

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF  
THE SCHOOLS INSPECTIONS ACT 1996**

**Hermon Community School  
Hermon  
Glog  
Pembrokeshire  
SA36 ODT**

**School Number: 668/2277**

**Date of Inspection: 22 –24 September, 2003**

**By  
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Registered Inspector: WO83  
Date: 24 November, 2003  
under Estyn contract number: T/ 62/ 03P**

## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to age 18 is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "Reception" (R) is applied to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13 the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key stage 1 of the national curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

The five-point grading scale used to represent the main judgements in this report is as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some particularly good.
2. Good: Good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: Good features that outweigh some shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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## 1. CONTEXT

### The school and its priorities

The school is located in the small rural village of Hermon, near Crymych, in Pembrokeshire. The great majority of pupils come from the village and the surrounding areas. The area is described as being neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged; 8% of pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals.

There are 50 pupils, aged between 4 and 11 years, on the school roll and they represent the full ability range. Welsh is the main language spoken in the homes of 56% of pupils. By now, 90% of all the pupils speak Welsh to a first language standard. Ten pupils are included on the special educational needs [SEN] register.

The school operates the Unitary Authority's (UA) language policy and is listed as being in Category A. This means that Welsh is the main medium of the life and work of the school and seeks to ensure that all the pupils are fully bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary sector.

The School Development Plan [SDP] includes the following priorities:

- to improve pupils' literacy skills;
- to continue to improve pupils' mathematical skills;
- to extend pupils' information, communication and technology skills (ICT);
- to set individual targets for pupils.

The future of the school is currently under review by the UA. Consequently, the headteacher's post is that of Acting Headteacher. This factor, together with the uncertainty surrounding its future, has contributed to a lack of long-term vision in relation to the work of the school.

The school was previously inspected in May 1998.

## 2. MAIN FINDINGS

### Main Findings of the Report

The school is a close and caring community. The relationship between the teachers and pupils, between the pupils and adults and between the pupils and their peers is very good.

- The quality of provision for children under-five is appropriate and promotes the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Standards of achievement are as follows:

Language, literacy and communication skills	Satisfactory
Personal and social development	Good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Satisfactory
Creative development	Satisfactory

Physical development	Satisfactory
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- In Key Stage 1 [KS1] and KS2, pupils' standards of achievement in the National Curriculum [NC] subjects and religious education are as follows:

	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
Welsh	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
English		Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Design and Technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information Technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
History	Good	Satisfactory
Geography	Good	Satisfactory
Art	Good	Satisfactory
Music	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Physical Education	-	-
Religious Education	Good	Satisfactory

- Standards of achievement in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum are satisfactory. To date, there is no whole-school strategy to promote key skills across the subjects.
- It was judged that the quality of teaching was good in 52% of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 48%. Teachers' initial presentations are thorough and they make good use of resources to provide suitable experiences for pupils. There is effective interaction between the teachers and pupils and good use is made of plenary sessions to reinforce the learning.
- Where there are shortcomings in the teaching, the tasks set are not sufficiently challenging to extend pupils' learning in all subjects and there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and methods of working. Teachers plan their work carefully and in the best practice they identify in some detail what is expected of the pupils. This practice is not consistent across the school.
- The quality of provision for pupils with SEN is good. The teachers and the learning assistant offer pupils effective support, and they make steady progress in their work.
- The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum, but insufficient attention is accorded to some subjects and this affects curriculum balance. Policies and schemes of work have been produced for the majority of curriculum subjects. However, not all have been updated to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000.
- The arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress are satisfactory. Pupils' progress in language and mathematics is carefully monitored and recorded, but pupils' progress in the other subjects is not recorded. Pupils' work is regularly marked and, in the best practice, guidance is given to pupils as to how to improve the standard of their work. The quality of the annual reports to parents is generally good, and parents are appreciative of them.

- In the NC tests and assessments in 2003, the school's results at KS2 are higher than the national averages in Welsh, English, mathematics and science. Pupils' results are also higher than the county averages in Welsh but are a little below in the other subjects. In KS1, the school's results in the non-statutory assessments are above the national averages in Welsh and mathematics but are a little below in science.
- The acting headteacher, who has held this post since September 1997, provides caring leadership and succeeds in establishing a very good relationship with pupils, staff, parents and governors. Under her leadership, the school has gained the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark. Staff work well together and they demonstrate great commitment to the school.
- The headteacher and teachers monitor pupils' workbooks and they discuss their progress on a regular basis, but the school's self-evaluation systems are under-developed in terms of developing whole-school procedures to monitor the educational provision and pupils' standards of achievement.
- The governing body is highly supportive of the school and members undertake their responsibilities conscientiously. Members have individual subject responsibilities which they discuss with members of staff. This is a welcome initiative. However, school documentation does not fully conform to statutory requirements. The School Handbook is a useful publication but it does not contain all the required information. To date, the school has not formulated a home-school agreement.
- The school does not have effective measures to prevent access to its buildings. Currently, school doors are not locked because of the need for pupils to go out to the toilets that are located in a cabin on the yard.
- The SDP sets appropriate targets for improvement and contains detailed strategies for the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT. There is insufficient detail on the processes that the school must follow in order to achieve the other targets which have been set. The use of the SDP as a tool to promote further school improvement is under-developed.
- The headteacher and the governing body carefully manage the budget, and the school succeeds in working within the budget it is allocated. A close eye is kept on financial decisions in order to provide value for money. The school currently has a significant surplus. It is intended to use some of this money to maintain the present staffing levels at the school and to improve learning resources.
- The school has responded satisfactorily to the key issues identified in the last inspection report but some matters require further attention. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in a number of subjects and there is good use of the local swimming pool and of the leisure centre to provide suitable physical education experiences for pupils. The need to improve standards in the subjects that were satisfactory remains a key issue. Documentation has been reviewed but they do not all

fulfil statutory requirements. To date, indoor toilets have not been provided for staff or pupils. These aspects remain key issues for action.

- Pupils are offered good opportunities to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as Urdd activities, visits and sporting events. Appropriate attention is given to the development of pupils' team skills through the school's physical education programme and by arranging activities jointly with other agencies.
- The school succeeds well in promoting bilingualism. Appropriate attention is given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and to the development of pupils' awareness of local history and traditions. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show respect and courtesy towards their teachers, other staff and visitors. Standards of pupils' behaviour are very good.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the school's efforts on behalf of their children and respond well to any request for additional support. Good use is made of the expertise of individual parents and of friends of the school to contribute to pupils' learning. The Friends of the School work hard and offer good financial support.

### **3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **3.1 Standards achieved by pupils in subjects and areas of learning**

Pupils' standards of achievement are good in 44% of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 56%.

- The personal, social and mathematical development of the under-fives is good. The children's language, literacy and communication skills, and their creative and physical development are satisfactory. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is also satisfactory.
- In KS1, standards in Welsh and science are satisfactory and good in mathematics. Standards in history, geography, art and religious education are good. Standards in design and technology, information technology and music are satisfactory. No physical education lessons were observed during the inspection.
- In KS2, standards in Welsh, English, mathematics and science are satisfactory. Standards in information technology, design and technology, history, geography, art, music and religious education are also satisfactory. No physical education lessons were observed during the inspection.
- In general, boys and girls make comparable progress in their work. Pupils with SEN achieve satisfactory standards.
- In the NC tests and assessments in 2003, the school's results at KS2 are higher than the national averages in Welsh, English, mathematics and science. Pupils' results are

also higher than the county averages in Welsh but are a little below in the other subjects. In KS1, the school's results in the non-statutory assessments are above the national averages in Welsh and mathematics but are a little below in science.

- The school succeeds in meeting its targets.
- As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of KS1 and KS2 in 2003 was more than five but fewer than ten, the information provided in this report is restricted to performance indicators.

### **3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum**

Standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum are satisfactory. To date, there is no whole-school strategy to promote key skills across the subjects, and the planning for the development of these skills within lessons is under developed.

- The under-fives make good progress in their ability to apply and improve their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT in the six areas of learning.
- In KS1 and KS2, appropriate attention is given to literacy in all aspects of the work. The school succeeds well in developing pupils' abilities to communicate orally in Welsh and English. Pupils listen attentively and the vast majority are keen to contribute during discussion sessions.
- Pupils' oral standards in Welsh are good. They contribute confidently to class discussions, offering extended responses. In KS2, pupils are able to converse freely in English. The more able pupils are happy to express and justify opinions, making correct use of subject-specific vocabulary.
- In both key stages, pupils make increasing use of their reading skills in their work across the curriculum. They read an increasing range of Welsh and English books, and make satisfactory use of reference books to gather information.
- Pupils' writing standards are satisfactory; individual pupils produce good work. Pupils write regularly and can adapt their styles satisfactorily to suit varying contexts and audiences. The more able pupils can express their ideas clearly. However, the vast majority of pupils do not write in a sufficiently extended manner.
- Numeracy standards across the curriculum are satisfactory. Pupils have a firm grasp of number processes and are able to handle numbers competently in their mental and written calculations. Their ability to handle data has not been sufficiently developed. In both key stages, pupils' abilities are not developed consistently through a range of investigative tasks and in different contexts.
- Standards in ICT across the curriculum are satisfactory. In both key stages, pupils make appropriate use of their skills to record and present information. Y2 pupils make good use of art packages to support their work. In KS2, pupils make purposeful use of their skills to gather information in subjects such as geography and religious

education. Nevertheless, pupils' ICT skills are not extended sufficiently to support their work across the subjects.

- Pupils with SEN achieve satisfactory standards in the key skills across the curriculum.

## **4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

- The school conforms to statutory requirements in relation to daily acts of collective worship. A devotional atmosphere is created in the majority of the periods of worship. Pupils contribute regularly.
- The school is a caring and close community. Pupils enjoy a very good relationship with each other and with their teachers and other adults. All members of staff promote high values.
- Pupils have a firm awareness of the importance of respect for the environment. They undertake certain duties but few opportunities are afforded to older pupils to show initiative.
- Pupils collect towards good causes. As a result they become aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities that make a significant contribution to their social and cultural awareness. These include the school eisteddfod, concerts, assemblies and sporting events. Urdd activities play a prominent part in the life of the school.
- To complement their school-based studies, visits are organised to places of educational interest. The visitors invited to school to work with pupils enhance their curricular experiences.
- The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is given appropriate attention in the school curriculum and its activities, and appropriate attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of other cultures and religions.
- Although the school has no formal policy on racial equality, pupils have a good awareness of the need to respect different traditions and values.

### **4.2 Behaviour and attitudes**

Pupils' behaviour is very good and they demonstrate a keen interest in their work.

- Pupils behave properly and responsibly. They are familiar with the school rules.

- School rules and policies are implemented effectively.
- During the inspection no instances of bullying were observed. No pupils have been excluded during the past year.

### **4.3 Attendance**

Levels of attendance are generally good.

- School registers were inspected and were found to be correct and complete.
- As a result of parental co-operation, there are no unauthorised absences. Parents' letters explaining any absences are kept by the school.
- Punctuality is good. This allows for a punctual start to the school day. The timetable is adhered to during the day.
- The school conforms to statutory requirements regarding registration and recording attendance.
- The school has no formal targets to improve levels of attendance further.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

It was judged that the quality of teaching was good in 52% of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 48%.

- Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the majority of the subjects they teach. They make appropriate use of a range of teaching strategies and of purposeful resources in order to provide suitable learning experiences for pupils. In KS2, effective use is made of team teaching to teach some subjects.
- In the good teaching, teachers' presentations are thorough and there is effective interaction with pupils. The work is suitably matched to pupils' needs and differentiated tasks are set for pupils as pairs or in groups. Good quality support is provided for pupils as they set about their work.
- Where the teaching is satisfactory, despite some good features, expectations are not sufficiently high and neither are tasks sufficiently challenging to extend pupils in all subjects. When planning tasks, inadequate attention is given to progress and continuity in subject-specific skills.
- In both key stages, pupils' investigative and reference skills are not developed with sufficient regularity.
- In both key stages, too few opportunities are given to pupils to develop their own ideas and methods of working.

## **5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting**

The quality of the arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting is satisfactory.

- The quality of the baseline assessments undertaken following the full-time admission of children to the reception class is good. The results are discussed with parents and appropriate targets are set. However, inadequate attention is given to the progress made in the six areas of learning and to the next steps to be taken in order to achieve further development. The school receives information about every child from the voluntary nursery school. This is good practice.
- The school conforms to statutory requirements in relation to pupils with SEN, and the arrangements for assessing and recording these pupils' progress are good.
- The school monitors pupils' language and mathematical development. A progress-tracking file is kept for each pupil during his or her period at school and regular records are kept of the books read by each pupil. However, assessments are not conducted with sufficient regularity in the core subjects in order to be able to identify the progress and development of pupils' work in these subjects.
- Assessment records are not kept in the foundation subjects. Teachers keep pupils' books and photographs of their activities in order to report to parents on their achievements.
- A portfolio of pupils' written work is kept. The examples selected are levelled and a note of their significance is made. To date, these examples are not used to moderate assessments of pupils' work.
- In KS1, personal language targets are set for pupils but this arrangement is not consistently applied throughout the school.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work. In the best practice, the written comments offer pupils guidance on how to improve the standard of their work.
- Parents are invited to school twice a year to discuss their children's work and progress. Parents appreciate the willingness of teachers to meet them informally as and when required.
- The quality of the annual reports to parents is generally good, and parents are appreciative of them. The content of the reports conforms to statutory requirements.

## **5.3 Curriculum**

A broad and appropriate curriculum is provided. Insufficient attention is given to some subjects and this affects curriculum balance.

- The curriculum provided for the under-fives is appropriate and promotes the desirable outcomes. The activities provided are not always planned in sufficient detail to extend

children's skills across the areas of learning. These children are educated in the same class as pupils in KS1.

- The curriculum provided for pupils with SEN is appropriate and tasks are differentiated according to their needs.
- Policies and schemes of work have been produced for the majority of curriculum subjects. Not all schemes have been updated to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The county schemes provide teachers with clear guidance on additional planning. To date, they have not been adapted sufficiently to meet the particular needs of the school.
- The curriculum is presented through a series of themes but there is insufficient collaborative planning to ensure continuity and progression in the learning. In the best practice, teachers' short-term planning identifies precisely what is expected of the pupils, the specific skills to be developed and the organisation of the activities involved. This practice is not applied consistently across the school.
- To date, there is no detailed planning for the development of key skills across the curriculum.
- Appropriate planning is undertaken for pupils' personal and social development. There is much emphasis on fostering pupils' personal values and on the development of a stable and supportive school ethos.
- The school succeeds well in promoting bilingualism. Appropriate attention is given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig (Welsh Curriculum) and to the development of pupils' awareness of local history and traditions.
- Educational visits contribute effectively to pupils' experiences. The appropriate range of extra-curricular activities make a significant contribution to the curricular experiences provided.
- Reading is the main homework set in KS1. In KS2, homework is set regularly and it contributes effectively to raising pupils' standards of achievement and in reinforcing class-based work. The co-operation between the school and parents in this respect is good.
- The NC has not been modified for any pupil, and no pupil has been disapplied from the requirements of the curriculum.

#### **5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

The quality of support, guidance and pupils' welfare is good.

- Staff know the pupils well and pupils in turn know that they can approach the staff at any time for support and guidance.
- Relevant policies and procedures are in place for health and safety, equal opportunities and sex education.

- Pupils are carefully monitored during break times and the lunch hour and a member of staff has responsibility for first aid. Staff are aware of their general responsibilities in the area of child protection and UA policies are implemented; the headteacher is the named person.
- Equal opportunities are provided without exception in all school activities.

### **5.5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)**

The provision for pupils with SEN is good.

- The school fully meets the statutory requirements in relation to the code of practice.
- A register of pupils with SEN is kept. Ten pupils require attention, five at the school action stage and five at school action plus. These pupils are effectively supported by a classroom assistant, and by a support teacher for 3 hours per week.
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have been produced for these pupils and appropriate targets set. The strategies that are identified are clear and parents and pupils contribute to their implementation.
- There are effective links between the support teacher, school co-ordinator, teaching and support staff and the authority's support agencies.
- Regular reviews are conducted of the progress made by pupils with SEN. The pupils make satisfactory progress at the level of their development.
- Teachers plan differentiated tasks and pupils with SEN receive appropriate support during their lessons.
- The designated member of the governing body with responsibility for SEN is fully aware of his responsibility. Regular reports on the provision are made to the governing body.

### **5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions**

The partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions is good.

- Parents are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the school's efforts on behalf of their children and respond well to any request for additional support. This was shown at the pre-inspection meeting with parents and in the questionnaires that were returned.
- The Friends of the School work hard and offer good financial support to the school. Good use is made of the expertise of some parents and friends of the school to contribute to pupils' learning.

- A good range of information is provided for parents in the form of annual reports, meetings, termly calendar, letters and other publications. Parents greatly appreciate the accessibility of staff if and when they wish to approach them on any matter.
- This is a community school and there is a close relationship between the school and the local community. Members of the community come to school to talk to pupils. The school supports eisteddfodau and other local events and the community is invited to performances of the school concert. The school fully supports the various activities of the local Urdd club.
- The school is a member of the Preseli family of schools and the majority of the links with other schools emanate from the link with the secondary school at Crymych. There are strong cultural links through the Urdd and through performances arranged by the secondary school. Various competitive sports events are arranged through Dragon Sports. The school hosts visits by theatre companies and visits the centre at Crymych to watch stage performances.
- There are well-established bridging links with Ysgol y Preseli. Visits are organised by Y7 teachers to the school, and Y6 pupils visit the secondary school. A collaborative system is used so that teachers at the school visit Ysgol y Preseli to prepare curricular materials in language, mathematics and science.
- Pupils from Ysgol y Preseli come to this school on work experience placements, as do students from colleges at Haverfordwest and Cardigan.
- The school makes full use of all relevant services offered by the UA.

## **5.7 Partnership with industry**

The partnership with industry is satisfactory.

- Pupils' awareness of the world of work is enhanced by their visits to businesses such as a chocolate factory, a weaving workshop and a nationwide company selling building materials. Satisfactory use is made of these visits to reinforce classroom-based curricular activities.
- Effective use is made of the visits made by members of the community who come to school to talk about their work.
- The links with the Education and Business Partnership have raised staff awareness of this aspect of the curriculum.
- The school has no policy for developing its partnership with industry.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement**

The quality of the school's processes for self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory.

- The school's policy for self-evaluation outlines a number of appropriate procedures for evaluating different aspects of provision. To date, a whole-school system together with a clear timetable for monitoring the quality of the planning and teaching, and pupils' standards of achievement, has not been established.
- The headteacher and staff monitor the contents of pupils' workbooks and discuss pupils' progress on a regular basis. Teachers evaluate their own lessons and in the best practice the aspects requiring attention are recorded. The school does not have a sufficiently detailed structure to assist it to raise pupils' standards of achievement.
- A useful audit of the educational provision has recently been conducted. As yet, the outcomes have not been used to inform further planning.
- Subject responsibilities are shared amongst the teaching staff. They work well together but their role as curriculum leaders has not been sufficiently developed.
- The school has established a system for analysing SATs test scripts in order to identify any significant shortcomings. The information collected is used to inform further planning. The school has embarked upon the process of target setting for individual pupils.

## **6.2 Leadership and efficiency**

The quality of leadership and efficiency at the school is satisfactory.

- Both staff and governors have a strong commitment to the school and they work closely together. There are high expectations in terms of values, behaviour and relationships.
- The school's aims and objectives are very well supported by parents.
- The headteacher, who has class responsibilities, offers sensitive and caring leadership. She succeeds in establishing a very good relationship with pupils, staff, parents and governors. Under her leadership, the school has gained the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark.
- The SDP contains detailed strategies for the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT but does not contain sufficient details on the processes to be followed in order to achieve the other targets that are identified. The document does not contain an appraisal of the SDP for the previous year and neither does it identify the methods to be used to monitor progress towards achieving the targets that have been set. The use of the SDP as a tool to foster school improvement is under-developed.
- School documentation does not fully conform to statutory requirements. The School Handbook is a useful publication but it does not contain all the required information.

To date, the school has not formulated a home-school agreement.

- The governing body is highly supportive of the school and its members are eager to assist the school whenever they can. They have individual subject responsibilities, which they discuss with members of staff. This is a welcome initiative.
- The governing body carefully monitors the school's financial position and a close eye is kept on expenditure in order to provide value for money. The school currently has a

significant surplus. It is intended to use some of this money to maintain present staffing levels at the school and to purchase additional resources.

- Overall, the school offers value for money.
- Daily administration and communication at the school are satisfactory.

### **6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

Resources are managed satisfactorily.

- The school has two full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and one part-time teacher. Detailed job descriptions have been produced, clearly identifying their respective responsibilities.
- Teachers are suitably qualified for the age ranges they teach. The full-time staff attend a good number of courses and the training has a positive impact on their teaching methods.
- Support teachers are employed for Welsh, music and special needs, together with an assistant to support children under five and individuals with special educational needs. They make a valuable and effective contribution.
- The school is pleasantly located in the middle of the village with a hard play area for games. The main building is sound, but sections of the windows in the refectory are in a poor state of repair.
- Space at the school is at a premium for whole-school activities and for physical education lessons, but good use is made of the facilities provided by the local community. Regular use is made of the swimming pool, the sports centre and the adjacent sports field. Some of the classrooms are short of space but full use is made of the space available for teaching. Storage space is also in short supply.
- The displays of pupils' work contribute to creating an attractive environment in the classrooms.
- The school does not have effective measures to prevent access to its buildings. Currently, school doors are not locked because of the need for pupils to go out to the toilets that are located in a cabin on the yard. The location of the toilets creates

obvious difficulties during lessons because of the need to provide appropriate supervision of the younger pupils. Insufficient steps have been taken to prevent children from gaining access to the underside of the cabin.

- Standards of cleanliness are good.
- Overall, the supply of teaching resources for the vast majority of subjects is adequate and regular use is made of them to promote pupils' learning. However, there is a shortage of equipment for ICT and for the under-fives. The SDP identifies the intention to purchase additional resources including books and mathematics equipment.

## **7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING**

### **Standards Achieved by Pupils**

#### **Provision for the under-fives**

The provision for the under-fives is appropriate and promotes the Desirable Outcomes in the six areas of learning. The reception age children are educated alongside KS1 pupils.

#### **Language, literacy and communication development**

The development of language, literacy and communication is satisfactory.

#### **Good features**

- The vast majority of children listen attentively. They enjoy listening to a story and in taking part in whole-class oral activities. A small number of individuals converse well with their peers and with other adults and use extended vocabulary correctly. The Welsh learners make consistent progress in gaining an understanding of the language and make a good effort to use the language as they work. The children are able to recognise letters and some simple words. Most children recognise their own names and can write them fairly accurately. They can over write and underwrite correctly.

#### **Shortcomings**

- A significant minority of children lack the confidence to express themselves orally.
- A small number of the older children's early reading skills have not been extended sufficiently.

#### **Personal and social development**

The children's personal and social development is good.

#### **Good features**

- The vast majority of pupils have established good relationships with their peers and with adults. They enjoy taking part in activities that promote playing together and sharing. By listening to stories, they learn about being friends and about being thankful. The older children are able to concentrate effectively on their tasks.

#### **Shortcomings**

- There are no significant shortcomings.

### **Mathematical development**

The children's mathematical development is good.

#### **Good features**

- The vast majority of children count correctly up to at least ten. Some of the older children understand the meaning of "one more" and are able to place numbers in their correct order. They recognise and are able to name two dimensional (2D) shapes and confidently match and sort objects and colours.

#### **Shortcomings**

- The children's mathematical language is under-developed.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory.

#### **Good features**

- The more confident children are able to talk about themselves, their friends and family. When observing objects in water they make correct use of scientific vocabulary such as 'floating' and 'overflowing'. The vast majority of children recognise various fruits and are aware that flowers need water for growth. Their ICT skills are developing appropriately. They are able to control the mouse skilfully as they make a picture on the screen.

#### **Shortcomings**

- Some of the play experiences have not been sufficiently structured for the children and as a result they lose opportunities to develop their skills in this area.

### **Creative development**

The children's creative development is satisfactory.

#### **Good features**

- The children enjoy 'role play' and dressing up like the characters from a storybook, and other characters such as a nurse and a clown. They are able to sing a range of simple songs and can keep to the beat reasonably well when accompanying their singing on untuned instruments. They produce a variety of drawings and paintings at their level of development and they demonstrate increasing mastery of paint brush, crayon and pencil.

#### **Shortcomings**

- The 'role play' sessions are insufficiently structured and the children tend to lose interest because of the length of the session.
- The children are not allowed to make sufficient personal choices when engaged in creative activities.

### **Physical development**

The children's physical development is satisfactory.

**Good features**

- The children use small equipment with increasing dexterity. When using large toys, they display satisfactory control of their large physical skills.

**Shortcomings**

- When playing with large toys, there is a tendency for the children's play to lack focus and direction.

**Welsh**

Overall, pupils' standards of achievement are satisfactory in both key stages. In KS1 and KS2, standards of oracy are good and standards in reading and writing are satisfactory.

**Good features**

- In KS1, the pupils listen well to stories and presentations. The vast majority are eager to take part in the class discussions, and they talk confidently to adults. They are able to recall the main elements of a story and can put events in their correct order. They express themselves clearly and intelligibly.
- Pupils read books that are appropriate to their age and they show an interest in books. They employ a number of appropriate strategies to assist them with their reading.
- Pupils show an increasing awareness of various forms of writing. Individuals develop confidence by forming their own sentences, others are more dependent on key words provided by the teacher; whilst the remainder underwrite correctly. They are all able to read their written work.
- In KS2, the vast majority of pupils listen attentively and respond enthusiastically in different situations. The learners are confident in expressing themselves orally and their ability to do so indicates the clear progress being made. The more able pupils express themselves clearly during discussions and they offer their own ideas and opinions in an extended manner. This work is of a good standard.
- The vast majority of pupils exhibit positive attitudes towards reading. They select their own books and are aware of the books written by various authors. They employ appropriate strategies when faced with unfamiliar words. Individual pupils read fluently and meaningfully. Individuals have also begun to appreciate works of poetry and they can discuss their content with interest.
- Pupils make appropriate use of dictionaries and a thesaurus and are able to use a range of different sources to gather information.
- Pupils show an increasing mastery of various forms of writing. Individuals write well and in an extended form, making meaningful use of paragraphs. They vary their sentences to create different effects. Pupils have written suitable and interesting books for the school's younger pupils. They have clearly benefited from the experience and produce work of good quality.

**Shortcomings**

- In both key stages, a small number of pupils lack confidence when expressing themselves orally.
- In both key stages, there are a small number of pupils who are unable to read with the expected ease and fluency. In KS2, individuals read syllabically and without any sense of expression. They do not make use of punctuation to convey meaning.
- In KS2, spelling, punctuation and syntactical errors hamper the written work of large numbers of pupils.

## **English**

English is formally introduced in KS2. Standards are satisfactory.

### **Good features**

- In KS2, pupils listen well to presentations and to each other. The more able pupils reply confidently to the questions asked, providing extended responses when required. By Y5 and Y6, pupils speak fluently, offering opinions and sound reasoning.
- Individuals read well and meaningfully. They are able to understand what they read and can explain the difference between works of fiction and non-fiction.
- The older pupils make effective use of reference books and the Internet to search for information
- Pupils produce an appropriate range of written work. The vast majority undertake comprehension tasks correctly, and through various structured activities they gain a clear understanding of language forms. Individuals write well and the content of their work is coherent and interesting. They exhibit mastery of syntax, punctuation and spelling conventions.

### **Shortcomings**

- A small minority of pupils do not pay sufficient attention to punctuation when reading aloud and their ability to discuss books is insufficiently developed.
- Errors of spelling and syntax adversely impact upon a good number of pupils' standards in writing. The handwriting of individual pupils is untidy and the presentation of their work is not always of an acceptable standard.

## **Mathematics**

Standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in KS1 have a clear understanding of number bonds and patterns. They understand the relationship between addition and subtraction and they can place numbers in the correct order. They make correct use of numbers during mental and written calculations.
- Pupils are able to recognise 2D shapes. They recognise the value of various items of coinage and the more able pupils can use them correctly to calculate small sums of money. In their measurement work, they use standard measures correctly.
- Pupils are able to display information they have gathered in various graphical forms.
- In KS2, the vast majority of pupils have a sound understanding of the four rules of number and of place value. They are able to recall their multiplication tables correctly. The more able pupils achieve good standards.
- Pupils use sensible mental strategies to discover the correct answers to number problems. They are well informed about the relationship between fractions and percentages and are able to estimate with a fair degree of accuracy.
- The older pupils are well informed about angles and the characteristics of 2D and 3D shapes. They understand the concept of co-ordination and reflection. They have a secure knowledge of standard measures.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS2, a good number of pupils lack confidence in discussing and explaining their work.
- The more able pupils in KS2 do not use a sufficiently wide range of mental strategies to make swift and accurate calculations.
- In both key stages, pupils' ability to exhibit data in a range of forms, including ICT, is under-developed.

### **Science**

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils know the difference between animate and inanimate objects. They are able to name parts of the body correctly and know the main characteristics and functions of their senses. They have a clear understanding of the value of a healthy diet.
- Pupils observe carefully and are beginning to make sensible predictions. They can record their observations correctly in the form of pictures and simple sentences. Their use of scientific terminology is satisfactory.

- In KS2, pupils have a sound knowledge of life processes and of living things. They are able to name various bodily organs and can describe how they work. They understand the effects of physical exercise on the heartbeat.
- Pupils are able to identify a good range of materials and can describe some of the ways in which they change. They recognise the differences between solids, liquids and gases.
- Pupils are aware of the need for fair testing and the more able pupils can explain which conditions are needed to conduct such a test.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1 and KS2, pupils' investigative skills have not been sufficiently extended.
- In KS2, pupils' ability to record their findings in their own words is under-developed.
- In both key stages, pupils make insufficient use of their ICT skills to investigate and to record their findings.

### **Design and technology**

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils work with a good range of materials to make various products.
- Pupils' measuring, cutting and shaping skills are good. The quality of their finished articles is good and sometimes very good.
- The older pupils make correct use of control devices to program a floor turtle.
- In KS2, pupils work with a variety of materials. In the best work, pupils draw sketches and choose suitable materials to make different products.
- Pupils' making skills are good. They are aware of the need to work safely and to handle tools correctly.

#### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1 and KS2, pupils lack a clear understanding of the design process. The diagrams and drawings they produce do not contain the required level of detail to illustrate their ideas.
- In KS1 and KS2, pupils' ability to identify the relative strengths and shortcomings of their products is under-developed.

## **Information Technology**

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils use computer programs to reinforce and enhance their experiences in language and mathematics. They are able to correctly follow on-screen instructions.
- The older pupils make effective use of the word processor to produce pieces of written work. Individuals can modify the text according to requirements, import pictures and print their work. Their work is of a good standard.
- Pupils are confident in their use of the mouse to create colourful shapes and patterns. They make good use of art programs to create attractive pictures.
- In KS2, a good number of pupils are able to correctly load, store, retrieve and print their work. They make appropriate use of their word processing skills to record their work and to display final copies of their written work.
- Pupils retrieve and print information from the Internet and from CD-ROMs in their investigative work in subjects such as geography and religious education.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' skills do not develop consistently across all applications as they move up the school.
- In KS2, pupils do not make regular use of their skills in their work across the subjects.

## **History**

Standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils have a sound understanding of the concept of the past and present. They make correct use of words and phrases relating to the passage of time and can place events in their own lives in the correct order. They are aware of the order of the week and of the year.
- Pupils are well informed about the stories and tales presented to them. They know several facts about characters such as Jane Pritchard. They correctly record their observations in the form of pictures and sentences.
- Pupils are able to differentiate between old and new when handling artefacts and they understand the difference between practices past and present. They begin to understand that things can change over time.

- In KS2, pupils have a sound knowledge of the history of the Celts. The history was brought alive to them through a visit to Castell Henllys where they were given an opportunity to re-live the period. They discuss the period with enthusiasm and can compare the Celts' way of life with that of the present day. When researching artefacts, pupils can discuss sensibly the manufacture and the use made of different artefacts.
- When recalling the history of the Second World War, pupils can discuss facts about the period, referring to some relevant artefacts. They display a sense of empathy when discussing the experiences of evacuees.

### **Shortcomings**

- In both key stages, pupils' skills of historical enquiry have not been sufficiently extended.
- In KS2, pupils do not record their own ideas and opinions sufficiently in their own words.
- Pupils in KS2 do not have a clear understanding of the meaning of a timeline.

### **Geography**

Standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils have a secure knowledge of their locality. They can name the main buildings in the village and can discuss the occupations of individuals within the community. They can name several nearby towns and villages.
- Pupils' mapping skills are good. They can correctly locate Wales on a map of the United Kingdom and are able to broadly indicate where they live. They can describe a journey on a map, using the correct terminology.
- They know that Cardiff is the capital city of Wales. They can name several of its key buildings and can make simple comparisons between some of its characteristics and those of their own locality.
- Using a story as a medium, pupils become aware of a wider world and they develop a good awareness of a contrasting area. They confidently compare the weather and people's lifestyles in a contrasting area with their own locality.
- In KS2, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of their own locality. Their geographical vocabulary is developing well as they discuss the position and location of their community within the county. They can make confident comparisons between their own locality and a nearby urban area. They search for additional information on the Internet.

- Pupils are able to name the main physical and human features of their locality. The older pupils are beginning to develop an awareness of conservation problems and of the effects of waste on our daily lives. They can express their own views simply on these issues.
- Older pupils in KS2 are able to read maps. They use four figure grid references to read locations on an Ordnance map. They are able to interpret map symbols and keys correctly.
- During their study of an economically developing country, pupils come to understand that life in Lesotho is different to their own and they are able to describe some of the differences with a sense of empathy.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1, pupils' investigative skills are under-developed.
- Pupils' skills of geographical enquiry do not develop sufficiently throughout KS2.
- In KS2, pupils' ability to record their own observations and findings in their own words has not been sufficiently extended. In their studies, pupils tend to describe rather than analyse the differences they observe.

### **Art**

Standards are good in KS1 and are satisfactory in KS2.

### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils use an appropriate range of resources and media. They draw and paint from their observations and from memory with increasing confidence. They know how to mix primary colours in order to create new shades.
- They can successfully emulate the works of famous artists. The older children are well informed about the way in which an artist whose work they have studied uses particular colours. They produce good quality work when emulating the works they have studied.
- They make confident use of ICT to produce colourful and interesting pictures. Pupils in Y2 exhibit a good understanding of pattern during their work on tasks such as weaving.
- There is further development in KS2 as the pupils observe and create in a range of different media.
- Pupils observe carefully as they produce a sketch of various objects; many pupils produce good quality work.

- Pupils discuss the works of famous artists intelligently, including artists from Wales. They can emulate their work, focussing on specific features.
- Pupils produce interesting work with wool when weaving and knitting, and they create interesting scenes, giving due attention to tone, colour, shape and form. This work is displayed effectively

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1, pupils do not make choices in response to a stimulus, and their ability to evaluate and discuss their own work and that of other artists is limited.
- In both key stages, there is little evidence of pupils' 3D modelling work.
- In KS2, the artwork of a good number of pupils does not illustrate sufficient development in care and attention to detail as they move up the school.

### **Music**

Standards are satisfactory in both key stages.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils sing an appropriate range of songs and hymns to a satisfactory standard.
- The vast majority of pupils can correctly name tuned and untuned instruments. They are able to accompany their own singing with the instruments, keeping the beat satisfactorily.
- Pupils can repeat simple rhythms accurately and can tap the beat of their names. They investigate a variety of sound sources in response to these activities. They understand the meaning of strong and soft sounds.
- In KS2, pupils sing a good variety of songs and hymns. The vast majority sing accurately and the quality of their singing is good. They pay due attention to expression and to the variation of pace and dynamics of their singing.
- Pupils listen to a variety of music and they use a number of musical terms correctly when describing these works. They express simple views about the music, conveying in pictorial form what the music conveys to them.
- Pupils have a general knowledge of local and well-known composers and performers and have an increasing awareness of various types of music.
- Some pupils avail themselves of the instrumental tuition on offer. They recognise the value of notes in staff notation and can read a simple melody. This contributes to the standards achieved in the subject.

### **Shortcomings**

- In both key stages, pupils' composing skills have not been sufficiently extended.
- In both key stages, pupils' ability to evaluate and discuss the performances of their own work and that of other composers has not been sufficiently developed.
- Pupils' use of their ICT skills to support their work in music is under-developed.

### **Physical education**

No physical education lessons were observed during the inspection. The scheme of work shows that the school offers pupils a balanced programme of activities.

### **Religious education**

Standards are good in KS1 and satisfactory in KS2.

#### **Good features**

- In KS1, pupils are well informed about stories from the Bible and are able to repeat them correctly. When discussing some of the parables, they come to know their significance in the modern day.
- The older pupils are aware of some of the main religious festivals and of the significance of other important days.
- They know that chapels and churches are places of worship for Christians as is the synagogue for Jews, and they understand the importance of the Bible to Christians and the Torah for the Jews.
- Pupils' understanding of principles, such as friendship and care for others, is developing well. They are able to discuss such principles simply.
- In KS2, pupils are able to repeat a number of stories from the Bible and can explain the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. They are aware of the importance of the Torah for the Jews.
- Pupils can link some of the main events in the New Testament with the Christian festivals.
- They are able to discuss humanitarian issues simply. They are aware of the importance of caring for others and for the world.
- Pupils are aware of elements of Judaism and can compare places of worship used by Christians and Jews, naming various artefacts that are relevant to their worship. They are able to discuss other significant features, such as the various Jewish celebrations.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS1, pupils' knowledge of objects seen in places of worship is limited. Their ability to express their opinions on religious issues has not been sufficiently developed.
- Pupils in KS2 are uncertain about places of pilgrimage for believers and they have little information about benefactors.
- Pupils in KS2 are relatively uninformed about the features of a church building and they do not exhibit sufficient depth of understanding in their written tasks.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress Since the Last Inspection**

The school has made satisfactory progress in responding to many of the key issues identified in the last inspection report, but some issues require further attention.

It was identified in the previous report that the school needs to raise standards in the subjects where pupils' standards of achievement were adjudged to be satisfactory. The need to expand and extend play experiences for the under-fives and the need to provide them with additional resources was also identified. It was also noted that arrangements should be made to provide indoor activities in physical education. It was further noted that indoor toilets should be provided for staff and pupils. Reference was also made to the need to ensure that the school's documentation fulfils statutory requirements.

- Since the last inspection, standards have improved in a number of subjects in KS1. Standards are now good in mathematics, history, geography, art and religious education. In KS2, standards are satisfactory in all subjects. Good use is made of the swimming pool and leisure centre in order to provide appropriate physical education experiences for pupils.
- Provision for the under-fives has been reviewed and the school has invested in additional resources. The curriculum provided for the under-fives is now appropriate and promotes the desirable outcomes. The activities provided are not always planned in sufficient detail to extend children's skills across the areas of learning.
- Indoor toilets have not been provided for staff or pupils.
- Not all school documentation fulfils statutory requirements.
- Some of the above issues remain key issues for attention.

### **8.2 Key issues for action**

The school needs to:

- maintain the good standards and improve standards in those subjects and aspects which are satisfactory by addressing the shortcomings noted;
- strengthen the SDP as a management tool by including detailed action plans for the targets noted;
- update school policies and schemes of work, tighten short term planning and develop the assessment procedures in order to ensure greater continuity and progression in pupils' learning;
- extend the use of numeracy and ICT as key skills to support pupils' learning across the subjects;
- formulate and implement a whole school self-evaluation process as a means of securing improvement;
- ensure that school documentation conforms with statutory requirements;
- address the safety issues identified in the report.

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic information about the school

School's Name	Ysgol Gymunedol Hermon
Type	LEA Maintained/Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
School Address	Hermon Y Glog Sir Benfro
Postal Code	SA36 ODT
Telephone number	01239 831335

Name of Headteacher	Mrs M George (Acting Head)
Date of Appointment	September 1997
Chair of the governors/ The appropriate authority	Mrs N Nicholas
Registered Inspector	Miss. D. Morris
Date of Inspection	22-24 September, 2003

### B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>									
Year Group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total

Number of pupils		11	6	4	8	6	7	8	50
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Number of teachers			
	Full time	Part time	Full time equivalent (FTE)
Number of teachers	2	1	2.8

Staffing information	
Pupil : teacher (fte) ratio, excluding nursery and special classes	17.8 :1
Pupil : adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	-
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	20.8
Teacher : class ratio	1.16 :1

Attendance in percentages for the three terms prior to the inspection.				
	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Term 1	97%	93%	95%	95%
Term 2	96%	95%	94%	95%
Term 3	96%	93%	95%	94%

Number of pupils excluded during the 12 previous months.	0
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### C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments and Public Examinations

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2003
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was greater than 5 but fewer than ten, performance indicators only are included.

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school:	78%	*In Wales:	81%

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2003
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 was greater than 5 but fewer than ten, performance indicators only are included.

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and either Welsh (First language) or English.			
by Teacher Assessment		By test	
At the School:	75%	At the School:	75%
*In Wales:	68%	In Wales:	68%

\* Wales results 2002

### D. Evidence base of the inspection

- The school was inspected over a period of three days. The team consisted of 3 inspectors including the lay inspector.
- 27 teaching sessions or parts thereof were inspected.
- Pupils were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. They were heard reading and samples of their work were examined.
- The school's documentation was studied including the schemes of work, teachers' planning notes and pupils' assessment records.
- Attendance registers were examined.
- Meetings were held with the head, the staff, the governing body and the parents.
- The daily acts of collective worship were attended.

- A parents' meeting was attended where 23 parents were present, and 25 parent questionnaires were returned and analysed.

**E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team**

Name	Role	Sections of the report	Subjects (section 7)
Miss D Morris	Registered inspector	1, 2, 3.1, 3.2, 5.1, 5.4, 6.1, 6.3, 6.2, 8.1, 8.2, Appendix	Mathematics, science, information technology, design and technology, geography, physical education
Mrs R H Roberts	Team inspector	4.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5.	Children under 5, English, Welsh, history, art, music, religious education
Mr G Morris	Lay Inspector	4.2, 4.3, 5.6, 5.7	

**The inspectors wish to thank the school governors, head, staff, pupils and parents for their willing co-operation during the inspection.**