficult to sustain their listening in a larger group. Standards in bilingualism are good. Children correctly use a wide range of questions, greetings and commands in Welsh.
- 15 Attendance rates for the past three terms average 87.3 per cent. Most absence is due to illness and recurring medical conditions but holidays in term time also have an adverse impact on overall rates of attendance for the school.
- 16 The personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children is outstanding. They are developing a very secure set of values to guide them. Their respect for diversity and understanding of environmental, conservation and global issues is excellent, relative to their young age.

### The quality of education and training

- 17 In the sessions or activities observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

#### Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
45%	55%	0%	0%	0%

- 18 The percentage of teaching achieving a grade 2 or better is much higher than the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in his most recent report. In 2007-2008, 16 per cent of the teaching in primary schools inspected in Wales achieved a grade 1, 67 per cent achieved grade 2 and 15 per cent achieved a grade 3.

- 19 Outstanding features in the quality of teaching include very well planned, stimulating learning experiences, exemplary relationships, strong emphasis on developing children's language, high levels of professional knowledge among both teaching and support staff and very skilled intervention in children's activities.
- 20 The few minor shortcomings in the quality of teaching usually occur where the size of the group is too large to be managed with maximum effectiveness and makes too great a demand on the listening and concentration skills of very young children.
- 21 Strategies for assessment are very well matched to clear learning objectives. Children are encouraged to reflect on their learning and identify how they might do better. Assessment fully informs planning for future learning.
- 22 The school's provision is highly effective in meeting the needs and interests of all learners including those with SEN, those with English as an additional language and children who are more able or talented.
- 23 The school's partnerships with parents, the local community, other schools and higher education institutions are very successful and have outstanding features that enrich the life and work of the school and enhance children's learning experiences.
- 24 The school provides outstanding care, support and guidance for children. The acting head teacher and staff very successfully identify children's personal and emotional needs and create the conditions in which they can thrive.
- 25 Very effective arrangements secure the well-being of children. A comprehensive range of detailed policies and procedures to promote their health, safety and well-being have recently been reviewed and updated and expectations of all members of staff are clear. The school makes outstanding efforts to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Children are very well supervised at all times.

### **Leadership and management**

- 26 The acting head teacher has been in post for just two terms. She has enthusiastically embraced the school's strong traditions while simultaneously reviewing the quality of its provision and developing new initiatives and improvements in pursuit of excellence for all. She has an absolute commitment to the school, provides an exceptionally clear sense of direction and is a very good role model. A very positive team spirit is clearly apparent among all staff.
- 27 Management responsibilities have been reviewed and redistributed very effectively to take into account the expertise and interests of different practitioners, including highly qualified and skilled teaching assistants. There are excellent lines of communication and everyone is clear about expectations regarding their different roles.

- 28 Arrangements for practitioners' professional development are tightly linked to priorities in the school development plan and ensure equality of opportunity for all. The very positive outcomes of in-service training are evident in the consistently high quality of teaching and professional knowledge among staff. The induction of new staff is also good with outstanding features, enabling them to develop their skills and their knowledge of individual children as quickly as possible.
- 29 The governing body provides outstanding support to the acting head teacher in her leadership role. Between them, governors have an exceptionally wide range of relevant qualifications, experience and specialist knowledge in the field of early years education. In many helpful ways, they assist the acting head teacher in setting the strategic direction of the school. Nearly all members of the governing body are regular and frequent visitors to the school and know the quality of its provision extremely well. They act as a very positive, but constructively critical, friend to the school. The governing body meets regulatory and legal requirements.
- 30 A culture of self-evaluation is very well developed and the school has an outstanding awareness of its strengths and points for development. The views of practitioners, children, parents, the community and the governing body are actively sought and acted upon. Every aspect of the school's provision, especially those directly affecting standards, is constantly monitored and evaluated so that the process of self-evaluation is an on-going one. It effectively identifies relevant priorities that need to be addressed in the school development plan. Actions taken have clearly resulted in measurable improvements. The self-evaluation process is extremely accurate. The overall judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report precisely match those made by the inspection team in all seven key questions.
- 31 There are many outstanding features in the way leaders and managers use all resources, including staff, and the accommodation. Close monitoring by the governing body ensures best value for money before appointments or purchases are made. The quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, guidance and support, and leadership and management are of a very high standard and demonstrate clearly that the nursery provides outstanding value for money.
- 32 The school has made good progress in addressing the issues for improvement identified during the last inspection. It has broadly maintained high standards in all areas of learning and in all aspects of its provision.

## Recommendations

- 33 In order to improve the school needs to:
- R1 Review, monitor and adjust the size of groups, when necessary, in order to maximise opportunities for children's learning.

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 1: Good with outstanding features

- 34 The inspection team's findings match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 35 On entry to the nursery, nearly half the children have skills that are below average overall according to the school's baseline assessments. Fifty-one per cent of children are below average in their language and communication skills. All children make good progress in the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills, but many make outstanding progress, exceeding expected levels of achievement in relation to their starting points.
- 36 Although more boys than girls are identified as having specific difficulties on entry to school, they make at least as good progress as girls.
- 37 Children identified as having special education needs (SEN) make excellent progress relative to their abilities, particularly in aspects such as language development and learning to meet the behavioural expectations of the nursery.
- 38 Children learning English as an additional language make extremely good progress in developing their understanding and use of English. A few children display exceptional multi-lingual skills, developing confidence not only in their first language but also in Welsh as well as English.
- 39 More able children flourish in all areas of learning, but also in terms of special talents they may have in aspects such as reading, drawing and ball skills.
- 40 In the sessions or activities observed during the inspection, standards were judged as follows:

#### Grades for standards

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
45%	55%	0%	0%	0%

- 41 The percentage of sessions achieving grade 2 or better is much higher than the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in his most recent report. In 2007-2008, 12 per cent of standards in primary schools inspected in Wales achieved a grade 1, 72 per cent achieved grade 2 and 15 per cent achieved a grade 3.
- 42 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good, and often

outstanding, progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes. Standards in the seven areas of learning for children under five were judged as follows:

### Standards in Areas of Learning

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity	Grade 1
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Grade 1
Mathematical Development	Grade 1
Welsh Language Development	Grade 2
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Grade 1
Physical Development	Grade 1
Creative Development	Grade 2

- 43 Standards and progress in children's use of the key skills of speaking, writing and use of numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) are good with outstanding features. They use their speaking, writing and numeracy skills extremely well in a very wide range of role-play activities and in more focused adult-led learning experiences. The school's records of children's progress show that in only six months following their first assessment, half the children reached the highest level of competence in using the computer.
- 44 Standards and progress in children's use of the key skills of listening and reading are good with no important shortcomings. Nearly all children listen attentively to their teachers and respond appropriately in small group situations but a minority find it difficult to sustain their listening in a larger group. Most children are developing a good understanding that books are a source of pleasure and information and use them to supplement their learning across the curriculum.
- 45 Standards in bilingualism are good. Children correctly use a wide range of questions and commands in Welsh. They greet each other and talk about the weather confidently. Their bilingual skills are developing well through play in various areas of learning, particularly in outdoor physical development sessions.
- 46 Most learners apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired extremely well in their independent activities. There are numerous examples where, as a result of previous demonstrations or modelling by practitioners and supported practice of their skills, children confidently and independently follow their own lines of interest and inquiry using appropriate strategies, tools and materials.
- 47 Many children show an excellent awareness of what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. They identify strengths and areas of difficulty in their work with increasing maturity. For example, when making a collage of sunflower heads using seeds, rice and dried beans, one child said, "It was tricky picking up the little seeds. It was easier if I picked up a handful."

- 48 At the end of topics such as 'Our Changing World', many children reflect very well on what they have learned. One child said, "I learned about frogs - some change colour and some don't. I've learned how to write my name now – when I was little I couldn't, so I'm bigger now."
- 49 All learners make good, and often outstanding, progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage of learning. Receiving infant or primary schools confirm that they arrive with high standards of attainment, especially in the key areas of personal and social development, language and communication skills and mathematical development.
- 50 Children's behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding and contribute significantly to the standards they achieve in all areas of learning, particularly in their personal and social development.
- 51 All children are enthusiastic learners and enjoy their work and play. In most situations they listen carefully to staff, are interested in everything around them, eager to join in activities and keen to do their best. They take delight in their own achievements and in those of others.
- 52 Attendance rates for the past three terms average 87.3 per cent. Most absence is due to early childhood illnesses and recurring medical conditions. However, holidays taken in term time also have an adverse impact on overall rates of attendance for the school. Most children are punctual, keen to attend school and settle quickly into their daily routines.
- 53 Nearly all children are making excellent progress in developing the capacity to work independently and make their own choices and decisions. They are confident and eager to explore new learning situations.
- 54 The personal, moral, social and wider development of all children is outstanding. They are developing a very secure set of values to guide them and understand, for example, concepts such as fairness and kindness. Their understanding of environmental, conservation and global issues is excellent, relative to their young age.
- 55 Almost without exception, children demonstrate an excellent understanding of equal opportunities and a respect for diversity within their school and the wider world. They are accepting of each other, work and play co-operatively together and help and support each other very well.
- 56 Children take an active part in the life and work of the local community and support many community activities. They are well prepared for participation both locally and in the wider community of Newport. Children are gaining a good understanding about the range of work people do within their community.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 57 The inspection team's findings match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 58 The overall quality of teaching from both teaching and support staff is good with outstanding features and meets children's needs and the requirements of the Foundation Phase curriculum extremely well.
- 59 In the sessions or activities observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

#### Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
45%	55%	0%	0%	0%

- 60 The percentage of sessions or activities where the quality of teaching achieved a grade 2 or better is much higher than the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in his most recent report. In 2007-2008, 16 per cent of the teaching in lessons in primary schools inspected in Wales achieved a grade 1, 67 per cent achieved grade 2 and 15 per cent achieved a grade 3.
- 61 Outstanding features observed in the quality of teaching include:
- highly stimulating learning experiences with very clear learning objectives that are exceptionally well planned and organised;
  - exemplary relationships between adults and children and the high priority given to children's emotional and personal well-being;
  - a consistent emphasis by practitioners on helping children understand and use an increasingly wide range of vocabulary, phrases and sentences;
  - practitioners' recognition and understanding of children as individuals;
  - very high levels of professional knowledge among practitioners, including support staff, about young children's learning and development;
  - skilled, sensitive intervention in children's self-chosen activities in order to deepen and extend their learning;
  - the modelling of role-play activities so that children are aware of the many ways in which they could engage in imaginary play, thus enabling them to sustain their play for longer periods of time; and
  - personalised provision that offers equal opportunities and meets all learners' needs extremely well, including those of more able or talented children.

- 62 Most practitioners are skilled at knowing when to direct and organise children's activities and when to allow them to follow their own lines of inquiry and interest. Children are constantly encouraged to work and play independently and make their own choices.
- 63 More experienced practitioners are very skilled at asking open questions that prompt children to think more deeply and express their ideas. They take every incidental opportunity to promote children's use of key skills such as numeracy. A good example is where the teacher encouraged children to estimate the number of spades of compost it would take to fill a pot before planting a turnip seed.
- 64 Practitioners share their professional knowledge very effectively to support those who are less experienced or new to the school and help them to develop their skills to the benefit of the children.
- 65 The few minor shortcomings in the quality of teaching usually occur where the size of the group is too large to be managed with maximum effectiveness and makes too great a demand on the listening and concentration skills of very young children.
- 66 Occasionally, practitioners try to speak to children when they are not all listening or do not curtail many contributions from the same individual which begins to result in loss of attention from the majority.
- 67 Practitioners meet the English language needs of children, including those with English as an additional language, extremely well. Most practitioners use incidental Welsh effectively throughout the day in a variety of contexts and, on the whole, promote bilingual skills effectively. However, the use of incidental Welsh is inconsistent between practitioners.
- 68 The assessment process has many outstanding features because its use is a key tool in planning the next steps in children's learning and helping them to achieve their full potential. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements.
- 69 Practitioners assess children's progress very well. Strategies for assessment are very well matched to clearly identified purposes and learning objectives and assessment fully informs planning for future learning. Procedures are very effective and manageable, including those for children with SEN. Very detailed information is provided about children's progress in the seven areas of learning.
- 70 Foundation Phase training on observation and assessment is having a very positive impact on how and what practitioners assess in terms of learning. Spontaneous observations and planned, focused assessments provide key workers with a very clear view of children's individual achievements. The wide variety of assessment formats, field notes, photographs and discussions with children provide very useful information about children's levels of involvement and their well-being and social development.

- 71 On-entry screening is used most effectively to assist in planning to meet the needs of individuals from the day they start in the nursery and is a major strength of the assessment process. The excellent tracking system monitors progress of particular groups across the areas of learning. Very informative profiles outlining children's development and progress are kept.
- 72 Practitioners ensure that children understand the purpose of assessment and their role in planning their own progress is exceptional. They play a prominent part in evaluating their own progress. Practitioners provide valuable oral feedback to children. Through discussing their comments or photographic evidence with them, children are encouraged to reflect on their learning and identify their strengths and how they might do better. Another outstanding feature is the effective participation by children with SEN in preparing their Individual Learning Plans.
- 73 Parents are extremely well informed of their children's progress and the way forward through termly reviews and consultations. The informal feedback they receive through daily contact with practitioners is an outstanding feature of the provision. Parents greatly appreciate the quality of the information they receive on their child's progress.
- 74 Annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements and provide detailed information about children's progress in all areas of learning, together with guidance on further development. Parents are invited to respond to the reports and usually do so. Records are transferred to infant schools to ensure that they have a clear picture of children's progress and achievements.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 75 The inspection team's findings match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 76 The nursery is outstanding in the way in which it provides a stimulating and exciting learning environment, with all practitioners ensuring opportunities for active first-hand experiences so that children develop appropriate skills. The provision is highly effective in meeting the needs and interests of all learners including those with SEN, those with English as an additional language and more able and talented children. The school's provision complies with statutory requirements.
- 77 Curriculum documentation and schemes of work give extremely clear guidance about the development of children's skills. The curriculum is rich, broad and well balanced and ensures continuity and progression in children's learning. The introduction of a project-based approach ensures active learning experiences that are cross-curricular and well supported by an

- outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. Very imaginative use is made of indoor and outdoor environments.
- 78 Purposeful and effective planning is an outstanding feature of the provision. Detailed long-term planning focuses on skills development. Short-term planning fully reflects the school's commitment to Foundation Phase principles and is organised on a fortnightly basis. Daily plans are completely informed by assessment outcomes and differentiation in planning caters extremely well for the needs of children of all abilities and backgrounds.
- 79 There is an excellent balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Flexibility in planning allows for changes in activities when children spontaneously show an interest in unexpected topics.
- 80 Children learn individually, in groups and through whole class activities and these include a very good range of investigative tasks. In general, flexible grouping arrangements ensure that children's needs are met very well. However, in a few sessions, the size of the group is too large to enable children to maintain their interest and attention.
- 81 Provision for developing key skills is good with outstanding features. There are many opportunities for children to talk to adults and with their peers and to develop their early reading and writing skills in meaningful contexts. Occasionally, the development of children's listening skills is hindered in large group situations.
- 82 Opportunities for children to develop their numeracy skills are integrated most effectively into all activities and impact positively on children's confidence in handling numbers. Provision for developing ICT skills is excellent, with equipment such as 'Digiblu' cameras and digital microscopes, as well as computers, in constant use by children.
- 83 Problem solving and thinking skills are planned and promoted in an outstanding way, as is the development of independence. The development of children's creativity is good.
- 84 The nursery broadens and enriches children's learning experiences particularly well through off-site activities. Children benefit greatly from visits to exciting places such as Newport Wetlands, the local church and the Forest School in Goytre Wharf. Physical skills are much enhanced by weekly sports coaching sessions by specialist teachers.
- 85 A large network of visitors also helps to make learning come alive. Projects such as the 'insect hotel' and 'hedgehog home' and the construction of a living willow sculpture house extend children's learning in exciting ways.
- 86 Extra-curricular activities such as the weekend mural painting sessions, the gardening club and the lending library all feed into the Children's University accreditation's and contribute greatly to children's development. An outstanding feature of the provision is the monthly 6 o'clock 'bedtime story' in

the nursery, when children come back to school in pyjamas and dressing gown with their favourite toy before going home to bed. Once a term, the 'bedtime story' occurs at the local library which helps encourage parents to use it with their children.

- 87 The aims and objectives of the nursery reflect the school's commitment to the children's personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well indeed. The school's provision for the development of children's personal and social education is an outstanding feature and underpins all aspects of its work.
- 88 Children have opportunities to experience awe and wonder in the garden area as they see their plants grow from seed. Collecting for charities and undertaking responsibilities extend their personal and social development in imaginative ways. Provision for moral development is outstanding and is promoted by the excellent examples set by all practitioners and the clear values and high expectations in the school.
- 89 The school's provision for cultural development is outstanding. Children are made aware of their own culture through the effective *Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, the Welsh dimension to the curriculum. They are introduced to cultural diversity through many cookery, craft, dance and music activities.
- 90 The school's partnerships with parents, the local community, other schools and higher education institutions are highly successful and have outstanding features that enrich the life and work of the school and enhance children's learning experiences.
- 91 Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and proud of the school. They have great confidence in the acting head teacher and staff, value the school's welcoming nature and appreciate the strong sense of community it fosters. The genuine warmth, respect and partnership between parents and staff are outstanding features and are of great benefit to children.
- 92 The quality of information provided for parents is excellent. Parents are kept very well informed through regular newsletters, curriculum topic information, an informative annual report of the governing body, a comprehensive prospectus and by regular meetings with staff to discuss children's work and progress.
- 93 The school has established highly successful partnerships with several institutes of higher education and regularly provides training facilities for student teachers and students undertaking vocational and child care qualifications. Students from local secondary schools also undertake work-experience placements at the school. Students are extremely well supported by staff and they make a good contribution to the life and work of the school. They work alongside staff and take an active role in children's learning and personal development.

- 94 Outstanding partnerships have also been developed with the Flying Start centre attached to the school and with the primary schools to which children transfer. Arrangements for transition are exceptionally well organised and effective and ensure children settle well into their new school environments with minimum disruption to their learning and personal well-being.
- 95 Links with the local community are wide ranging and highly successful. Educational visits and the expertise of members of the local community make an outstanding contribution to children's learning. The school and its various activities are very well supported and valued by the community which it serves.
- 96 The school makes good provision for work-related education and ensures children have access to a range of experiences well suited and relevant to their age and understanding. It effectively promotes children's understanding of the range of work people do within their community through role-play, visits in the locality and through the contribution made by people from various occupations and professions.
- 97 The school has developed good working partnerships with local employers and relevant agencies, including Careers Wales. Several teachers have undertaken business-related courses which have contributed well to their professional development and enhanced curriculum provision for children.
- 98 Children's bilingual skills are promoted effectively through a series of daily experiences that are planned as part of a wider programme of activities. Bilingual signs contribute well towards the Welsh ethos of the school. Practitioners have received training in Welsh and, on the whole, provide good learning experiences in Welsh for the children. Welsh classes for parents ensure that parents and children learn the language alongside each other. The Welsh dimension is successfully promoted through visits by Welsh artists, musicians and storytellers and the annual eisteddfod and St. David's Day celebrations.
- 99 The acting head teacher and members of staff know children very well and are highly successful in tackling social disadvantage and stereotyping and in ensuring equality of opportunity for all. Children have equal access to the curriculum and all other facilities within the school.
- 100 The provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship, and the efforts made by the school to act in a sustainable way, are outstanding and fully embedded in the life and work of the school. Children are involved in re-cycling, composting, water and energy conservation and waste minimisation schemes.
- 101 The school is part of the Eco Schools award scheme and is justly proud of achieving the Green Flag award in recognition of its commitment to conservation and the environment.

- 102 The school is successfully laying the foundations for lifelong learning and community regeneration. The high priority given to children's personal and emotional health and well being which prepares them to acquire the skills and attitudes to make progress in their learning, permeates the life and work of the school. It works in very close partnership with a range of external agencies to secure the best possible support for children and their families.

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

##### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 103 The inspection team's findings match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 104 The school provides outstanding care, support and guidance for children. The acting head teacher and staff are highly successful in identifying children's personal and emotional needs and then creating the conditions in which they can develop and flourish. The mutual warmth and respect between staff and children are outstanding features and enable children to make excellent progress in their academic, social, personal and emotional development.
- 105 The school works in full and productive partnership with a wide range of agencies and support services to ensure children's 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 outstanding working partnerships with parents and carers, which contribute significantly to the quality of support and guidance offered. A strong feature is the way in which the acting head teacher consults parents and carers, listens carefully to them and takes into consideration their views and opinions. Parents and carers unanimously say that they feel valued, welcomed and respected by staff.
- 107 All members of staff are committed to providing children with opportunities to express their views and opinions about their school and children rise to this challenge with confidence, despite their young age. For example, children were consulted when the school formulated its disability equality scheme and children's ideas are readily taken into account through their involvement in the Eco Committee.
- 108 The induction procedures for children entering the school are outstanding and tailored to accommodate the specific needs of the individual child. All adults offer exemplary pastoral support to children when they start school with the result that children feel secure and settle very calmly and happily into their new environment. In addition, children are extremely well supported as they prepare to leave for the next phase of their education.
- 109 The school provides outstanding personal support and guidance for children. The acting head teacher's personal commitment to the pastoral care of

children permeates the life and work of the school and members of staff are very good role models for the children in their care.

- 110 Children's individual needs are well known to staff and a carefully structured pastoral programme ensures these needs are met with sensitivity. Children confidently seek the help and support of adults in the school and are listened to and treated with great kindness and respect.
- 111 The monitoring of behaviour, attendance, punctuality and performance is thorough and rigorous and early intervention ensures any issue is dealt with swiftly and efficiently. The school does its best to encourage full attendance but this is still not as good as it could be.
- 112 The school has established very successful arrangements that contribute to the well-being of children. It has a detailed policy and set of procedures to promote health and safety, including risk assessments, which are monitored and implemented consistently by the acting head teacher, staff and the governing body. Arrangements for dealing with accidents, emergencies and medical needs are well established and effective. Children are very well supervised at all times.
- 113 The school makes outstanding efforts to promote healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle and children respond positively to this provision. Parents value the school's initiatives and are extremely supportive of what the school is aiming to achieve. Children are encouraged to eat fresh fruit and healthy snacks and fresh water is readily available. Children also have access to a wide range of physical and outdoor activities which contribute significantly to their health and well-being.
- 114 There are appropriate measures to deal with appeals and complaints and to promote the protection of children. The acting head teacher has designated responsibility for child protection and there is a nominated governor for safeguarding issues. National child protection guidelines are followed, training is regularly updated and all adults in the school are made aware of the correct procedures to be followed.
- 115 The provision for children with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features, all aspects of it being tailored to the precise needs of individual children. This highly effective personalised provision is implemented through a mixture of individual support from key workers during children's engagement in the usual range of activities in the nursery and in more structured, adult-led small group work.
- 116 The policy and provision for children with SEN follows the recommendations of the Code of Practice and takes full account of the statutory framework for inclusive education.
- 117 Children with special educational needs who require more help with their language, learning or behaviour, and those who are more able or talented, are

soon identified from baseline assessments and from the skilled and knowledgeable observations of key workers.

- 118 Children's needs are diagnosed in great detail using a range of information from assessments, with advice from specialist external agencies when needed, and personalised additional support is planned and provided for them. All communications and actions regarding individual children are carefully logged so that there is a very full picture of the overall support provided.
- 119 Individual Learning Plans clearly describe specific areas of difficulty. An outstanding feature is the way in which very young children contribute to these plans, stating what they think they are good at and what they need to get better at. Targets for improvement are written in accessible language and the school regularly tracks and records children's progress towards them. Specific key workers are very effectively delegated to support individual children with recommended strategies to help them overcome their difficulties.
- 120 Parents are involved at every stage. Their views are noted and activities suggested for them to do with their child at home. Another outstanding feature is the way in which the school also extends its support to the child's family.
- 121 Children with SEN, and those who need help specifically with their communication skills, receive extremely well targeted small group support such as 'Teaching Talking' and 'One Step at a Time' that helps to ensure that they make maximum progress.
- 122 The bilingual support teacher and students make an excellent contribution to enabling children with English as an additional language to learn from their experiences and develop their communication skills in both English and their home language. The English as an additional language support teacher provides an invaluable channel of communication between the school and those parents who are still developing their confidence in speaking English.
- 123 The school's personalised provision very effectively extends to those children whose behaviour might hinder their own progress or that of others. Agreed strategies for anticipating and managing the challenging behaviour of a few children are clearly described. All key workers understand these strategies so that children experience consistency in the response and behaviour of the adults who care for them.
- 124 The quality of provision for equal opportunities is outstanding, and the school's commitment to the social inclusion of all children is exemplary.
- 125 The school is very successful in recognising the diversity of children's backgrounds and takes this into account when planning and delivering its support and guidance. For example, the services of a bilingual support worker are called upon, when necessary, to aid effective communication between the home and the school. The acting head teacher and staff know children and their families very well and are sensitive to their individual needs.

- 126 Members of staff are highly skilled at promoting gender equality, and stereotypical choices and expectations are challenged rigorously. This is particularly evident when children undertake role-play and in the positive female role models from different professions and occupations who visit the school to speak to children about their work.
- 127 There are very effective policies and procedures to promote good race relations, equality and diversity. Equality for all is firmly embedded in the school's ethos. Children and adults value and respect the contribution of others regardless of their ability, gender, race or background.
- 128 The school has made all reasonable arrangements to secure the equal treatment of disabled pupils and to welcome disabled visitors to the school. Good quality documentation, including an accessibility plan and disability equality scheme, demonstrates how staff will make improvements in access to the curriculum, physical access and in the provision of information for disabled persons. The school is accessible to wheelchair users but there are no toilet facilities for the disabled.
- 129 The measures taken to eliminate oppressive behaviour, racial discrimination and bullying are appropriate and such incidents are reported to be virtually unknown at the school. All staff work hard to create a climate of mutual support and trust, where good behaviour is expected and where any issue is dealt with swiftly and fairly. Children respond very well to these secure boundaries and the school functions very well as an exceptionally inclusive and very happy community.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 130 The inspection team's findings match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 131 The acting head teacher has been in post for just two terms. She has enthusiastically embraced the school's strong traditions while simultaneously reviewing the quality of its provision and developing new initiatives and improvements in pursuit of excellence for all. She has an absolute commitment to the school, provides an exceptionally clear sense of direction and is a very good role model for her colleagues.
- 132 Through an excellent combination of professional knowledge, efficiency and an ability to develop productive working relationships, the acting head teacher has very quickly earned the respect, appreciation and confidence of members of staff, parents and governors. Her enthusiasm is shared by all practitioners so that a very positive team spirit is clearly apparent.
- 133 The school is an exceedingly happy, vibrant and inclusive community where everyone, child and adult, is valued and nurtured. One member of staff summed up this atmosphere very aptly when she said: "It's a pleasure to come to work – in fact, it doesn't feel like work!" The school's new mission statement, 'Actively Engaging Lively Minds', was agreed by all members of staff and is comprehensively reflected in all aspects of its daily life and work.
- 134 All policies and procedures have recently been reviewed, discussed and updated to ensure that all members of staff understand the common aims of the school. High expectations of all practitioners are evident throughout.
- 135 Management responsibilities have also been reviewed and redistributed very effectively to take into account the expertise and interests of different members of staff. Several teaching assistants, for example, are highly qualified to degree level. An outstanding feature is the way in which they have further developed their professional knowledge and skills and enthusiastically assumed responsibility for co-ordinating provision in key areas.
- 136 There are excellent lines of communication and everyone is clear about expectations regarding their different roles. The revised Staff Handbook gives very useful information about the context of the school and its routines and expectations regarding issues such as health and safety, assessment, behaviour management and presentation of children's work. Guidelines on a number of aspects, such as effective support during children's free choice activities, focus sharply on maximising the quality of adult intervention and raising children's standards of achievement.

- 137 Very good account is taken of national and local priorities such as healthy schools, tackling disadvantage and promoting education for sustainable development, with extremely positive outcomes for the children.
- 138 New and very effective performance management systems have been established. Following appraisal by the acting head teacher, practitioners have performance management interviews and objectives are set to ensure that they employ their wealth of expertise to meet children's learning needs to best effect.
- 139 Arrangements for practitioners' professional development are tightly linked to priorities in the school development plan and ensure equality of opportunity for all. The Professional Development policy specifically aims for all staff, students, parent helpers and parents, regardless of their race, culture, religion, gender or ability to receive high quality training which will afford them the best possible chances both now and in the future. The very positive outcomes of in-service training, both within school and through attendance at externally organised courses, are evident in the consistently high quality of teaching and professional knowledge observed during the inspection.
- 140 The induction of new staff is also good with outstanding features. The Induction Policy makes clear the expectation that all new members of staff should read all the school's policy documents over time, but indicates those of greatest importance to be read as a priority. New members of staff are paired with more experienced practitioners who offer much valued advice and guidance. This practice also enables newly-appointed staff to develop their knowledge of individual children as quickly as possible and therefore use their skills to the utmost effect.
- 141 The governing body provides outstanding support to the acting head teacher in her leadership role. Between them, members of the governing body have an exceptionally wide range of relevant qualifications, experience and specialist knowledge in the field of early years education. In many helpful ways, they assist the acting head teacher in setting the strategic direction of the school so that she does not feel isolated in her leadership role.
- 142 Nearly all members of the governing body are regular and frequent visitors to the school and know the quality of its provision, its many strengths and few areas for development, extremely well. From this first-hand knowledge, and from very detailed reports from the acting head teacher, they are very well informed about the school's activities and performance.
- 143 Many governors give freely and generously of their time, but also ask challenging questions and hold rigorous discussions of the occasional contentious issue when necessary. They act as a very positive, but constructively critical, friend to the school. 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**

- 144 The inspection team's findings match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 145 The head teacher and governing body very successfully use a wide variety of approaches to inform themselves of the school's performance. They demonstrate exceedingly well that they implement effective strategies that bring about improvement.
- 146 A culture of self-evaluation, ably led by the head teacher, is very well developed and the school has an outstanding awareness of its strengths and development points too. All practitioners are very much involved in the self-evaluation process and are invited to make additions, contributions and evaluations of the seven key questions.
- 147 Every aspect of the school's provision, especially those directly affecting standards, is constantly monitored and evaluated so that the process of self-evaluation is an on-going one. The self-evaluation report is a good working document with adjustments made as priorities are met. Through the use of first-hand evidence, the report firmly establishes arrangements to ensure that records are consistently kept for monitoring the effectiveness of the school's provision. It reflects accurately the findings from monitoring reports, questionnaires and interviews, as well as making effective use of data to set new and challenging targets.
- 148 The self-evaluation process involves all stakeholders and is well structured. It clearly identifies priorities that need to be addressed in the school development plan. The views of practitioners, children, their parents, the community and the governing body are actively sought and acted upon.
- 149 Daily evaluations of learning and teaching by practitioners are an outstanding feature and questionnaires provided for parents are a very useful part of the self-evaluation process. The school listens carefully to children's opinions about activities. The governing body is developing extremely well its role in the school's self-evaluation process and took an active part in making judgements on the key questions prior to the inspection. The self-evaluation report gives a balanced, comprehensive view of the school.
- 150 The school development plan makes very effective use of evidence gathered in the self-evaluation report to set main priorities needed to bring about improvement. It includes targets, costings and responsibilities and notes the time allowed for achieving targets, outlining the criteria used for measuring success. Resources are analysed carefully, and findings used effectively to ensure improvements. The school ensures that priorities from the previous

year have been achieved and, if not, they are incorporated into the new school development plan.

- 151 Actions taken have clearly resulted in measurable improvements. For example, the nursery has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time, and records clearly show marked progress in the acquisition of ICT skills by children over the past two terms. Children have made outstanding improvements in their ability to lead and influence their own learning through the Eco-Schools committee and the project approach is having a very positive impact on the development of thinking skills, pupils' engagement and independence.
- 152 The school's self-evaluation process is extremely accurate. The overall judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report precisely match those made by the inspection team in all seven key questions.
- 153 The school has made good progress in addressing the issues for improvement identified during the last inspection. It has broadly maintained high standards in all areas of learning and now succeeds in providing children with more opportunities to make use of Welsh and to see Welsh more visibly displayed around the school. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching have been formalised appropriately and the school complies with statutory requirements for registering children.

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

##### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 154 The inspection team's findings match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 155 There are many outstanding features in the way leaders and managers use resources. Staffing levels are very good, with highly qualified teachers and support staff. All practitioners are well trained to ensure that the Foundation Phase is delivered very effectively. They all work together as a highly effective team to provide for the needs of all children. Each member is fully employed in planning and assessing children's progress.
- 156 All members of staff have appropriate job descriptions in line with workforce remodelling guidelines. Role changes for support staff involve their being given various responsibilities such as being in charge of SEN provision, the outside area, healthy schools or display areas.
- 157 Teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time and the head teacher's time to carry out her leadership and management duties are used very effectively. An experienced Higher Level Teaching Assistant provides very good quality cover to ensure that high standards are maintained during this time.

- 158 Parent helpers, students and volunteers work extremely well to promote learning and make a vital contribution to the well-being of the children. For example, parents' help in the garden area is very valuable. The school support officer and the caretaker/cleaner contribute well to implementing the values and caring ethos and ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school.
- 159 The quality and range of learning resources, both indoors and outdoors is outstanding. The high quality resources reflect the children's developmental needs particularly well and are constantly monitored. Changes are sensibly made if children's interest wanes or needs are not being met by the current provision. The low-level cupboards and trays to access equipment encourage children's independence very well. Regular monitoring by all staff ensures that equipment is in a safe condition.
- 160 Adequate funding is allocated to purchase an excellent range of equipment to develop physical skills indoors and outdoors. Wherever possible, the nursery uses networking support most effectively to seek donations and grants to provide resources in line with agreed whole school priorities.
- 161 The quality of accommodation inside and outside is outstanding, and provides an exciting environment that stimulates learning. Highly effective use is made of the accommodation. Indoor provision is colourful, well organised, free of clutter and is used extremely well to encompass all areas of learning. Outdoors, clear zones are identified for investigation, physical play, creativity, role play and gardening. These are colourful and attractive.
- 162 Economic, efficient and effective use is made of all resources. This is another outstanding feature of the provision. Practitioners are deployed economically and efficiently and extremely effective use is made of their time, expertise and experience. Children benefit enormously from the expertise of regular visits by the forest-school teacher and excellent use is made of sports coaches to develop children's physical skills. This is money very well spent.
- 163 The valuable whole-school approach to self-evaluation effectively determines the needs and allocation of resources. There is very close monitoring of expenditure by the acting head teacher, the school support officer and the governing body. All major priorities are identified and linked to the school development plan. They are fully costed and presented to the finance sub-committee of the governing body for their consideration. Close monitoring ensures best value for money before appointments or purchases are made. The school balances the effectiveness of its provision against costs, including staffing costs, most effectively.
- 164 The quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, guidance and support, and leadership and management are of a very high standard and demonstrate clearly that the nursery provides outstanding value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

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

### Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

##### Outstanding features

- 166 Children's relationships with adults and peers are outstanding. They demonstrate respect for practitioners, and show care and affection for other children. Nearly all of them play harmoniously with their peers and have an excellent understanding of the need to help others. They are willing to take turns and share resources and responsibly tidy up at the end of an activity.
- 167 All children show exceptional care and respect for the environment, as can be seen in the way in which they tend seedlings in the garden and in their recycling activities. They handle living creatures such as insects and snails carefully and are extremely gentle and thoughtful when touching and holding the hand of a visiting baby.
- 168 Their interest, curiosity and positive attitudes to new experiences are outstanding. Most children are independent learners who are eager to participate in all activities. They display a high degree of confidence when tackling problems and investigations, for example, when building dens. They respond very well indeed to the support and encouragement of adults and show good self-esteem.
- 169 The children's sense of responsibility is developing very well and most have an excellent understanding of what is fair and unfair. A good example of this is their contribution to the disability equality scheme, when they voiced their ideas sensibly.
- 170 A striking feature shown by most children is the outstanding concentration when engaged in solitary or group play. They become absorbed in tasks, do not waste time and many concentrate for long periods of time on their investigations. They respond happily when adults intervene in their play and appreciate the help they receive.
- 171 The children's understanding of their own Welsh identity is exceptionally good, as is their appreciation of the diversity in their school and their local area. Most have an early appreciation that people in different cultures have different views and customs.

### **Good features**

- 172 All children have a good understanding of personal hygiene. For example, they know it is important to wash their hands before handling food. They also know that they have to eat sensibly in order to be healthy and need to clean their teeth regularly.
- 173 In general, children make sensible choices during free activity sessions and move confidently from one activity to another. They understand why the school has rules and the importance of certain safety factors and know how to behave on certain occasions, for example, at snack time.
- 174 From their religious education sessions, children have a good knowledge of Christian celebrations. They attend harvest festivals and Christmas celebrations with their parents in the local church. They are also well informed about celebrations, such as Diwali and Eid, in other religions.

### **Shortcomings**

- 175 There are no important shortcomings, but a few children have difficulty concentrating and focusing in large groups.

## **Language, Literacy and Communication Skills**

### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Outstanding features**

- 176 Often from a below average starting point, children of all abilities make excellent progress in developing their confidence and fluency in speaking with adults and with their peers in a variety of contexts. They speak at increasing length, often initiating conversation and using more complex linguistic forms and a wider range of vocabulary. Children who have difficulty in articulating clearly also often speak confidently, with animation, and at length.
- 177 Through role-play in the 'Baby Clinic', older and more able children show a mature awareness of different forms of conversation. For example, one little boy acting in role as the 'receptionist' asked questions about 'appointments' over the 'telephone'.
- 178 Children learning English as an additional language confidently and correctly make simple statements following predictable language patterns that have been modelled for them. They increasingly understand and communicate effectively with adults and with their peers.
- 179 Through regular practice with an extremely wide variety of implements, on large and small scales and on different surfaces, many children make excellent progress from experiments with mark making towards the formation of recognisable letters and words.
- 180 After just two terms in the nursery, many older children write their own names clearly, legibly and independently. They frequently use the letters they know

in their independent writing during role-play activities in areas such as the 'garden centre'. They increasingly hold writing instruments appropriately and are beginning to write simple messages in a conventional way.

### **Good features**

- 181 Most children listen carefully to adults in the majority of situations and respond appropriately to questions and instructions. They are also beginning to listen and respond well to one another.
- 182 In small and medium sized groups, all children enjoy listening to stories such as 'The Enormous Turnip', chuckling at humorous elements in it and many spontaneously comment on key events. Through re-enactments of the story using glove puppets, they are developing an increasing awareness of the role of different characters.
- 183 Most children are also becoming aware of books as sources of information. For example, they look at pictures in books about snails to augment their observations of a giant African snail and develop their knowledge of the names for different parts of the creature.
- 184 Older and more able children show a well developed knowledge of key aspects of reading such as left to right orientation and the difference between pictures and print and letters and words. The majority of children are becoming familiar with the sounds of different letters. For example, they can name a number of different objects beginning with the letter 's'. They talk confidently about characters and events and show good understanding of the stories they have heard. A few children sometimes choose to look at books independently.

### **Shortcomings**

- 185 There are no important shortcomings.

## **Mathematical Development**

### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Outstanding features**

- 186 All children use number confidently in practical situations and discuss their work capably, with most of them showing excellent knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of mathematics.
- 187 In general, children demonstrate excellent recognition and awareness of numbers. For example, many 'touch count' to 20 confidently and use number lines effectively. They count the number of vegetables on seed packets correctly. More able children count backwards from 10. A few children clearly write the numbers counted.
- 188 Many children are particularly good at matching objects and they sort items correctly, according to given criteria. They know the names of two-

dimensional shapes and discuss parts of flowers effectively with reference to various shapes. A few more able children show excellent reasoning skills as they discuss work they did using coins to make spiral patterns.

- 189 Most children compare sizes of objects most effectively and use comparative language with increasing confidence and accuracy. For example, they compare the sizes of bears described in 'The Teddy Robber' very well indeed and sequence teddies brought from home, from tiny to huge, correctly.
- 190 They show excellent development of measuring and weighing skills, for example, when weighing dolls in the baby clinic and measuring seedlings in the garden. Their understanding of time is good and they recognise numbers on a clock face easily.
- 191 Through numerous problem-solving investigations, indoors and outdoors, children display confidence in predicting outcomes. For example, exciting water play leads to an excellent understanding of capacity, with children guessing how many small bottles of water are needed to fill a large bottle.
- 192 Children's understanding of the purpose and use of money is developing very well indeed through role play in the flower shop. Also, they see a real purpose for using money when buying fresh fruit and vegetables in Newport market for cooking.

### **Good features**

- 193 Children's use of mathematical language is good, for example, their use of positional language. Effective use is made of appropriate vocabulary in role play, for example, 'Can I buy...?' and 'How much is...?', as well as words such as 'heavier' and 'smallest'. They have a good understanding of simple fractions, for example, when sharing fruit at snack time.
- 194 Mathematics is recorded in a variety of ways. For example, some children circle pictures, and others record in columns, when producing tally charts of creatures in the outdoor area. Most children are able to interpret data in simple tables correctly.
- 195 All children have a good recall of number rhymes, songs and counting games.

### **Shortcomings**

- 196 There are no important shortcomings.

## **Welsh Language Development**

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

#### **Good features**

- 197 Through participating in listening and speaking activities most children are developing good oracy skills. They listen well and join enthusiastically in simple rhymes and songs which contain repetition of familiar language

patterns. They listen carefully to stories such as one about the giant's big clothes and follow the print and pictures with interest. They view and listen well to a variety of ICT interactive software, for example, a 'Sali Mali' computer programme.

- 198 Most children use simple words, greetings and expressions effectively, with correct pronunciation and appropriate intonation. When choosing fruit and a drink at snack time, they express their likes and dislikes and communicate their preferences well. They show a good understanding of commands and comments by responding to basic instructions through appropriate actions. They count and describe colours effectively, and have a good range of vocabulary in relation to the weather.
- 199 Children have a good understanding of many Welsh words in the numerous bilingual signs, notices and labels around the nursery. Their bilingual skills are at their best in their development sessions with sports coaches. They count in Welsh when bouncing balls, and make constant references to shapes, to colours and to parts of the body, spontaneously. They listen and respond well to increasingly complex phrases and instructions in these sessions.

### **Shortcomings**

- 200 There are no important shortcomings.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Outstanding features**

- 201 Through their investigations, discussions and recording of animals and plants both indoors and out, all children are developing an excellent understanding of living things and what they need to grow. Nearly all children know that plants grow from seeds and most also understand that they need soil and water in order to thrive. They know the typical habitats of creatures such as slugs and woodlice.
- 202 All children show great curiosity in the world around them. Their observational skills are developing exceptionally well through their comparisons of different 'mini-beasts' and watching plants grow. They handle living creatures very carefully and enthusiastically communicate what they have found out both verbally and through drawings, writing and simple tally charts.
- 203 All children actively care for the environment and have an outstanding early awareness of sustainability issues such as the importance of recycling, saving energy and composting.
- 204 An extremely wide range of visitors to the school, explorations in the local community and beyond and role-play activities in areas such as the police or fire station enable children to develop an excellent early awareness of the work people do.

- 205 Children's skills in using a wide range of ICT including computers, digital microscopes and cameras and listening centres are good with outstanding features. Nearly all children confidently move the mouse and cursor to select different tools and move images around the screen. Around a half of them independently print out their selections. Many know how to position a specimen under the digital microscope to focus on different details and achieve a clear image on the screen.
- 206 Most children are also developing an excellent understanding of ways in which they, themselves, change over time. When meeting a visiting baby they understand that she is at an earlier stage of development and that they can do things now that they could not do when they were little. For example, one child said, "We can go to the toilet on our own and feed ourselves but babies can't". More confident children ask relevant questions about the baby and her needs.

### **Good features**

- 207 Through their daily routine of describing and recording the weather, all children are becoming aware of day-to-day changes in their environment. They have a good sense of belonging in Fairoak and, by charting the weather on a map of the United Kingdom, they have a developing awareness that they live in Wales.
- 208 When making bread or biscuits, all children develop a good understanding of how ingredients change when mixed and cooked.

### **Shortcomings**

- 209 There are no important shortcomings.

## **Physical Development**

### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Outstanding features**

- 210 Children show excellent control, co-ordination, confidence and agility when climbing on outdoor equipment, such as the 'boat' and the ropes. They balance very well when stepping on logs and riding bikes. They demonstrate a very good awareness of space when riding scooters and pushing trucks. Many children, especially boys, ride fearlessly but safely, on the big toys.
- 211 Children hop, skip, and run energetically and demonstrate excellent co-ordination when pushing, pulling and pedalling wheeled toys. They show very good hand/eye co-ordination when throwing, rolling and bouncing balls of various sizes in ball handling activities.
- 212 When handling small equipment, such as crayons, jigsaws, paintbrushes, pencils and the computer mouse, children show outstanding control. They display very good fine motor skills when playing with construction toys, when

using tools to create models, using scissors to cut around vegetable shapes and when writing letters and numbers.

- 213 In their outdoor activities, children carry equipment safely, showing very good knowledge of correct lifting and moving techniques. They handle various garden tools, such as spades and wheelbarrows, with increasing dexterity. They demonstrate an excellent awareness of safety when handling potato peelers and using knives during wood whittling activities.

#### **Good features**

- 214 When moving in response to music, as in Welsh country dancing and in Indian dance sessions, children move with sensitivity, using their bodies effectively to convey feelings.
- 215 Children have a good understanding of the importance of keeping their bodies fit and healthy.

#### **Shortcomings**

- 216 There are no important shortcomings.

### **Creative Development**

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

#### **Good features**

- 217 All children make good progress in drawing from direct observation. While looking closely at the African snail, younger children enjoy making marks with crayons to represent it. Older children's drawings show good approximations to the shape of the snail and include key features such eyes and the spiral patterns in its shell.
- 218 Most children's skills in working in three dimensions are developing well. They effectively extend their study of the snail by making models from playdough. They knead, roll and shape the dough and imprint patterns on their developing creatures paying good attention either to the snail they are observing or to examples in photographs and illustrations.
- 219 All children engage in a good variety of painting activities, including on a large scale. Those children who choose to paint independently handle paintbrushes appropriately and paint purposefully, exploring the possibilities of colour, line and shape and experimenting with different techniques such as dabbing, streaking and filling in.
- 220 All children are becoming familiar with a good range of percussion instruments and with different ways of playing them. They respond appropriately to directions to play quickly or slowly, loudly or quietly. Many children are beginning to be aware of the number of beats in different words such as 'slug' and 'spider'. A few children are beginning to tap or clap a steady beat to accompany a 'Train Song'.

221 All children appreciate the artistic and musical traditions of their own and other cultures. During Diwali celebrations, for example, they paint effective Mendhi patterns on their hands and enjoy traditional Indian dancing with Dandia sticks.

**Shortcomings**

222 There are no important shortcomings, but a minority of children lack confidence in singing and moving imaginatively to music in large group situations and do not refine their movements as well as they could.

## School's response to the inspection

The head teacher, staff and governors are delighted to receive the report of the recent inspection which acknowledges that Fair oak Nursery is an outstanding school that fully achieves the key aim summarised in its mission statement: 'Actively Engaging Lively Minds'

All staff and governors are pleased that the inspectors found the school to be a very happy place with many outstanding features, including providing a rich and varied range of relevant enjoyable experiences that successfully promote high standards of achievement. The skill and dedication of teachers, and the care and talent of support staff, are duly acknowledged. The awarding of one hundred per cent Grades 1 and 2 for standards of teaching and learning is significantly higher than the national results and fully reflects the professionalism and commitment of all staff in Fair oak Nursery School.

The staff and governors were pleased that the team recognised how practitioners' high expectations for children's progress impacted on the quality of the learning and teaching. The inspection report notes that both leadership and the role of the governing body is outstanding, as is the partnership with parents and the wider community.

The head teacher, staff and governors wish to thank Mrs Stephanie James and the inspection team for their courtesy, empathy and professionalism during the inspection and for their rigour in examining all the evidence, making clear judgements and providing constructive feedback. Their opinions are valued and the recommendations will be incorporated by staff and governors in future plans for the school which will be shared with parents and carers.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Fairoak Nursery School
School type	Nursery
Age-range of pupils	3 to 4 year olds
Address of school	Church Road Newport
Postcode	NP19 7EJ
Telephone number	01633 259415

Acting Head teacher	Heather Morgan
Date of appointment	01/09/08
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Bernadette Byrne
Registered inspector	Stephanie James
Dates of inspection	27/04/09 to 29/04/09

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of children on roll on first day of inspection*	Full-time equivalent (fte)
73	36.5

\* Three 'Rising 3' children started school later in the week of the inspection but are not included in this figure.

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent
Number of teachers	2	0	2

Staffing information	
Child: adult (fte) ratio in nursery	8:1

Term	Percentage attendance for three terms prior to inspection
Summer 2008	88%
Autumn 2008	85.4%
Spring 2009	88.4%

Percentage of children entitled to free school meals	N/A
Number of children excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results

There are no end of year national assessments for nursery children.

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent a total of seven inspector days in the school. The acting head teacher was the school's nominee. The team met before the start of the inspection.

Inspectors visited:

- twenty sessions or part-sessions;

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- the acting head teacher, teacher, support and administrative staff;
- groups of children; and
- representatives of organisations associated with the school.

The team also considered:

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

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

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Stephanie James Registered Inspector	Context Summary Appendices Contributions to key questions 1, 2 and 4 Key question 5 Language, Literacy and Communication Skills Knowledge and Understanding of the World Creative Development
Zorah Evans Team Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 2 and 3 Key questions 6 and 7 Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity Mathematical Development Welsh Language Development Physical Development
Janet Warr Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3 and 4
Heather Morgan Acting Head teacher and Nominee from the school	Provision of information and contributions to team meetings
Peer Assessor	There was no Peer Assessor on this inspection

#### The contractor was:

Evenlode Education Ltd  
Little Garth  
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Hawarden  
Flintshire  
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#### Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the staff, governing body, parents and children for their courtesy and help during the inspection.