

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Libanus Primary School
Libanus Rd
Blackwood
Caerphilly
NP12 1EH**

School Number: 6762084

Date of Inspection: 12/01/09

by

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Libanus Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Libanus Primary School took place between 12/01/09 and 15/01/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Glyn Robert Scott undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 Libanus Primary School is situated on the outskirts of the town of Blackwood, a busy market town in the Sirhowy valley. In recent years, there have been a lot of new housing developments in the area, and the majority of pupils are drawn from here. There are some out of catchment pupils who may have moved house but who continue to attend the school.
- 2 There are 338 pupils on roll from age 3-11. There are 45 (22.5fte) pupils in the nursery who attend on a part time basis. Pupils represent the full range of academic ability and social background.
- 3 The school population has changed over recent years, with more ethnic minority pupils, an increase in pupils entitled to free school meals (FSM), large numbers of families involved with Social Services, and more pupils with SEN, The predominant language spoken in school is English, with 95% of the population
- 4 The school was last inspected in January 2003. The present headteacher was appointed in September 2001. The school population has grown and yet the building has remained the same size. The canteen, storage areas and 2 classrooms have been demolished in preparation for a new building which will house a hall, kitchen and 4 classrooms. At the time of the inspection work had not started on the refurbishments.
- 5 For the under five age group the school are correctly following the Foundation Phase for nursery learners and this is to be applied to the Reception class in September 2009.
- 6 The school holds the Basic Skills quality mark for the second time and also holds Eco Flag status.

The school's priorities and targets

- 7 **2008-2009**
 - to implement the Foundation Phase into Nursery & Reception
 - to introduce & develop a SRF for ICT
 - to embed & map the skills curriculum for Curriculum 2008
 - to continue to develop the school's system of self evaluation
 - to continue to develop strategies for supporting pupils with SEN
 - to continue to raise standards of achievement in the core subjects
 - to continue to develop multi-culturalism within the school
 - to continue to develop school accessibility in line with the DDA
 - to continue to address premises related issues
 - on-going initiatives from previous SDPs

Summary

8. Libanus Primary School is a good school that provides a warm and caring environment for all its pupils. Improvements in learning and teaching since the last inspection are reflected in the good standards achieved. The headteacher, supported by the staff and governors, has established a strong learning environment. Outstanding features include well motivated and extremely personable pupils who regularly achieve high standards in a positive learning environment.

9 The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

Table of grades awarded

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

10 The school is meeting the statutory requirements for nursery children with respect to the Foundation Phase. As yet there is no requirement for the reception class to follow the Foundation Phase procedures; this is reflected in the two tables provided for the grading of both areas of learning for the under-fives.

11 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase;

Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity	Grade 1
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Welsh language development	Grade 1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2

- 12 The overall quality of educational provision for the under- fives has some weaknesses, in the systems employed to involve all staff in the learning and teaching in the reception classes. There is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right.

Subjects and/or areas of learning for under-fives. (Reception)

Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2

- 13 Pupils make good progress in the nursery phase of the school and this is reflected in the improvements in their baseline scores in the reception classes.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Grade 1	Grade 1
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information Technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Foundation phase	Grade 2	

- 14 Standards in the key skills of speaking and listening are outstanding throughout the school. Pupils articulate well and speak confidently and contribute well in lessons. Reading and writing are good with pupils achieving outstanding skills by the time they year 6, reading a wide range of genre.
- 15 Pupils’ bilingual competence throughout the school has shortcomings. Pupils do not develop their oral skills sufficiently well enough to communicate with their teachers or peers. They have insufficient knowledge of the Welsh language to promote their bilingual skills.
- 16 Pupils regardless of their age, ability or ethnicity make good progress in their knowledge understanding and acquisition of key and basic skills.
- 17 Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress and achieve the targets set for them in their individual education plans (IEPs). There are two pupils with statements who receive the appropriate additional support.
- 18 In KS1, the results of teacher assessment in English mathematics and science are above the national and local averages. When compared with schools in a similar free school meals indicator pupils are above average in all core subjects.
- 19 In KS2, the results of teacher assessment in the core subjects of English mathematics and science, is slightly below local and national averages. However trends are upwards and benchmark figures for mathematics and

science are in the upper quartile with English being in the median quartile. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

- 20 Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding features of the school. The school is a warm, welcoming, friendly community where all pupils are valued equally.
- 21 Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and play, are interested and keen to please their teachers. They listen carefully in lessons, contribute readily to discussion, sustain concentration and persevere well with their tasks. They take delight in their achievements and in the achievements of their peers.
- 22 Attendance rates for the past three terms average 94.4%. These rates are above national rates of attendance for pupils of primary school age and in line with rates of attendance for schools that have a similar free school meal entitlement.
- 23 The school has introduced new approaches to the teaching of learning which are already having a positive impact on standards. Older pupils are developing the capacity to work independently and collaborate well when working in pairs and small groups. However, younger children have too few opportunities to explore new learning situations. In a limited number of lessons, there is over direction and children are not given the opportunity to make their own choices and decisions.
- 24 Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. The very good relationships between staff and pupils underpin this development and pupils feel confident in expressing themselves because they know their views are valued by staff.
- 25 In discussion, pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness of equal opportunities issues and show a genuine respect for faiths and cultures that differ from their own.
- 26 Pupils are well prepared for effective participation in the life and work of the local community and good use is made of the community as a learning resource.

The quality of education and training

Grades for teaching

- 27 quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
22%	69%	9%	0%	0%

- 28 The quality of teaching is strength of the school and an important element in the progress pupils make and the standards that are achieved.

- 29 The above figures are an improvement from the last inspection and well above those published in HMCI's Annual Report for 2006/7. Nationally the figures for good or better teaching (grades 1 and 2) are 80% with 14% of them having outstanding features.
- 30 Teachers are good role models. The quality of the working relationship between them and pupils is very good and based on fairness and mutual respect; which effectively promotes motivation and learning. The atmosphere in each class is calm and conducive to learning. Teachers, for the most part have high expectations and pupils' efforts are frequently praised. High priority is given to the promotion of equal opportunities. Teachers display good subject knowledge and they make every effort to ensure that they are familiar with recent educational developments and initiatives.
- 31 Teachers are good language models for pupils to emulate. They adopt a very positive approach to the Welsh language and at various levels make good use of their own developing grasp of the language. There is however an insufficiently rigorous approach to planning and opportunities to promote the progressive development of pupils' bilingual skills across the school. This is an area which the school has identified for development.
- 32 Overall provision for assessment, recording and reporting is good. There is a well focused assessment policy which, together with a clear marking policy provides clear guidance and support for procedures in these areas.
- 33 An effective tracking system monitors the progress of pupils across the school in the core areas. Assessment of pupils throughout the school in the foundation subjects is more informal in nature.
- 34 Annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements and are of a good quality. They outline pupils' achievements effectively in relation to the desirable outcomes and core and foundation subjects in KS1 and KS2.
- 35 The curriculum is broad, balanced, well planned and effective, and is a good feature of the school. The school provides pupils with a wide range of experiences that cater for their specific needs and interests.
- 36 The provision for the Foundation Phase is developing very well. Pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's learning in the reception classes, but planning across the year group does not always give clear direction to support staff regarding intervention skills in children's play sessions.
- 37 The school makes good provision for the development of pupils' basic and key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils' problem solving and investigative skills are well developed and are also well organised and monitored.
- 38 The school works hard and makes an outstanding contribution in order to broaden and enrich learners' experiences. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a particularly wide variety of sporting, musical and dance activities.

- 39 The overall provision for the development of pupils', moral and social and cultural development is outstanding. The school is very pro-active in promoting good attitudes and values.
- 40 Pupils are taught to know right from wrong and with very few exceptions, they exhibit good self-discipline. Their roles within the school council and Eco committee are effective in developing an understanding of living as part of a community and helping them take responsibility readily.
- 41 The culture and heritage of Wales, (Y Cwriclwm Cymreig) feature prominently in a number of curriculum subjects and in the general life of the school. Planning to promote progression in pupils bilingual skills through giving them opportunities to use their developing grasp of the Welsh language in more informal situations and in other curriculum areas is however insufficiently developed.
- 42 The school's partnerships with parents, the local community, other schools and higher education institutions are highly successful and have outstanding features. They enrich the life and work of the school and enhance pupils' learning experiences.
- 43 The school makes good efforts to act in a sustainable way and pupils regularly monitor energy consumption and are involved in re-cycling, composting and waste minimisation schemes. Their understanding of environmental, conservation and global issues is impressive and they genuinely feel they can make a real difference,
- 44 As part of the *eco-schools award scheme*, the school is justly proud of achieving the *European Green Flag* in recognition of its commitment to conservation and the environment.
- 45 The school has a positive ethos and every pupil is valued and included. The school's systems for learning and teaching ensure that the wide ranges of needs within the school are met. Pupils are friendly and courteous to each other and adults. Positive relationships with parents have been established
- 46 The provision for pupils' well being is outstanding. Adults in the school are well aware of pupils with particular needs and understand fully the procedures in the event of accidents and emergencies. The school is fully involved in healthy schools projects.

Leadership and management

- 47 The school has progressed noticeably since the last inspection due to the strong leadership qualities of the headteacher. She is committed to providing a caring and supportive ethos that supports learning of a high standard. The headteacher is ably supported by her deputy, and staff that show support for each other in a team based environment of good leadership that strives towards a common purpose of expanding pupils' learning.

- 48 There is an equally strong commitment to promoting equality for all. Regardless of background or ability pupils talk of the safe atmosphere in the school where they trust their peers and adults to help and support them.
- 49 Staff have a good understanding of the priorities and policies of the school and bring well informed skills to learning and teaching.
- 50 The governing body is a proactive group regularly involved in the school. They fully meet their statutory responsibilities and act as a critical friend to the school.
- 51 Under the very effective leadership of the head teacher a good culture of self-evaluation has been established. The school adopts a positive approach to self-evaluation, the process is effective and planning for improvement is of a good quality.
- 52 There is a strong link between the process of self-evaluation and the School Development Plan which emerges. The School development plan (SDP) contains a number of relevant short term targets and a very useful longer term view.
- 53 Progress since the last inspection has been good overall. There has been for example a marked improvement in relation to pupils' achievement in key skills.
- 54 Use of assessment to plan work for different needs and abilities is now more effective as is curriculum planning to ensure continuity and progression.
- 55 The school is appropriately staffed with suitably qualified teachers who provide a very wide range of subject expertise, experience and skills, which are readily shared and disseminated throughout the school. Support staff contribute effectively to the overall learning and teaching throughout the school. Together with administrative and ancillary staff they help to make the school a happy and productive environment.
- 56 All learners have access to a wide range of learning resources both within and outside the buildings. Resources are effectively allocated around the school and much has been done to prepare for the onset of the Foundation Phase.
- 57 The leadership and management of the school are good with all stakeholders contributing to the school community. The efficient and effective governing body working with the headteacher has taken the school forward since the last inspection and gives good value for money.

Recommendations

- 58 The governors, headteacher and staff now need to
- R1** continue to develop pupil's involvement in their own target setting and understanding of what they need to do to progress. *
- R2** continue to progress with the development of bilingual skills throughout the school.
- R3** Further involve all early years' staff, in planning of learning and teaching.*
- R4** Continue to work with the unitary authority in improving the site to ensure the safety of play areas *

* The school has already identified this as a need in its School development plan

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 59 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 60 Standards of achievement are good overall. The findings of the inspection team fully match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 61 During the inspection, the pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects identified for inspection were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
21%	75%	4%	0%	0%

- 62 In 96% of lessons pupils standards of achievement were judged to be grade 2 or above, a figure which is significantly higher than the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target for 2007. Standards in all lessons were grade 2 or above which exceeds the WAG target that standards should be at least grade 3 or above in 98% of lessons. These figures show that there has been substantial improvement since the last inspection.

- 63 The school is working hard to implement the Foundation Phase for the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) The overall quality of provision for pupils in the nursery phase is good. In the reception classes, provision is good with some shortcomings in the deployment and involvement of support staff.
- 64 The overall quality of educational provision for the under- fives has some weaknesses in involving all staff in the planning for learning and teaching in the reception classes. However there is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right.
- 65 Pupils make good progress in the nursery phase of the school and this is reflected in the improvements in their baseline scores in the reception classes.
- 66 Standards of achievement for the under-fives were as follows:

Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity	Grade 1
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Welsh language development	Grade 1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2

- 67 The overall quality of educational provision for the under- fives has some weaknesses, in the systems employed to involve all staff in the learning and teaching in the reception classes. There is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right.

Subjects and/or areas of learning for under-fives. (Reception)

Language, literacy and communication	Grade 3
Personal and social development	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 3
Creative development	Grade 3
Physical development	Grade 2

- 68 Standards in the key skills of speaking and listening are outstanding throughout the school. Pupils articulate well and speak confidently and contribute well in lessons. Reading and writing are good with pupils reading a wide range of genre. Standards in numeracy and Information and communication technology (ICT) are also good with pupils displaying good skills throughout the school.
- 69 Pupils' bilingual competence throughout the school has some shortcomings. Pupils do not develop their oral skills sufficiently well enough to communicate with their teachers or peers. They have insufficient knowledge of the Welsh language to promote their bilingual skills.

- 70 Pupils regardless of their age, ability or ethnicity make good progress in their knowledge understanding and acquisition of key and basic skills. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress and achieve the targets set for them in their individual education plans (IEPs).
- 71 In KS1, the results of teacher assessment in English mathematics and science are above the national and local averages. When compared with schools in a similar free school meals indicator pupils are above average in all core subjects. Girls outperform boys slightly with all girls achieving level 2 in all three core subjects.
- 72 In KS2, the results of teacher assessment in the core subjects of English mathematics and science are slightly below local and national averages. However trends are upwards and benchmark figures for mathematics and science are in the upper quartile with English being in the median quartile.
- 73 The school has introduced new approaches to the teaching of learning which are already having a positive impact on standards notably in the teaching of English.
- 74 Overall pupils make good progress in their learning and are developing an understanding of how well they are progressing though this is not yet fully developed.
- 75 Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards learning are outstanding features of the school. The school is a warm, welcoming, friendly community where all pupils are valued equally.
- 76 In lessons and around the school, pupils demonstrate respect, care and concern for each other, for adults and for their environment. They are proud of their school and take delight in sharing their many achievements with visitors. Older pupils, in particular, are developing into articulate, responsible and mature individuals who demonstrate a high degree of self-discipline.
- 77 Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and play, are interested and keen to please their teachers. They listen carefully in lessons, contribute readily to discussion, sustain concentration and persevere well with their tasks. They take delight in their achievements and in the achievements of their peers.
- 78 Attendance rates for the past three terms average 94.4%. These rates are above national rates of attendance for pupils of primary school age and in line with rates of attendance for schools that have a similar free school meal entitlement.
- 79 Registration is conducted efficiently; most pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly. The school complies with all attendance requirements set out in *National Assembly for Wales (NAW) Circular 47/06, Inclusion and Pupil Support*.
- 80 Pupils, by the time they reach key stage 2 are developing the capacity to work independently and collaborate well when working in pairs and small groups. .

However in the reception classes, staff on occasions over-direct sessions and children are not given the opportunity to make their own choices and decisions.

- 81 Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. The very good relationships between staff and pupils underpin this development and pupils feel confident in expressing themselves because they know their views are valued by staff. The sensitive content of collective worship, the well structured personal social and emotional PSE programme and the highly supportive ethos of the school provide pupils with a secure set of values to guide them. Pupils are tolerant, open-minded and honest in their dealings with adults and with each other.
- 82 In discussion, pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness of equal opportunities issues and show a genuine respect for faiths and cultures that differ from their own. They express particular pleasure that their school community is becoming more diverse and they believe strongly that everyone should be treated equally and without discrimination or favouritism.
- 83 Pupils are well prepared for effective participation in the life and work of the local community and good use is made of the community as a learning resource. Governors, staff and pupils work in close partnership with the local community and support a range of community initiatives and activities.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 84 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 85 The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
22%	69%	9%	0%	0%

- 86 The quality of teaching is strength of the school and an important element in the progress pupils make and the standards that are achieved.
- 87 The above figures are an improvement from the last inspection and well above those published in HMCI's Annual Report for 2006/7. Nationally the figures for good or better teaching (grades 1 and 2), is 80% with 14% of them having outstanding features.

- 88 Where teaching is Grade 1, in the lessons seen the outstanding features include:
- very effective recall of previous learning experiences
 - the high level of challenge offered to pupils
 - very good skills and strategies for gaining and maintaining pupils' interest
 - very effective organisation and management of a range of differentiated activities with a very good pace to lessons
 - good opportunities for pupils to reflect and to work independently
 - a high quality of teacher intervention as pupils engage in their tasks.
- 89 Where teaching is Grade 2, the good features include:
- the effective use of a variety of teaching strategies and relevant resources, including interactive whiteboards
 - efficient class management strategies
 - stimulating and interesting tasks for pupils
 - effectively planned lessons with well focused aims, which are beneficially shared with pupils
 - appropriately differentiated tasks to meet various needs
 - good questioning skills and intervention strategies
 - revisiting the aims of the lesson and the key skills used during plenary sessions.
- 90 On the occasions when there are shortcomings in teaching, this is due mainly to teaching approaches which are over prescriptive and lost opportunities for enhancing pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- 91 Teachers are good role models. The quality of the working relationship between them and pupils is very good and based on fairness and mutual respect; which effectively promotes motivation and learning. The atmosphere in each class is calm and conducive to learning. Teachers, for the most part have high expectations and pupils' efforts are frequently praised. High priority is given to the promotion of equal opportunities.
- 92 Teachers display good subject knowledge and they make every effort to ensure that they are familiar with recent educational developments and initiatives.
- 93 Teachers are good language models for pupils to emulate. They adopt a very positive approach to the Welsh language and at various levels make good use of their own developing grasp of the language. There is however an insufficiently rigorous approach to planning and opportunities to promote the progressive development of pupils' bilingual skills across the school. This is an area which the school has identified for development.
- 94 Working alongside teachers, classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of the teaching and learning. They give good support to small groups of pupils within the classroom, as well as assisting individuals who need additional encouragement and who have ALN.

- 95 Overall provision for assessment, recording and reporting is good. There is a well focused assessment policy which, together with a clear marking policy provides clear guidance and support for procedures in these areas. There is a clear assessment timetable and teachers use evidence produced from the baseline assessments undertaken with the under-fives together with a range of tests. These include those produced by the LEA and National Curriculum tests in key stages 1 and 2 to identify strengths and areas for development and to set targets for individual pupils and year groups.
- 96 An effective tracking system monitors the progress of pupils across the school in the core areas. Assessment of pupils throughout the school in the foundation subjects is more informal in nature. Portfolios of levelled work in the majority of subjects help bring an added rigour to the overall assessment process. The school has good arrangements in place for the assessment of all subjects. Teachers make effective use of the collections of assessed work in place for every subject.
- 97 Assessment and recording procedure for pupils with ALN and the two statemented pupils are good. There are two pupils with statements of educational need whose needs are fully met by the school.
- 98 The identification of assessment opportunities in short term planning and evaluations of learning experiences, for the most part inform further planning of further curricular experiences in an effective manner.
- 99 Work is regularly marked and, in the best examples, particularly in language work, provides ways forward for pupils to improve. Lesson aims are identified during introductions and in the best practice the extent to which aims and key skills have been achieved are discussed in plenary sessions.
- 100 While pupils are beginning to play a more active role in relation to specific individual targets for improvement and with regard to evaluating the extent to which they have been achieved, these procedures are at an early stage of development and have been identified as areas for further development.
- 101 The school has appropriate arrangements for informing those with a legitimate interest about pupils' progress and achievements and the school exchanges much relevant data with the receiving secondary school and keeps governors well informed.
- 102 Annual reports to parents comply with statutory requirements and are of a good quality. They outline pupils' achievements effectively in relation to the desirable outcomes and core and foundation subjects in KS1 and KS2. Reports contain targets for improvement in the core areas and at times in relation to more general areas for development. Open evenings for parents are held twice a year when they can focus on their children's achievements and discuss their progress

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 103 The findings of the inspection report match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 104 The curriculum is broad, balanced, well planned and effective, and is a good feature of the school. Planning ensures equal access and meets the needs and aspirations of all groups of pupils, including those with ALN and the more able and talented pupils. The curriculum fully meets all statutory requirements. The school provides pupils with a wide range of experiences that cater for their specific needs and interests.
- 105 The provision for the Foundation Phase is developing very well. Pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's learning in the reception classes, but planning across the year group does not always give clear direction to support staff regarding intervention skills in children's play sessions.
- 106 Children receive a variety of stimulating learning opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, which develop their interests and they are actively involved in their own learning.
- 107 The school makes good provision for the development of pupils' basic and key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils' problem solving and investigative skills are well developed and are also well organised and monitored. A recent focus on developing pupils' thinking skills has been effective.
- 108 The school works hard and makes an outstanding contribution in order to broaden and enrich learners' experiences. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a particularly wide variety of sporting, musical and dance activities. Visits to the Christian Centre, France, St David's Hall and Crucial Crew enrich pupils' experiences. There are a number of visitors into school who share their expertise and knowledge with pupils in lessons, such as Kerbcraft and TARU, a Brazilian recycling group.
- 109 The overall provision for the development of pupils', moral and social and spiritual development is outstanding. The school is very pro-active in promoting good attitudes and values. Assemblies and times of collective worship are purposeful, enjoyable experiences. They meet statutory requirements and foster pupils' spiritual development well. Visiting clergy make very good contributions. Pupils are taught to know right from wrong and with very few exceptions, they exhibit good self-discipline. Their roles within the school council and Eco committee are effective in developing an understanding of living as part of a community and helping them take responsibility readily.

- 110 Provision for cultural development is good. The school is proactive in aiming to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of multiculturalism in the wider world. A member of staff has visited Nigeria and the pupils in his class performed an excellent multi-cultural assembly. As part of a project created with Caerphilly's Arts Development team, pupils held a Brazilian carnival through the streets of Blackwood.
- 111 The school's partnerships with parents, the local community, other schools and higher education institutions are highly successful and have outstanding features. They enrich the life and work of the school and enhance pupils' learning experiences.
- 112 Parents are very supportive of the school, value its welcoming nature and appreciate the ready access they have to the headteacher and the staff. They give freely of their time accompanying pupils on educational visits, such as the visit to France, fundraising through the Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) and supporting school activities. Communication between school and home is well established and effective.
- 113 The school has strong a working partnership with other schools in its area and with the secondary school to which the pupils transfer. The Carnival project between the secondary school and its feeder schools, and led by the pupils of Libanus is an outstanding feature. The more able mathematicians in year 6 are studying for their GCSE with a staff member of the secondary school.
- 114 The school regularly welcomes students from local secondary schools and colleges who undertake vocational qualifications. Students are well supported by staff and they make a positive contribution to the school.
- 115 The school's partnership with the local community is outstanding. Staff take full advantage of all that the community has to offer to broaden and extend the learning experiences of pupils. The school and its various activities are very well supported and valued by the local community.
- 116 The school's commitment to work-related education is good and pupils' learning has been enriched by a range of partnerships with local employers and relevant agencies. Teachers successfully address the vocational aspect of the PSE programme and a range of well-planned visits to commercial and retail sites enhances pupils' understanding of the world of work.
- 117 The school enjoys positive partnerships with personnel from the emergency services and pupils' understanding of their work has been enhanced through their involvement in the 'crucial crew' programme.
- 118 Several teachers have undertaken relevant industrial and business placements, which have contributed to their professional development and enhanced curriculum provision for pupils.
- 119 There is a clear Welsh ethos throughout the school Cwriculwm Cymreig. There are good attitudes towards the Welsh language and pupils respond

positively when given opportunities to use their second language. Planning to promote progression in pupils bilingual skills through giving them opportunities to use their developing grasp of the Welsh language in more informal situations and in other curriculum areas is however insufficiently developed. The culture and heritage of Wales feature prominently in a number of curriculum subjects and in the general life of the school.

- 120 The school's policies and procedures to promote equal opportunities and to tackle social disadvantage and stereotyping are an outstanding feature of provision and pupils succeed regardless of their ability, gender, race or backgrounds. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum and all other facilities in the school.
- 121 The standards in, and provision for education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC) are outstanding and fully embedded in the life and work of the school.
- 122 The school makes good efforts to act in a sustainable way and pupils regularly monitor energy consumption and are involved in re-cycling, composting and waste minimisation schemes. Their understanding of environmental, conservation and global issues is impressive and they genuinely feel they can make a real difference, both locally and globally, through active citizenship and care for the environment. The school's eco code of '*reduce, reuse, recycle and show respect*' permeates school life.
- 123 As part of the *eco-schools award scheme*, the school is justly proud of achieving the *European Green Flag* in recognition of its commitment to conservation and the environment.
- 124 Pupils have access to a relevant Personal and Social Education Programme in line with national recommendations. Aspects of PSE are having a positive impact on pupils' emotional personal and social development. Pupils are encouraged to enjoy successful relationships with their families, friends and local community. The school links with Nigeria help pupils develop an understanding of global citizenship. Pupils are aware of their physical health, understand healthy eating initiatives and develop self awareness, self respect and self esteem. The school has Healthy School Status.
- 125 Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are developing well. Pupils take part in competitions and workshops sponsored by industry and relevant agencies, including the Education Business Partnership (EBP) and Careers Wales. They have regular opportunities to develop their problem solving skills and contribute to decision making through their involvement in the School Council and the Eco Committee. Pupils take part in enterprise activities that give them good insight into the running of a successful business.
- 126 The school is committed to the priorities of lifelong learning and community regeneration but acknowledges that there is scope for children, at an appropriate level, to take more responsibility for their own learning.

- 127 Staff and pupils know their community well and understand what is needed for its continued regeneration and success. They recognise that through partnership, citizenship and care for the environment they can make a real contribution to their community.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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- 128 The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team found the care and support procedures to have an outstanding impact on pupils' feelings towards the school and this in turn impacted on standards.
- 129 Pupils are guided and supported well in a secure, supportive and happy environment. The school has a positive ethos and every pupil is valued and included. This is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils are friendly and courteous to each other and adults. They move safely from outside classrooms into the main building.
- 130 The school plans and manages care arrangements and support services effectively.
- 131 Positive relationships with parents have been established and the school operates an 'open-door' approach whenever possible. This is an outstanding feature of the school's provision. Governors have an agreed procedure for dealing with complaints. The school has a home/school agreement. Regular newsletters keep parents informed. Annual reports to parents are detailed and two Parent Consultations help to inform parents with information about their child's progress. Parental involvement with whole school initiatives is encouraged e.g. Kerbcraft and the Healthy schools initiative.
- 132 The School Council and Eco Council give pupils opportunities to make decisions. Junior pupils have a secret ballot to select members of the School Council. A DVD has been made of the election process for Libanus School Council and is being used as a good example for other schools. A 'suggestion' box gives pupils the opportunity to inform their council of their issues and priorities.
- 133 Useful Induction programmes help pupils to settle quickly. Visits to Early Years classes are arranged the term before entry and Early Years staff and the Head teacher meet with parents to distribute information and undertake a tour of the school. A staggered September intake helps children to feel more confident. New pupils to school are allocated a 'friend'. Older pupils are well prepared for their transition to High School.
- 134 All staff offer pupils appropriate academic and emotional support and guidance. The SENCO and the head teacher co-ordinate effectively with specialist services.

- 135 Registration is conducted efficiently, lessons start promptly and the school complies with all the statutory attendance requirements. Attendance is good and class teachers and the head teacher follow up absences. There are cluster attendance procedures in place. The school has an excellent working relationship with the Education Welfare Officer.
- 136 The provision for pupils' well being is outstanding. Adults in the school are well aware of pupils with particular needs and understand fully the procedures in the event of accidents and emergencies. The head teacher regularly attends LEA training for health and safety issues and relevant Risk Assessments are in place. Fire drills take place regularly. There are a number of dedicated First Aid providers. The school building programme is a challenge for health and safety issues.
- 137 The welfare and development of pupils is safeguarded by good partnerships with welfare agencies. The head teacher works closely with the Child Protection Officer. Policies are secure and staff have been properly trained.
- 138 Regular meetings contribute to the successful monitoring of attendance. Individual pupils with attendance problems are identified, contact is made with parents at an early stage, and other welfare agencies are involved when necessary.
- 139 The school's policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are very effective. Pupils who demonstrate emotional and behavioural difficulties are counselled, parents are involved and support is sought from external agencies when necessary. This is an outstanding feature of provision. The merit system for good behaviour and effort is valued by pupils and parents and works very well.
- 140 Class teachers monitor all pupils' academic performance, including those with ALN, carefully but the role of pupils in taking more responsibility for their own learning, in setting their own targets and understanding and planning their own progress is not yet fully developed across the school.
- 141 Good support is provided for additional learning needs.(ALN) The school's Special Education Needs policy has due regard to the Code of Practice. Pupils with special needs are identified early and teachers and support staff work closely with the co-coordinator (SENCO) and Head teacher.
- 142 Pupils are given their own programmes of learning and targets for success (IEPs, Play Plans). Parents are fully informed of their child's progress and attend regular reviews. The school uses a multisensory approach to learning. Class teachers differentiate activities where appropriate and pupils' demonstrate motivation and make good progress towards fulfilling their potential. There is a specialist teacher for pupils with special learning difficulties.
- 143 Extra provision is made for pupils for whom English is an additional language for two hours a week. This helps pupils emotionally and develops language

acquisition.

- 144 More able and talented pupils are well motivated and teachers give them the freedom to develop independent learning and research skills. Satisfaction in the way the school extends their learning was expressed in parent questionnaires. The school is inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils refer to the trust they have in the school to care for their interests. This is an outstanding feature of the school.
- 145 The school's provision for equal opportunities is good throughout the school. Equality for all is firmly embedded in the school's ethos and the headteacher and staff place a high priority on the social inclusion of all pupils.
- 146 The school is successful in recognising the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and takes this into account when planning and delivering its support and guidance. All staff know pupils very well and are sensitive to their individual needs.
- 147 The measures taken to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination and bullying are effective and such instances are rare in the school. In discussion, pupils stated that they would be confident in reporting instances of bullying and racism and felt that staff would listen to them and take seriously their concerns. Effective documentation underpins the school's work in this area and the headteacher monitors and responds quickly to any incident brought to her attention.
- 148 School policies and procedures effectively promote gender equality and challenge stereotypes, and the school does all it can to ensure the equal treatment of disabled learners. An accessibility audit has been undertaken, and a new disability equality scheme is in place. Plans clearly demonstrate how the school will make improvements in access to the curriculum, physical access and the provision of information for disabled pupils.
- 149 There are effective procedures in place to promote good race relations and the school recognises respects and celebrates diversity. Pupils value and respect the contribution of others regardless of their ability, gender, race or background.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 150 The findings of the inspection team fully match the judgement made by the school in the self- evaluation report.
- 151 The headteacher provides strong and informed leadership. She is committed to providing a caring and supportive ethos that supports learning of a high standard. The school has since the last inspection progressed well in the improvement of standards. The headteacher is ably supported by her deputy, and staff who show support for each other in a team based environment of good leadership that strives towards a common purpose of expanding pupils' learning.
- 152 Good leadership and management reflects the clear aims and values set down by the school in creating a caring ethos which encourages children to achieve their aspirations. Recent initiatives in the curriculum have been an example of the team support of staff and these are already impacting on standards.
- 153 There is an equally strong commitment to promoting equality for all. Regardless of background or ability pupils talk of the safe atmosphere in the school where they trust their peers and adults to help and support them. The welcoming and positive ethos within the school is an outstanding feature of provision.
- 154 The school takes good account of national and local initiatives with examples of community involvement with the local arts projects and the introduction of aspects of the curriculum 2008 which is already having a positive effect on the raising of standards.
- 155 The system of target setting is well embedded and the school sets realistic but challenging targets which it generally meets and in some cases exceeds. Targets are based on pupils individual and specific needs recognised in good tracking systems. Other targets that encompass the wider school needs are identified and prioritised in the SDP.
- 156 All staff and leaders are aware of their responsibilities and work well together in formal and informal settings to improve provision and develop their own skills. They keep abreast of new initiatives and through a clear and comprehensive monitoring system coordinators support their colleagues well. Staff development and training is wide ranging and generally good, though additional involvement in planning by some learning support assistants is at an early stage of development. The school' leaders strike a good balance between supporting individual staff development and setting school priorities.

- 157 Performance management processes are in place and in line with statutory requirements. Information gained from the process informs both individual and school based planning.
- 158 The governing body is a proactive group regularly involved in the school. They fully meet their statutory responsibilities and act as a critical friend to the school. They are well informed and involve themselves actively in the school to ensure that they are well informed about aspects of provision.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 159 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 160 Under the very effective leadership of the head teacher a good culture of self-evaluation has been established. The school adopts a positive approach to self-evaluation, the process is effective and planning for improvement is of a good quality. There is a clear strategy and the school has established procedures which are comprehensive, systematic and based on clear evidence. All staff are involved in the self evaluation process and contribute to the evaluation of how the goals and priorities of each year are met.
- 161 Governors play an important part in the process; they complete questionnaires Parents' views are formally canvassed through questionnaires and through more informal contacts while pupil opinions are sought through their involvement in school and eco councils.
- 162 The self-evaluation report produced before the inspection is a comprehensive document and focuses very effectively on a wide range of relevant elements relating to the seven key questions. The report is honest and thorough and governors, staff and LEA advisers were involved in its preparation. It clearly presents the school's perceived strengths and areas for development and provides a good basis for the inspection. The analysis is based on a wide range of evidence which was made available to the inspection team. The inspection team agreed with the schools' grading for six of the seven key questions. In respect to key question 4 outstanding features were found that warrants a grade one.
- 163 There is a strong link between the process of self-evaluation and the SDP which emerges. The SDP contains a number of relevant short term targets and a very useful longer term view. It is a well focused document which identifies specific actions to be taken and links well with budgetary considerations. Staff and governors have played an important role in its formation and the process of monitoring progress in relation to the priorities identified.

- 164 Subject co-ordinators, at the end of each year complete summary reviews on the monitoring of their subjects. They draw on a range of evidence; their reports note and record strengths and steps for development, which are fed into the SDP. All co-ordinators look at pupils' work, listen to learners and oversee planning and are making good progress in developing their skills of observing teaching. Those responsible for the core subjects also make an analysis of NC assessment data, benchmarking information and standardised tests to inform their conclusions. The core subjects are generally monitored every year and the foundation subjects every three years.
- 165 The headteacher undertakes an active monitoring role through conducting performance management reviews, looking at pupils' work and observing systematically in classrooms. She provides feedback to teachers on agreed observation targets and areas for development.
- 166 The headteacher and deputy together with other staff members undertake a detailed analysis of pupils' assessment results, including baseline assessment in the early years and NC levels at the end of KS1 and KS2. Effective use is made of the information collected to guide teaching, to plan the way forward for individual pupils and to set targets.
- 167 Test and assessment results and targets are discussed with governors and staff who focus appropriately on analysing pupils' progress. The governing body receives a range of reports and has a good knowledge of how the school compares with similar schools locally and nationally.
- 168 The process of self evaluation has been effective in leading to initiatives which have led to marked improvements in standards in subjects such as mathematics, science and information technology and with regard to improvements in reading and in improving the gender imbalance in achievement. Initiatives have also led to progress in the provision of PSE and in developing the role of subject co-ordinators.
- 169 Progress since the last inspection has been good overall. Standards of achievement in music have remained at Grade 2. Those in English and Mathematics have been raised from Grade 3 to Grade 2 in both key stages. In geography standards have been raised from Grade 4 to Grade 2 in KS1 and from Grade 3 to Grade 2 in KS2. There has been a marked improvement in relation to pupils' achievement in key skills.
- 170 Use of assessment to plan work for different needs and abilities is now more effective as is curriculum planning to ensure continuity and progression. The school has been successful in devising strategies to raise awareness of racial equality and of other faiths and cultures

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

Grade 2 good features outweigh shortcomings

- 171 The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgement in the self-evaluation report.

- 172 The school is appropriately staffed with suitably qualified teachers who provide a very wide range of subject expertise, experience and skills, which are readily shared and disseminated throughout the school. Support staff contribute effectively to the overall learning and teaching throughout the school. Together they help to make the school a happy and productive environment.
- 173 The school clerks, caretaker, catering staff, cleaners and lunchtime supervisors are very much part of the school team and carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.
- 174 The arrangements for performance management are embedded in the school and meet statutory requirements. There is a commitment by all staff to their own personal development. They set appropriate targets and goals for themselves and link these to the school's priorities. Managers fulfill their roles appropriately and responsibilities are effectively deployed to knowledgeable subject leaders. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning and subject leaders regularly communicate with their colleagues in both key stages regarding their subject responsibilities. They check pupils work, talk to learners and review planning.
- 175 Arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time are very well managed. Overall teachers and support staff are adequately employed. However, additional training is required for some LSA's.
- 176 All learners have access to a wide range of learning resources both within and outside the buildings. Resources are effectively allocated around the school and much has been done to prepare for the onset of the Foundation Phase. Information and communication technology facilities are good and the cultivated garden is well used by the pupils. However, resources in Geography need replenishment.
- 177 At present the school is awaiting further refurbishment and this makes the accommodation physically restrictive. The school will continue to work with the LEA to improve such aspects as the uneven surface and slope of the infant yard and the school canteen issues. Health and Safety issues identified by the inspection team have been discussed with the governors and are in the process of being addressed.
- 178 Effective and efficient use is made of resources around the school. Pupils respect the equipment and staff are appropriately deployed. Overall resources are matched to the school's priorities for development.
- 179 The leadership and management of the school are good with all stakeholders contributing to the school community. The efficient and effective governing body working with the headteacher has taken the school forward since the last inspection and gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

180 The school is correctly following the Foundation Phase for the nursery age pupils and preparing the reception classes for the introduction of the foundation phase in September 2009.

181 The inspection report for the under- fives therefore reflects the present learning approaches in the school.

Under 5s

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

182 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase;

183 The overall quality of educational provision for the under- fives has some weaknesses, in the systems employed to involve all staff in the learning and teaching in the reception classes. There is evidence that these weaknesses can soon be put right.

184 Standards of achievement for the under-fives were as follows:

. Language literacy and communication skills

Nursery Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings

Reception Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

185 Children in both the Nursery and reception classes talk appropriately and respond to questioning on their interests and activities. The children form good relationships with their teachers and their peers. As a result, they talk confidently and listen attentively during group sessions and use language well in imaginative and creative role-play sessions in the play areas, such as the farm house. The children are developing the confidence to speak at greater length, take turns, speak clearly, and use an increasing range of vocabulary.

186 Pupils enjoy mark making. As they progress through the early years they are developing their underwriting and personal writing confidently and with increasing fluency. Older pupils are confident to write phrases in their workbooks

187 Children enjoy stories and listen and respond with interest. In the nursery children respond often in sounds when hearing stories of their favourite farm

animals. They are developing their reading skills well and share books and older pupils' follow the text. They recognise the days of the week and know letters by their shape and sound. Children happily sit in the reading areas looking at books and share their thoughts on the illustrations.

188 Children under five respond to simple Welsh phrases during registration and in lesson introductions and directed sessions

Shortcomings

189 Children in the reception class do not interact fully with support staff. As a result opportunities for child initiated activities are not always fully addressed.

Personal and social development

Nursery Grade 1: good with outstanding features

Reception Grade 1 good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

190 Children in the nursery and the reception classes are happy and secure in an environment that encourages friendly relationships and a safe and welcoming atmosphere. Levels of cooperation and behaviour are outstanding. They show care and consideration for each other and their adult helpers. They follow instructions given by teachers and support staff.

191 Their behaviour at all times is exemplary. They listen attentively to their teachers and engage in meaningful conversations with adults as well as their peers. Their relationships with each other are ones of friendship and support. They sit and enjoy social occasions such as fruit eating and share appropriately.

192 They converse with each other and take turns. They wash their hands after activities and in preparation for eating. They dress themselves in role play clothing and at the end of their daily sessions. They are developing outstanding individual skills.

193 They enjoy their outdoor experiences and understand simple rules for their health and safety and abide by them. They greet new experiences with enthusiasm and confidence. They are contented and happy in the very caring and warm environment.

Shortcomings

194 There are no shortcomings

Mathematical development

Nursery Grade 2: good features with no important shortcomings

Reception Grade 2: good features with no important shortcomings.

Good features

- 195 In the nursery and reception class children have a good understanding of mathematical concepts. In the nursery, pupils explore the possibilities of sorting and counting. They use arbitrary measurements to support their play activities.
- 196 Pupils in the reception class have a good understanding of basic number and enjoy outdoor activities that involve the sorting and collection of numbers.
- 197 Pupils in both the nursery and reception count confidently. A few pupils in the nursery can count beyond twenty. They recognise regular shapes and can sort items by shape, size and weight. They can sort simple money problems and recognise the times at the start and end of their day.
- 198 Reception children can sort and order items both in both practical activities and using computer programmes. Most can count a set of objects and place them in appropriate sets such as living and non living things. As with many children in the nursery they understand bigger and smaller and longer and shorter.
- 199 Some reception children when questioned could refer to times such as on the hour and half past. They understand the concept of the value of money and in role play situations buy and sell items.

Shortcomings

- 200 In the reception class support staff involvement does not always extend the children in their mathematical development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

Nursery Grade 2: good features with no important shortcomings.

Reception Grade 3: Good features with some shortcomings

- 201 Children under five have a good understanding of the world around them. They understand that the weather can change and that daylight and darkness change daily. In their study of foods they understand that certain foods such as fruit and vegetables are healthy foods. They understand the need for good hygiene and the need to eat healthily.

- 202 Pupils in the nursery know that plants such as potatoes require sunlight water and soil to grow. They study the lives of farm animals and the processes of farming.
- 203 Pupils in the reception class sort items into living and non living things. They also know through their role play that different countries have different climates. They role -play comparing life in the hot climate of Africa and the coldness of our winters.
- 204 Children use welsh words in registration periods and on occasions in response to questions and instructions. They have a growing awareness of the world around them and with guidance talk about the journey of some fruits.

Shortcomings.

- 205 Pupils in reception do not always have good intervention by staff during their explorations to extend and fully challenge their perceptions of the world.

Physical development

Nursery: Grade 2: good features with no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 2: good features with no important shortcomings

Good features

- 206 Children in the nursery run, jump, hop, skip, climb confidently in the school's outdoor play area. They use equipment such as cycles and pushchairs appropriately and show sufficient control to avoid incidents and respect other children's space. They confidently take full advantage of the activities such as painting, and play dough designed to help them develop their gross and fine motor control.
- 207 Pupils in the reception class handle small construction toys and building blocks confidently. They run and play appropriately and use the outdoor wooded area to exercise. Their movements are somewhat constricted by the sloping play area which effects the overall safety of play activities.

Shortcomings

- 208 There were no significant shortcomings; however the outdoor facilities for reception children are hampered by the nature of the play area slope.

Creative development.

Nursery: Grade 2: good features with no important shortcomings

Reception: Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

- 209 The children experiment and play with a wide range of materials, such as paint, play dough, role play clothing and ICT. In the nursery through well planned structured play activities that often involve all children and their helpers develop children's skills with increasing accuracy. They paint and draw confidently and show developing dexterity when making simple models. They play and experiment with sound in their music lessons
- 210 In the reception class pupils enjoy singing and playing musical instruments. They play creatively with play dough and with colour. They enjoy their imaginative play referring fondly to the little people who live in the tree in the woodland area.

Shortcomings

- 211 Pupils in the reception class do not always have appropriate support or planned intervention by staff to challenge them and extend their skills.

Welsh Language development

Nursery: Grade 2: good features with no important shortcomings

Reception grade not applicable

- 212 Children in the nursery regularly respond in Welsh to aspects of their learning such as the Welsh names for farm animals. They also answer the register in Welsh and simple instructions with such words as 'barod'. They also sing songs in Welsh.
- 213 Children in the reception class are making good progress towards this aspect of the foundation phase responding regularly to instructions in Welsh and using Welsh vocabulary during lessons and assemblies.

Shortcomings

- 214 There are no significant shortcomings

English

Key Stage 1 – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 1 – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Good and outstanding features

- 215 In KS1 pupils listen attentively and respect other pupils' responses. They respond enthusiastically to books and other stimuli. The majority speak clearly, participate with enthusiasm in class discussions and activities, and express themselves well when evaluating their work. This is an outstanding feature.
- 216 Across KS2 pupils speak in an extended manner, giving reasoned explanations. They evaluate performances of their work to improve and refine their attempts at writing poetry and play scripts. Pupils' progress in developing their oracy skills is an outstanding feature of the school.
- 217 KS1 pupils read confidently in their class groups and make good progress in decoding skills. Younger pupils discuss their favourite characters, using a range of vocabulary and are able to express their opinions and explain feelings. Y2 pupils understand what has been read and make sensible predictions. The most able readers read their own work with expression. Pupils throughout the school show a wide vocabulary and by the upper juniors pupils reading skills are often outstanding
- 218 In KS2 pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy. Their understanding of significant themes, events and characters from classics such as "The Tempest" and "The Highwayman" enables them to write imaginatively based on the text. Many pupils speak knowledgeably about their favourite authors. Pupils' interaction in discussions on their study of 'the Tempest' are an outstanding feature of their learning.
- 219 KS1 pupils learn to write independently and do so with confidence. By the end of the key stage pupils write for a variety of purposes with the great majority organising their writing well, using appropriate punctuation. The abler pupils write with imagination and begin to adapt their writing to the reader.
- 220 Across all years in KS2 pupils develop a sound understanding of genre and write in many different forms. Their Haiku poems and descriptive writing are often outstanding. The more able pupils have a secure understanding of punctuation, spelling patterns and paragraphing. The content of these pupils' writing is coherent and interesting. Year 5 pupils use phrases such as "*cacophony of crashing waves*" and "*you could almost ride the silver mist that meanders the emerald forest*" to enhance their work.
- 221 Overall, written work is presented very well in both key stages and the majority of handwriting is good.

Shortcomings

222 There are no shortcomings.

Mathematics

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

- 223 Across KS1, most pupils make good progress and achieve well in their understanding of number and money. Younger pupils have a good grasp of number bonds and demonstrate good skills in sorting and sequencing numbers. Older pupils differentiate effectively between even and odd numbers and the majority add and subtract accurately and make appropriate progress in exploring number patterns. The majority of pupils achieve well in relation to mental calculation. By the end of the key stage, they have a good grasp of 2, 5 and 10 times tables and develop a familiarity with simple fractions.
- 224 At appropriate levels, pupils across the key stage make good progress in estimation and measure using non-standard units as they develop their understanding of weight and measurement. They develop a good grasp of two dimensional shapes and their properties and the majority of older pupils in particular identify three dimensional shapes and their properties. The majority of Y2 pupils develop a good understanding of time in half hour intervals while a significant number focus well on quarter hours.
- 225 Pupils classify information effectively using Carroll diagrams and at appropriate levels are beginning to make good use of their ICT skills to enhance their data base work. The majority make good progress in their problem solving skills.
- 226 In KS2, most pupils develop a good mathematical vocabulary. At appropriate levels the most pupils across KS2 can calculate and solve number and money problems using the four rules. By the end of the key stage the skills of a significant number are particularly well developed. The majority of pupils in KS2 develop a good grasp of multiplication tables which they use effectively in a range of situations.
- 227 Pupils across the key stage develop a good understanding of weight length and capacity and by the upper part of the key stage; pupils have a good grasp of area and perimeter. The majority of younger pupils make good progress in their understanding of time while pupils at the upper end compare analogue and digital times effectively.
- 228 Younger KS2 pupils develop a good understanding of simple fractions and by the end of the key stage; most pupils use fractions effectively in a range of

contexts and demonstrate a good grasp of the relationship between decimals and fractions.

- 229 Pupils in year 3 and 4 are developing a sound grasp of different types of angles and a good understanding of two and three dimensional shapes and their properties. Pupils in years 5 and 6 focus effectively on more complex two and three dimensional shapes and their properties.
- 230 Across KS2, pupils make good progress in data base work and often make effective use of their IT skills in this context. Using an appropriate vocabulary, the most pupils at the lower end of the key stage demonstrate good skills in organising material and in creating and interpreting a range of graphs. The majority of older pupils effectively use of a range of terms which include mode, median and range in this context and demonstrate good skills as they solve problems by representing data in tables, different types of graphs and computer generated spreadsheets. They produce accurate line graphs and can plot co-ordinates in four quadrants
- 231 Older KS2 demonstrate good strategies in their problem solving work as they investigate patterns in numerical, spatial and practical situations. The majority of Y6 pupils measure accurately and demonstrate very good skills when investigating the relationship between chords and angles created at circumference when drawing triangles.

Shortcomings

- 232 There are no important shortcomings, but in KS2 a significant minority of pupils often do not present their work in a neat enough manner.

Information technology

KS1: Grade 2: Good with no important shortcomings
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KS2: Grade 2: Good with no important shortcomings
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Good features

- 233 Standards and resources have greatly improved since the time of the last inspection.
- 234 Pupils learn to use computers to communicate and handle information in a range of subjects. Pupils regularly use digital cameras well to record their work, as well as digi-cams and digital microscopes.
- 235 KS1 pupils develop a number of basic skills such as executing program commands, saving their work, using the mouse and pointer. They learn to sort information from tally charts, that they devised themselves, into computer graphs such as pictograms and bar charts. They have also developed skills in word-processing, creating and printing simple sentences.
- 236 Pupils with ALN make good progress with good support from classroom assistants.

- 237 In KS2, pupils research the internet for information and access appropriate sites on the Internet and manipulate digital imagery skillfully.
- 238 Pupils in lower KS2 are adept in using the computer to compose simple music by changing the tempo and dynamics. They work with a high level of confidence and independence.
- 239 Y4 pupils enter information, using "Investigate", into a database. They create cards, sort and present data as well as confidently discussing the pros and cons of using a computer to store data. They also take part in an internet proficiency scheme for internet safety.
- 240 Y6 pupils can confidently create a spreadsheet about the longest rivers of Wales and the World and apply a confidential format to given cells to organise data.
- 241 Many pupils are adept at traversing the internet to use a variety of educational websites.

Shortcomings

- 242 There are no significant shortcomings

Geography

Key stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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Key stage 2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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- 243 Younger pupils in KS1 are aware of the countries that make up the United Kingdom and can identify their own locality on maps of Wales and Britain. Focusing on Spain they are developing an awareness of features of warmer climates and draw comparisons with aspects of life in their own locality. They demonstrate good skills of information gathering from given sources as part of their work.
- 244 The majority of Y2 pupils are beginning to demonstrate good skills as they use maps of the locality to identify a number of features including places of worship. They demonstrate good observational skills as they record features including a number of buildings during a walk around a part of their town. They focus well on photographs taken and sequence items well as they draw simple maps to record their experiences. Most demonstrate a good awareness of the four compass points and a developing an understanding of the importance of using keys to identify various buildings.
- 245 Y2 pupils are beginning to ask geographical questions and to use a subject related vocabulary well as they explore reasons for the location of buildings in various locations. A significant minority make good use of two figure co-ordinates as they use a computer programme to further develop their skills of gathering information from maps.

- 246 Previous work shows that Y2 pupils make good use of a visit to a contrasting seaside locality to gather information about natural and man made features which they use effectively to draw comparisons with their own area.
- 247 Pupils in Y3 focus well on the information they can gather about their locality from plans and photographs, they work well in groups to explore different types of maps including aerial photographs of their immediate locality and the majority demonstrate a good skills of using compass points and simple co-ordinates to locate different features. They are beginning to make appropriate use of keys as they focus on plans of the school. The majority demonstrate good skills as they note recent changes to the school area and offer appropriate opinions about the value of these changes.
- 248 Y4 pupils have conducted surveys and taken a range of photographs relating to their local town. They focus well on leisure activities and some of the services available and demonstrate good skills as they offer opinions about various features in their environment. A particularly interesting feature of their work is their preparation of well focused information leaflets to introduce their town to visitors from an African country who will be visiting their town in the very near future. Previous work shows that Y4 pupils make effective use of the close links that have been established with a school in Nigeria to enhance their awareness of aspects of life in an area of a developing country.
- 249 Pupils in Y5 are developing a good understanding of how places and environments are linked as they compare and contrast features in their own locality with those relating to Cardiff Bay. As part of their work they focus well on why localities change and effectively explore the reasons for changes in their own locality and the Bay area. They make good use of a range of evidence to formulate ideas and opinions about geographical issues linked to changes.
- 250 Y6 pupils make good use of their ICT skills to gather information about Welsh rivers. They classify the information effectively and make good use of spreadsheets to convey their findings. The majority of older pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the features and purposes of contour lines on ordnance survey maps and use 4 figure grid references with accuracy as they gather relevant information about a local river. Their work demonstrate a good understanding of how rivers are formed
- 251 The majority of Y6 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of latitude and longitude and use compass points and co-ordinates effectively as they identify areas on a world map which produce various food items. They demonstrate good skills as they investigate the amounts of water used on a daily basis by people in different parts of the world

Shortcomings

- 252 There are no significant shortcomings

Music

KS1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

KS2: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
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Good features.

- 253 Music is given a high profile at Libanus Primary and standards are good. Pupils across the Key Stages have many opportunities to sing, compose and evaluate their contributions.
- 254 Pupils in the nursery sing traditional songs and improve fine motor skills using percussion instruments. Some are able to keep a steady beat.
- 255 In KS1 pupils achieve good standards in singing. They have made musical instruments and use them to explore how sounds are made. Many children understand and use musical vocabulary such as crescendo and diminuendo. Some can act as conductor.
- 256 Children compose simple pieces in groups using shape syllables to clap rhythm with success and enjoyment. They perform to their peers and appraise their compositions as a class.
- 257 In KS2 pupils demonstrate good progression. Standards of singing in upper juniors are very good with children able to maintain their part in a group. Pupils sing tunefully with pride and confidence and many pupils sing solos.
- 258 Older pupils show understanding and appropriate use of musical elements. Pupils use body sounds and percussion and refine the quality of their composition in groups. Poetry and paintings are used as stimuli for imaginative interpretation to good effect. Pupils are beginning to use ICT for composition.
- 259 Visiting music teachers give children the opportunity to learn a variety of brass, string and wind instruments.
- 260 The school choir has performed for the community at special events and pupils perform for parents in concerts and the school Eistedfodd concert.
- 261 There is an exceptional four piece band including a member of staff that regularly plays in assemblies

Shortcomings

- 262 There are no significant shortcomings

School's response to the inspection

The Governors, Headteacher and staff of Libanus Primary School have considered the outcomes of the inspection report and are extremely pleased that the findings acknowledge that Libanus is a good school with many outstanding features.

We are also pleased that the team agreed with the school's judgements on the seven key questions, and that they felt the school's self evaluation process was thorough and effective. The report also recognises that the school has made good progress since the last inspection and states that Libanus gives good value for money.

We are proud that the team found the quality of teaching and standards of achievement to be above the Welsh Assembly All-Wales targets.

More importantly, the report recognises the caring ethos of the school and the high quality of support and guidance given to pupils. It clearly states that the team found the care and support procedures to have an outstanding impact on pupils' feelings towards the school and this in turn impacted on standards. It also acknowledges the fact that every pupil is valued and included making this an outstanding feature of the school.

Libanus Primary School is not complacent, and will work conscientiously to address any recommendations put forward by the inspection team.

The Headteacher, staff and Governors would like to thank the Inspection team for their professionalism, fairness and the courteous way in which they undertook this inspection. Their preparation and overall approach ensured there was a rigorous examination of the school.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Libanus Primary School
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Libanus Rd. Blackwood Caerphilly
Postcode	NP12 1EH
Telephone number	01495 225736

Headteacher	Ms Michelle Oddy
Date of appointment	September 2001
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr. Simon Evans
Registered inspector	Mr. Glyn Scott
Dates of inspection	12 th -15 th January 2009

Appendix 2

School data and Indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	45	51	42	43	41	52	57	52	338

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	15	2	16

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22.2:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24:1
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	90.4	89.7	95
Summer 2008	88.4	91.6	92.8
Autumn2008	85.5	92.2	95.3

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	19%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0%

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:					58
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			N	W	1	2	3	
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	13	60	26	
		National	0	3	14	63	20	
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	13	50	38	
		National	0	4	15	55	26	
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	15	65	20	
		National	0	5	16	68	11	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	63	28	
		National	0	0	11	72	17	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	53	38	
		National	0	0	11	67	22	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	10	58	33	
		National	0	1	9	66	24	

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

In the school	87.5	In Wales	80.1
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D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of KS2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y6					57			
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			N	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	3	22	48	26
		National	0	0	0	1	1	4	16	50	29
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	62	31
		National	0	0	0	1	1	3	15	50	30
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	55	38
		National	0	0	1	0	0	2	12	52	32

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

by teacher assessment		by test	
In the school	72.4%	In the school	NA
In Wales	74%	In Wales	NA

D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum

A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence

F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

4 inspectors spent a total of 16 inspector days at the school, and met as a team before the inspection.

The headteacher attended team meetings and provided additional information as the nominee on the inspection team.

The inspectors visited:

- 43 lessons or part lessons at the school

The team also considered:

- a selection of work by present pupils;
- comments from the pupils about their school;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- responses to a parents' questionnaire. Around 94% of responses were positive.

Before and during the inspection, members of the team held discussions with:

- the management committee, parents, pupils and staff;
- teachers and LSA's;
- mainstream school teachers;
- representatives of the local authority;

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspect Responsibilities	Subjects
Mr Glyn Scott	Rgl	Context, Summary, Key Questions 1, 4b, 5,	Early Years, ALN
Mr. Brynley Wynne Jones	Team	Key Questions 2a and 6	Maths, Geography, bilingualism
Mrs Janet Warr	lay	Contributions to KQ1,3,and 4	PSE
Mrs Georgina Wolsford	team	KQ 2b, KQ4	Music. assessment
Mr. Brian Warrilow	team	KQ3, KQ7	English, I.T.
Mrs Michelle Oddy	Nominee		

Acknowledgements:

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

Inspection Contractor:

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