

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Litchard Infant School
Garfield Avenue
Bridgend
CF31 1QB**

School Number: 6722299

Date of Inspection: 12 January 2009

by

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Litchard Infant 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 Litchard Infant School took place between 12/01/09 and 15/01/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Stephanie James undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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 **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. Litchard Infant School serves a residential area to the north of Bridgend, close to the M4 motorway. It caters for pupils aged three to seven years. The school has a very wide catchment area and describes the majority of its pupils as coming from neither advantaged nor disadvantaged backgrounds. However, a significant minority of pupils come from socially and economically disadvantaged homes. The school scores 1797 on the Welsh Index of Deprivation Rankings, when 1896 is the highest score. Thirty per cent of pupils come from outside the school's immediate catchment area. There is high pupil mobility during the school year, usually linked to the relocation or re-housing of families and short term contracts for parents who work at the local hospital.
2. There are currently 184 pupils on roll, including 52 children of nursery age. The number of pupils on roll has remained constant since the last inspection. Children enter the nursery during the September after their third birthday. They are admitted to the reception classes at the beginning of the school year after their fourth birthday. There are seven classes in the school, including the nursery, with two parallel classes in each year group. Baseline assessments indicate that children's attainment on entry to school is variable, but below average overall.
3. Twenty-three per cent of pupils, excluding nursery children, are entitled to receive free school meals, which is above the national average of around 17 per cent and the Bridgend average of about 18 per cent. All pupils speak English at home and no pupils speak Welsh as a first language. Ninety-eight per cent of pupils are of white ethnic origin. Sixty-four pupils (approximately 35 per cent) are on the school's register of Special Educational Needs (SEN). This is well above the national average of around 20 per cent of pupils having SEN.
4. The last year or so has been a period of great uncertainty for the school regarding its future. It has now been decided, as part of Bridgend Local Education Authority's school modernisation programme, that the infant school will close at the end of August 2009. It will amalgamate with the juniors in September 2009 to form a new primary school. The permanent head teacher of the juniors is the current acting head of the infant school. He assumed this additional role in January 2008 following the retirement of the previous head teacher.
5. The school achieved the Healthy Schools award, the silver Eco Schools award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time during the autumn term 2008. It was last inspected in February 2003.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's principal aims are to produce, "happy and hard working pupils, absence of bullying, positive and consistent discipline, a lively and creative atmosphere that is conducive to learning, the fair treatment of pupils and a welcoming atmosphere for all who work within and those who visit the school".

7. Key priorities in the School Development Plan for the current year 2008-2009 are to:
 - continue to raise standards in general, but with a key focus on language, in particular reading and extended writing;
 - implement the Foundation Phase and introduce the best practice into reception and key stage 1;
 - implement changes to the Physical Education provision and
 - prepare for amalgamation with the junior school.

Summary

8. Litchard Infants is a good and improving school with outstanding features in standards of Welsh and bilingualism, the quality of care, support and guidance and in the use it makes of all available resources. The leadership of the acting head teacher, since his appointment one year ago, is also outstanding in providing an exceptionally clear sense of direction for the school.
9. The overall judgements of the inspection team match those of the school in its self-evaluation of all seven key questions.

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 1

Standards

10. In the lessons observed in the six subjects and areas chosen for inspection, standards were judged as follows:

Grades for standards in lessons in inspection subjects

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5.5%	94.5%	0%	0%	0%

11. Standards in lessons compare favourably with the national picture reported in the Annual Report 2006/2007 of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Wales. Standards in 80 per cent of lessons in schools inspected in Wales that year achieved a grade 2 or better, with 10 per cent of them having outstanding features.

12. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes. Overall standards in the seven areas of learning are:

Areas of learning for under-fives	Inspection grade
Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity	2
Language, literacy and communication skills	2
Mathematical development	2
Welsh language development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Physical development	2
Creative development	2

13. Overall standards in the subjects selected for inspection in key stage 1 are:

Key Stage 1 inspection subject	Inspection grade
Art and design	2
Design and technology	2
Geography	2
Religious education	2
Welsh second language	1

14. In the 2008 National Curriculum teachers' assessments, the performance of pupils at the end of key stage 1 was below the results of other pupils in Wales. However, over 30 per cent of that year group of pupils had special educational needs (SEN). In addition, a few pupils joined the school from elsewhere during the year, which also had a negative impact on results. Trends in performance show fluctuations in attainment because of the high numbers of pupils with SEN and high pupil mobility.
15. Many pupils make good progress and achieve the learning targets agreed for them by the school and Local Education Authority by the end of key stage 1. A few pupils exceed their targets in English, mathematics or science. The achievement of those pupils who do not meet expected targets is sometimes adversely affected by poor attendance and punctuality.
16. Pupils with additional learning needs make good and sometimes outstanding progress because of the very well targeted support they receive.
17. In both the under-fives and the key stage 1 classes, progress and standards in the key skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) are good with no important shortcomings. By year 2, standards in bilingualism are good with outstanding features.
18. Almost without exception, pupils are extremely well behaved in class and around the school. Their personal, social, moral, spiritual and cultural

development has outstanding features. They work and play extremely well together.

19. Average attendance for the last three terms was below the national and Local Education Authority averages. Most pupils arrive punctually, but a few are frequently late.

The quality of education and training

20. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4.2%	95.8%	0%	0%	0%

21. The quality of teaching compares well with the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in his most recent report. In 2006-2007, the quality of teaching in 80 per cent of lessons in primary schools inspected in Wales achieved a grade 2 or better, with 14 per cent of them having outstanding features.
22. A very strong feature of the quality of teaching throughout the school is its consistency. Almost without exception, lessons are well paced and teachers succeed in stimulating and maintaining pupils' interest using a good variety of resources and techniques that help learners achieve the objectives of the lesson. There are excellent relationships between teaching, support staff and pupils that help create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in classes. All adults treat pupils fairly, consistently and equally.
23. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that successfully caters for the needs of all pupils and meets statutory requirements. The principles and practice of the Foundation Phase are well established in the nursery and nursery/reception classes. In key stage 1, recently revised schemes of work systematically develop skills and knowledge in all subjects. The '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*', the Welsh dimension to the curriculum, gives pupils excellent opportunities to develop their awareness of their Welsh heritage.
24. There are good policies and excellent, well documented procedures to ensure the healthy development, safety and well-being of pupils. The school provides a warm, secure and consistent environment for pupils. There is an ethos that focuses clearly on the well-being and self-esteem of each child, so that every child matters in a close and friendly school community.

Leadership and management

25. The leadership and management of the acting head teacher are outstanding, particularly in establishing very quickly what the key priorities of the school should be and building a team spirit and shared sense of purpose among all members of staff.

26. The over-riding aim is to raise standards, particularly in core subjects. The acting head teacher is using his experience, knowledge and skills extremely well to take those actions that are most likely to result in the achievement of this aim. He has very effectively harnessed the considerable expertise that exists among the staff to this common goal. Subject leaders and senior managers are becoming much more involved in those aspects of school life for which they take responsibility. Teachers and support staff have relished new opportunities to develop their expertise and increase their confidence through courses that are pertinent to the school's priorities.
27. The governing body is well informed about progress toward targets in the school development plan and are aware of how well the school compares with others. It fulfils the legal duties placed upon it and is a good critical friend to the school.
28. Although elements of the self-evaluation process have been in place for some time, recently introduced self-evaluation processes are far more comprehensive and draw on a wide range of information. The self-evaluation process is very accurate in identifying key priorities for improvement and actions taken are already having beneficial effects.
29. During the past year the acting head teacher and governors have made crucial and extremely well targeted investments in areas of greatest priority. They have tapped into a wide variety of sources of income in order to do this. Their investment is beginning to impact on standards, but it will take longer than a year for a full return on the school's investment, in terms of higher standards, to be realised. Overall, the management of resources is outstanding in order to invest for the future and ensure that the school gives excellent value for money.
30. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the last inspection.

Recommendations

31. In order to improve further, the school should:

R1 Continue to focus on raising standards.

R2 Raise levels of attendance and punctuality.

Note: The school has already identified Recommendation 1 as a priority in its current 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

32. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
33. In the lessons observed in the six subjects and areas selected for inspection, standards were judged as follows:

Grades for standards in lessons in inspection subjects

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5.5%	94.5%	0%	0%	0%

34. The standards achieved by pupils compare favourably with the national picture reported in the Annual Report 2006/2007 of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Wales. Standards in 80 per cent of lessons in schools inspected in Wales during that year achieved a grade 2 or better, with 10 per cent of them having outstanding features.
35. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes. Overall standards in the seven areas of learning for children of this age are as follows:

Areas of learning for under-fives	Inspection grade
Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity	2
Language, literacy and communication skills	2
Mathematical development	2
Welsh language development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	2
Physical development	2
Creative development	2

36. A significant minority of children are below average in attainment on entry to school, particularly in speech and language skills. Many pupils make good progress and achieve the learning targets agreed for them by the school and Local Education Authority by the end of key stage 1. A few pupils exceed their targets in English, mathematics or science. The achievement of those pupils who do not meet expected targets in all three core subjects is sometimes adversely affected by poor attendance and punctuality.

37. Overall standards in the subjects selected for inspection in key stage 1 are as follows:

Grades for standards in subjects inspected in Key Stage 1

Inspection subject	Inspection grade
Art and design	2
Design and technology	2
Geography	2
Religious education	2
Welsh second language	1

38. In the 2008 National Curriculum teachers' assessments, the performance of pupils at the end of key stage 1 was below the results of other pupils in Wales. Seventy-four per cent of pupils attained the expected level 2 or above in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science compared with 80 per cent nationally. However, over 30 per cent of the 2008 year group of pupils had special educational needs (SEN). In addition, a few pupils joined the school from elsewhere during the year, which also had a negative impact on the overall results at the end of key stage 1.
39. There were slight differences in the performance of boys and girls, but there is no clear pattern in their relative performance over time.
40. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 at the end of key stage 1 in National Curriculum assessments in 2008 was well above national levels in English, above in mathematics and broadly in line with national figures in science.
41. In comparison with similar schools (those with 16 to 24 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals), pupils' performance at the end of key stage 1 was below average in English and mathematics and well below in science. Trends in the performance of all pupils show fluctuations in attainment according to the nature of each year group.
42. Trends in the performance of pupils attaining level 3 show that they achieve well in English, usually above local and national levels. Their performance is broadly in line with national levels in mathematics but their performance in science is more varied.
43. Pupils' attainment in National Curriculum assessments at the end of key stage 1 in 2008 was a significant improvement on the previous year. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards are continuing to improve, especially in English, as a result of the school's sharp focus on improving pupils' performance in this subject.
44. Pupils with additional learning needs make good and sometimes outstanding progress because of the very well targeted support they receive. For example, around half the pupils in the current year 2 have received extra

support with their reading. As a result, the reading of all these pupils has improved and a significant minority of them have made rapid progress in a short space of time, especially in their ability to read common words. Parents also comment very favourably on the progress individual children have recently made in their reading.

45. In both the under-fives and the key stage 1 classes, standards in key skills are good with no important shortcomings. Pupils listen well to presentations and develop confidence in expressing their ideas in discussions. In a 'hot seating' session in key stage 1, for example, pupils display skills in using language to empathise with historical characters.
46. Most pupils use their developing reading skills effectively in their learning across the curriculum. They use their writing skills for a good range of purposes and record their activities in interesting ways. For example, in a design and technology task, pupils describe in detail how they created a bridge for Billy Goat Gruff to cross.
47. Pupils apply their numeracy skills well both in their play and in other activities across the curriculum. Their application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills across a number of areas of learning and subjects effectively reinforces their knowledge and skills. This is especially evident in pupils' abilities when using interactive whiteboards.
48. Standards in bilingualism are good with outstanding features. Progression in pupils' linguistic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in Welsh is consistent across classes so that pupils at the upper end of the key stage have a very high level of language acquisition. They ask and answer questions confidently and use their Welsh readily on all occasions. Pupils are also developing an excellent awareness of Welsh heritage and culture.
49. Learners apply the knowledge and skills they have learned increasingly effectively to new situations. For example, pupils in year 1 apply their historical knowledge and understanding effectively in their discussion of the textures of old and new teddy bears in an art lesson.
50. Pupils agree personal targets with their teachers and increasingly understand what they need to do to improve. Older pupils understand simple targets such as the need to "spell harder words" and refer to where their targets are displayed on the classroom wall.
51. As a result of the school's recent precise identification of pupils who would benefit from additional support, most pupils make good progress in fulfilling their potential and moving on to the next stage of learning.
52. Nearly all pupils are highly motivated, make very effective use of their time and work productively. This is an outstanding feature and also a contributory factor in the improving standards pupils reach. They are making good progress in using their problem solving skills and creativity and in developing the capacity to work independently.

53. Almost without exception, pupils are extremely well behaved in class, in assembly and around the school. Their behaviour and attitudes reflect the ethos of the school, which places a strong emphasis on consideration, courtesy and regard for others. All pupils know the procedures to be followed should any form of anti-social behaviour or harassment occur.
54. The school's average attendance for the last three terms was 90.9 per cent. This is below the national and Local Education Authority averages. It is also lower than the Free School Meals comparison criteria. Most pupils arrive punctually, but a few are frequently late.
55. Pupils' personal, social and moral development has outstanding features. They work and play extremely well together and support each other both during lesson times and at less structured times of the day. They show respect for others and are willing to listen and appreciate differing views. Great improvements in their social skills are evident from the time they enrol, to the time they leave the school.
56. Pupils know that all individuals, regardless of their gender, colour or background should be treated with equal dignity and respect. They develop a good insight into the world of work and the wider community.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

57. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
58. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
4.2%	95.8%	0%	0%	0%

59. The quality of teaching compares well with the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for Education and Training in Wales in the Annual Report 2006-2007. During that year, the quality of teaching in 80 per cent of lessons in primary schools inspected in Wales achieved a grade 2 or better, with 14 per cent of them having outstanding features.
60. A very strong feature of the quality of teaching throughout the school is its consistency. Almost without exception, lessons are well paced and teachers succeed in stimulating and maintaining pupils' interest.
61. Introductions and discussions are well focused, last just the right amount of time to hold pupils' attention and contribute well to the excellent behaviour learners achieve. There is good use of time between the different elements of lessons and pupils are brought together effectively at the end to reflect on and consolidate their learning.
62. Teachers skilfully ask challenging questions and give clear explanations and instructions using language that is effectively geared to the level of young pupils' understanding. They also encourage pupils to take time to think about possible answers before responding.
63. Learning objectives are clearly explained and shared with pupils so that they understand what is expected of them. Teachers use a good variety of resources and techniques that help learners achieve the objectives of the activity or lesson. The expertise of support staff is highly valued and they are effectively deployed to meet pupils' personal and learning needs.
64. Throughout the school, there are excellent relationships between teaching, support staff and pupils that help create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in classes. All adults treat pupils fairly, consistently and equally.

65. Almost without exception, teachers plan interesting activities that are appropriate and relevant to pupils' interests and stage of development. They adapt tasks effectively for the range of ability within the class except in those rare instances where there is an over-use of worksheets and purposeless colouring tasks which restrict pupils' creativity and capacity to develop independence.
66. In the few lessons where there are minor shortcomings, teachers talk a little too much, missing opportunities to elicit more ideas from pupils. Very occasionally, the interactive whiteboard is used to introduce a topic when the use of concrete resources would be more suitable for the purpose of the lesson.
67. Members of both the teaching and support staff care greatly about pupils' well-being and have a deep understanding of their needs. The revised personal and social education (PSE) programme has greatly enhanced their skills in managing pupils' behaviour and helping them to exercise self-discipline.
68. All teaching and support staff have recently and very effectively up-dated their subject knowledge and skills in key areas such as the Foundation Phase, reading support programmes and the use of interactive whiteboards.
69. The school meets the language needs of learners extremely well. The Welsh co-ordinator gives very good support to all teachers and support staff who provide a stimulating learning environment, giving pupils confidence and encouragement and thus ensuring outstanding progress in their Welsh and bilingual skills.
70. Assessment procedures are thorough and meet statutory requirements. Teachers make good use of a variety of tests and assessments to inform future planning and set targets for learners.
71. The development of precise and informative assessment procedures has been a key tool in beginning to raise standards. A good example of this is the use of Raising Attainment and Individual Standards in Education (RAISE) and 'Catch-up' funding to identify, assess, support and plan further work for pupils who have been under-achieving in their reading.
72. Members of staff working with children under five carefully record their daily observations of children's responses to their learning experiences. Weekly evaluations of children's understanding enable them to plan effectively for further progress in the seven areas of learning.
73. Before they transfer to the next stage in their education, year 2 teachers meet with experienced members of staff in the junior school to moderate and agree standards attained by pupils in the three core subjects at the end of key stage 1. This ensures that transfer records provide accurate and very useful information for year 3 teachers.

74. Pupils' involvement in assessing their progress and setting targets for their own performance is developing well. Teachers give helpful oral feedback to pupils on work in progress. Their comments when marking pupils' work are encouraging and sometimes provide useful suggestions indicating how they could improve their work. However, this good practice is not yet consistent throughout the school.
75. Annual reports to parents are very detailed and give a good picture of their children's progress and achievements. Different formats are provided for children under five and pupils in key stage 1 and include a section for parents' comments. There are also regular opportunities for parents to consult teachers about their children's 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

76. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
77. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that successfully caters for the needs of all pupils and meets statutory requirements.
78. The principles and practice of the Foundation Phase are well established in the nursery and nursery/reception classes. The provision offers a stimulating range of experiences in the seven areas of learning and there is a good balance between adult-led activities and those children choose for themselves. The outdoor environment is in continual use and is an integral part of children's learning experiences. Careful planning ensures that there is parity in the provision for children of nursery age in the three early years classes and good progress in all seven areas of learning.
79. In key stage 1, the curriculum includes all the prescribed subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There are recently updated policies and schemes of work for the core subjects and foundation subjects. The schemes of work are clearly laid out and systematically develop skills and knowledge in all subjects. They are used effectively to provide learning experiences that promote progress in clear lesson plans.
80. The school's provision for the development of pupils' key skills is good overall. Opportunities to develop key skills feature prominently in teachers' lesson plans. The school has recently gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time in recognition of its work in developing these skills.
81. Children under five and pupils in key stage 1 are provided with a good range of opportunities to listen to others and talk about what they have done and what they see. They are surrounded by interesting books which help them enjoy becoming readers and writers.

82. Pupils have many opportunities to use their numeracy skills in a range of practical activities. Provision for the development of pupils' ICT skills is good, with recently installed interactive whiteboards used well across subjects and areas of learning.
83. Pupils' learning experiences are further advanced and enriched through an extremely wide variety of extra-curricular activities and off-site provision. These include an extensive range of sports, homework, ICT, yoga, choir, dance and music clubs. Affordable and relevant educational visits within the locality and further afield contribute extremely well towards raising pupils' standards of achievement. Places visited include a working farm, a dog trust, the Museum of Welsh Life at St. Fagan's, churches and synagogues.
84. The school's promotion of pupils' personal, social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good with outstanding features. There is a comprehensive and coherent programme of Personal and Social Education involving all staff, parents, pupils and community workers such as police and the school nurse. It permeates all aspects of curricular development, helping pupils to become confident and healthy and able to make informed choices by developing their feelings of self-worth and self-esteem.
85. Adults successfully encourage positive moral values and there are good opportunities for pupils to show kindness and consideration to each other. Teachers encourage pupils to have a clear understanding of right and wrong and to be aware of their wider responsibilities. Circle time is used very effectively to help pupils explore issues and express their thoughts and feelings about them.
86. The school has good links with local ministers of religion who often take assemblies. Pupils in year 2 visited the local Baptist church and participated in a 'wedding ceremony' during the week of the inspection. This made an excellent contribution to their understanding of this special life experience.
87. Collective worship is of a broadly Christian nature and enhances pupils' spiritual awareness. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements. Assemblies effectively foster pupils' personal development and help them appreciate individual achievements.
88. The partnership with parents is good. All pupils are supported very well, both at home and in school, to complete relevant home/school tasks, such as when pupils in year 1 create moving transport models. This helps pupils to extend their learning and enhances standards of achievement extremely well.
89. There are very close transition links with the junior school and good relations with Bridgend and Carmarthen colleges which take up training placements at the school.
90. The provision for work-related education is good and successfully contributes to pupils' understanding of the jobs people do. There are visits to the school from the fire service, health visitors and the police, who have set up a

permanent surgery at the school. Visits to local shops and supermarkets and further afield to places such as the Mumbles lifeboat station further extend pupils' understanding of the world of work.

91. Children in the early years are given good opportunities and receive frequent encouragement to develop competence in both Welsh and English. The 'Siop Gymreig' in all classes, for example, is used effectively to promote Wales and the Welsh language. During key stage 1, an excellent range of learning experiences in Welsh ensures that pupils succeed in developing bilingual competence.
92. The school's '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*', the Welsh dimension to the curriculum, gives pupils very good opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of the traditions, culture and history of Wales. They visit places of interest such as the Gower Heritage Centre and Llanelli Wetlands, participate in folk dancing and celebrate St. David's Day. Through their work in art, pupils are becoming aware of the work of Welsh artists and designers, such as Cefyn Burgess and David Emmanuel.
93. This is an inclusive school where all pupils have full and equal access to all aspects of school life and work, including extra-curricular clubs and sporting activities. Tackling social disadvantage and combating stereotyping is a high priority. Programmes such as 'RAISE' and 'SPIRALS', a language and thinking skills project, are being used very effectively for the benefit of those pupils who need extra help.
94. Arrangements to develop pupils' understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship are good. The school has recently received the Eco School Silver award in recognition of its work in this area.
95. The school successfully promotes pupils' entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills throughout the curriculum using role-play, challenges such as 'KNex' and through subjects such as design and technology.
96. There are a number of good initiatives to help pupils' develop lifelong learning skills, including the Bridgend 'Talk' project and 'Learning to Learn' scheme. Some parents attend school to read with pupils and there are numerous home-school tasks completed by parents with their children.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

97. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
98. The overall quality of care, guidance and support is good with outstanding features.

99. Litchard Infants is a caring, happy and supportive school where very close account is taken of individual need and every pupil is valued and nurtured. Parents are very appreciative of the support and guidance provided for their children.
100. Year 2 pupils say they feel safe and secure and are taught who to go to if they are experiencing any difficulties. They say they know their teachers want them to be happy. New pupils are supported by "buddies" who help them to integrate very successfully.
101. Parents feel very confident in approaching the acting head and other members of staff with any concerns they may have in the knowledge that they will be addressed promptly and sensitively. The school extends the support it gives to pupils to their families. Parents frequently seek and receive support not only with issues to do with their children, but also concerning wider aspects of their lives. This is an outstanding feature in the quality of the partnership with parents and carers.
102. Pupils on the school council are very proud to represent their peers and confirm that their wishes are always heard, considered and, if wise and practical, adopted. The school council meets all regulations.
103. The school provides an outstanding induction service for potential pupils including visits to a cluster of playgroups by nursery and reception teachers. There are excellent systems in place and they are used very well to help learners settle in quickly when they enter the school. As they progress through the school, the improvement in pupils' skills is tangible, as is the rise in their self-esteem and confidence.
104. The school provides an exceptionally wide range of Personal and Social Education development opportunities. The very high priority it places on this aspect enables pupils to achieve very well in their personal development and is an outstanding feature of the school. Excellent attention is given to relationships, sex and drugs education and many interesting initiatives help develop pupils' good attitudes to healthy lifestyles, including a fitness club.
105. Procedures for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance and punctuality are good. The school uses attendance data effectively to identify groups that contribute to the relatively low attendance levels and discusses individual pupils' poor attendance with their parents and carers. Good attendance is rewarded and the school works strenuously with the Educational Welfare Officer to try to improve the situation.
106. There are good policies and excellent, well documented procedures to ensure the healthy development, safety and well-being of pupils. The head teacher and senior team have successfully created an ethos that focuses clearly on the well-being and self-esteem of each child, so that every child matters in a close and friendly school community. The school provides a warm, secure and consistent environment for pupils.

107. Members of staff are trained in first aid. Procedures for administering medicines are carefully followed. Pupils who feel ill or have an accident during the day are very well supported. Accident records are carefully maintained. Regular fire drills are held and risk assessments around the school are systematic. The 'Healthy Schools' initiative and visits by members of the community contribute very well to pupils' well-being.
108. There are tried and tested child protection arrangements and the school works in pupils' best interests to safeguard their welfare. Recommended procedures are rigorously followed. The head teacher is the designated child protection officer and the deputy head in his absence. All members of staff receive updated training and there is comprehensive liaison with outside agencies when the need arises.
109. The quality of provision for pupils who have additional learning needs is outstanding. This includes pupils who are less and more-able, those who have specific medical or behaviour needs, those who are 'looked after' and pupils who have English as an additional language. All statutory requirements are met, ensuring that such pupils have full access to all the benefits that the school provides.
110. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) manages provision extremely well and shows an exceptional level of commitment to her role. Procedures are very well organised. The SENCO has instigated a very effective programme of staff training, both for herself and other staff. Members of the teaching and support staff know pupils and their families very well, which is reflected in the high levels of confidence that parents display in them. Detailed assessment and recording of need is of a commendable standard.
111. The school has established highly effective early diagnosis of pupils' needs. Time is allocated for the nursery teacher to visit local playgroups to talk to staff, parents and the school nurse and to observe children. Playgroup children and staff regularly visit the nursery. This means that intervention strategies are put in place for children with additional educational needs, even before they enter the nursery at three years old. This is an outstanding feature of the provision.
112. The SENCO, class teachers and all support staff work in close collaboration to meet pupils' needs. This includes periods where individuals and small groups are supported with specific literacy and reading programmes. Resources are extremely well targeted and extensive.
113. Teaching and support staff are confident in their roles and deliver the programmes of work with skill and imagination, ensuring that targets in pupils' individual education plans are fully met. As a result, these pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. School tracking data shows that by the end of the school, most pupils with additional learning needs achieve levels expected for their age and, at the very least, meet the targets set for them.

114. The school takes very good account of pupils' social, ethnic or linguistic background and ensures that their needs are met. There are small numbers of pupils of diverse backgrounds that regularly pass through the school. They are swiftly and fully integrated into the school community.
115. The school effectively and actively promotes gender equality and challenges stereotypes. Boys and girls work well together in the classroom and have equal access to sporting and other activities.
116. Good race relations are positively promoted and there is an appropriate race relations policy in place. Incidents of racial discrimination are extremely rare and there have been none recorded recently.
117. Sensitive, discreet and individualised support is provided for those pupils whose behaviour may affect their own learning and that of other pupils. The way these pupils are fully integrated in classes and the progress they make are outstanding features. All members of staff consistently and effectively apply the principles outlined in the Personal and Social Education framework. Pupils and their parents are confident that any incidents of bullying or harassment will be dealt with quickly and efficiently.
118. There is a suitable policy and processes to ensure equal treatment of all pupils including those with physical disabilities. An appropriate disability action plan has been established.
119. The school recognises and respects diversity and all are treated with equal dignity and respect. The major festivals of different cultures are celebrated through the curriculum and in assemblies and help pupils become aware of cultural diversity.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

120. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
121. The grade for this key question matches the grade awarded in key question 1, but not the grade awarded in key question 7. Although there are outstanding features in the quality of leadership of the acting head teacher, the full impact of the school's recent investment in developing the skills and confidence of other leaders and managers is yet to be seen in pupils' overall standards of achievement.
122. On his appointment a year ago, the acting head teacher very quickly established what the key priorities of the school should be. His personal leadership and management of the school are outstanding, particularly in terms of building a team spirit and shared sense of purpose among all members of staff. This is all the more remarkable, given the uncertain position the school has been in over the last year. He has also very quickly gained the confidence of parents, governors and pupils who trust him to do what is in their best interests.
123. The principal aims of the school are successfully reflected in all aspects of its life and work. The over-riding aim is to raise standards, particularly in the core subjects. The acting head teacher is using his experience, knowledge and skills extremely well to take those actions that are most likely to result in the achievement of this aim. He has very effectively harnessed the considerable expertise that exists among the staff to this common goal.
124. Subject leaders and senior managers have very much welcomed the opportunity to become more involved in those aspects of school life in which they have most interest. They are beginning to take greater responsibility for the subjects and areas that they lead and carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and thoroughly.
125. Those managers who are relatively new to the role in key areas such as SEN provision are already making a noticeable positive impact on the quality of provision and standards of achievement. Where there has, until very recently, been a lack of continuity in the leadership of certain subjects, such as science, pupils have not achieved so well. This has changed and there is now a clear sense of direction in order to raise standards.
126. All teachers and support staff have relished new opportunities to develop their expertise through courses and training events that are pertinent to the school's priorities. Members of the support staff, for example, have attended courses on healthy eating, 'catch-up' reading and strategies for supporting pupils'

language development. Their confidence has grown enormously as a result of the investment in developing their knowledge and skills, even to the extent that a few of them are now leading certain aspects of the school's provision.

127. Overall, the school takes good account of Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and local priorities, having recently achieved awards for being a healthy and environmentally friendly school. It has fully embraced the WAG objective for pupils to develop their bilingual skills, with outstanding results.
128. Members of staff work productively and purposefully with colleagues in its partner junior school. Pupils and staff have realistic, but challenging targets for improvement. The acting head teacher meets all members of staff individually during an annual performance management review to agree personal and professional targets that effectively reflect the overall needs of the school.
129. Staff meetings include members of the support staff, as well as teachers. They are well focused and effectively facilitate team work and a sense of purpose regarding priorities for staff and school development. Members of staff who have attended relevant training courses, such as those for the Foundation Phase, make detailed notes which they share with their colleagues in order effectively to spread good practice throughout the school.
130. The governing body is in a period of change, but effectively helps set the school's strategic direction. They, too, benefit from training courses that further develop their knowledge and expertise. They are well informed about progress toward targets in the school development plan through regular termly reports from the acting head teacher. They are aware of how well the school compares with others in a similar context and ask relevant questions.
131. Individual governors are linked to specific subjects or aspects of the school's provision in which they have a particular interest. They view pupils' work and hold discussions with relevant leaders and managers. Those who are able to also spend time in school working alongside pupils. In this way, they informally monitor the quality of teaching and learning and have a good picture of the school's daily life and work.
132. The governing body fulfils the legal duties placed upon it and is a good critical friend to the school.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

134. Arrangements for evaluating and improving quality and standards at the school are effective. The school's self-evaluation report provides a clear and concise summary of the school's strengths and areas for development across all seven key questions in the Estyn inspection framework.
135. Although elements of the self-evaluation process have been in place for some time, recently introduced self-evaluation processes are far more rigorous and comprehensive, drawing on a wide range of information gathered by all stakeholders involved with the school.
136. The acting head teacher, ably supported by senior managers, teaching and non-teaching staff and governors, demonstrates an absolute determination to improve all aspects of the school, including achieving high standards for the pupils.
137. Several leaders and managers are fairly new to the role and have taken on their responsibilities with great enthusiasm and skill. Very good teamwork has evolved in the self-evaluation process and leaders now have a corporate approach and a very good understanding of how the school is performing.
138. Intensive training for teaching and non-teaching staff over the past year, and increased ownership of policy and self-evaluation, has improved the confidence of all staff and is beginning to embed as measurable improvements are becoming evident.
139. Curriculum leaders have become much more involved in auditing provision and standards in their subjects because they have been empowered to monitor and review teaching, learning and standards. They are building a wealth of first-hand information to guide their decisions and help them to set targets for further development.
140. The views of parents and pupils have been sought and seriously considered. Members of staff have been trained to ask pertinent questions and parents say the school listens to them. Teaching assistants say they have had many good opportunities to contribute to the ongoing development of the school.
141. Governors have become much more knowledgeable about provision and standards because they thoroughly discuss benchmark and other performance data. They also evaluate their own performance, setting specific targets for the improvement of the governing body. This is helping them to focus better on improving standards as part of strategic planning. For example, the school identified that reading standards were not high enough and this has become a major priority in the school development plan.
142. Setting priorities for improvement proved a challenge for the school because self-evaluation revealed a number of areas that needed to be improved. However, decisions were reached through staff and governor consultations and discussion. As the school is to close at the end of this academic year, an interim development plan was drawn up with clear and specific priorities.

143. The school ensures that priorities are supported through adequate allocation of resources. Funds have been gained from various bodies and generous sponsorship from local banks. The parents' association has also worked very hard, making a substantial financial contribution to new ICT resources.
144. The school is justifiably proud of the progress that it has made over the past year, as staff and other stakeholders work closely together to plan priorities and monitor outcomes. Actions are already having beneficial effects because so much has been done.
145. Standards of reading are showing promising improvement. Behaviour, particularly for pupils whose poor behaviour was likely to impede their own and others' progress, has improved enormously due to consistent application of the principles in the school's new Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme. This PSE provision is also providing excellent opportunities for all pupils to develop emotionally and socially. Pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles has improved dramatically.
146. The school's self-evaluation process is very accurate in identifying key priorities for improvement. The overall findings of its self-evaluation report match those of the inspection team in every key question.
147. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues for improvement identified in the last inspection.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

148. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
149. During the past year the acting head teacher and governors have made crucial and extremely well targeted investments in areas of greatest priority. They have tapped into a wide variety of sources of income in order to do this. Their investment is beginning to impact on standards, but it will take longer than a year for a full return on the school's investment, in terms of higher standards, to be realised. For this reason, the grade for key question 7 is higher than the grades awarded to key questions 1 and 5.
150. The school has an appropriate number of teaching, support and administrative staff to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively to all pupils. Teachers and learning support assistants are well qualified and suitably experienced and work extremely well together as a dedicated team. Members of staff are very effectively deployed to make best use of their skills, interests and experience. This is an outstanding feature.
151. Teachers and learning support assistants regularly attend training courses to improve their skills. This is having a very positive influence on developments

in all classes and in the use of the outdoor environment. There has been a strong up-take of training grants from the General Teaching Council for Wales during the past year.

152. Administrative staff carry out daily routines and a range of other responsibilities very efficiently and effectively. All mid-day staff provide a valuable contribution to pupils' well-being and the smooth running of the school. The caretaker and cleaning staff maintain the school buildings and the grounds, including the nature reserve and garden areas, to a high standard.
153. The quality and quantity of learning resources for children under five is good with no important shortcomings. The outdoor learning areas for these children are outstanding. A huge commitment has been made to improve and develop further the accommodation and resources for the Foundation Phase.
154. There are sufficient resources for all subjects in the National Curriculum. Subject leaders effectively monitor resources for their curriculum areas and ensure that they are well used, updated regularly and accessible to all. The school library is well stocked and managed. Interactive whiteboards were introduced in all classes in the summer term 2008 and these are being extremely well used.
155. The school has adequate accommodation for the number of pupils on roll. It is situated on a large pleasant site that is shared with the junior school. The school was built in the mid nineties and is in a good state of repair. It is of semi-open plan design. A demountable building effectively houses the nursery class.
156. Staff effectively create a positive learning environment for pupils. Displays of pupils' work celebrate their achievement and further enhance the appearance of the interior of the building.
157. The school has developed a 'forest school' adjacent to the junior school. The overall development and use of the outdoors as an additional learning resource has greatly enhanced provision and is an outstanding feature of the accommodation.
158. The recently appointed acting head teacher ensures that economic, efficient and extremely effective use is made of all available resources. The budget is regularly and rigorously monitored to ensure best value. There is a strong link between the Local Education Authority finance officers and the school finance team. A comprehensive and thorough audit of resources has been carried out. A recent auditor's report found systems to be efficient and proper.
159. The investment in training for all members of staff is clearly having a very positive impact on the consistently good quality of teaching and learning, as is the investment in ICT equipment.
160. The school has established a manageable system to enable all staff to be released for the statutory planning, preparation and assessment time for

teachers. This time is used well, particularly for assessment. All cover for release from class is very effectively provided by highly qualified support staff. The school allocates and uses resources for workforce remodelling very efficiently.

161. The governing body meets regularly to plan and monitor spending decisions. They fervently believe that resources are provided on the basis that they will have a positive impact on teaching and learning. The school development plan is extremely well linked to budgetary decisions.
162. Overall, the management of resources is outstanding in order to invest for the future and ensure that the school gives excellent value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

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

Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

164. All children are well motivated and display good levels of concentration on their chosen activities both indoors and out. They remain on task, show real enjoyment and become absorbed in what they are doing even when there is no direct adult supervision. They are curious and keen to engage in new experiences.
165. Most children are developing good levels of independence. For example, many nursery children take their socks and shoes off independently in preparation for exercise, while many older children can undress themselves.
166. Most children behave extremely well in their activities throughout the day. They display an excellent understanding of the rules and expectations for behaviour, for example, when engaged in physical activities in the hall. They respond promptly and appropriately to instructions and move safely.
167. Younger children are beginning to understand the need to share and take turns. Older children do this on most occasions and co-operate with one another increasingly well. They work and play harmoniously together. By reception, children are beginning to be aware of different cultures and beliefs through their study of festivals in Christianity and Judaism.
168. Children respond thoughtfully to stories that help them express and reflect on their own and others' feelings and experiences. By reception, most children articulate the difference between right and wrong and can give simple examples of good and bad behaviour.

Shortcomings

169. There are no important shortcomings.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

170. Most children listen very attentively and respond appropriately to instructions. They enjoy listening to songs and rhymes, confidently memorising and repeating them.
171. A significant minority of children lack confidence in expressing their thoughts and feelings when they first enter the nursery. With well focused support, they gradually develop confidence in communicating their needs and ideas. During a 'bear hunt' around the school, for example, they spontaneously point out their observations to other children and adults. Older children are keen to engage visitors in conversation and talk about what they are doing. By reception, most children use a suitable vocabulary when observing and handling bug houses in the woodland area.
172. Younger children are beginning to understand the purpose of print and show an interest in books. Older children handle books correctly, enjoy talking about the pictures and are developing a good knowledge of letters and their related sounds. More-able children read simple, familiar texts confidently using a range of strategies including picture cues, phonics, word recognition and contextual understanding.
173. All children enjoy experimenting with mark making, both indoors and out, using a wide variety of implements and make good progress in understanding the purpose of writing. They often write spontaneously during their role-play activities, for example, by writing invitations to a tea party. A few older children write simple sentences about their experiences that communicate effectively using recognisable letters and words.

Shortcomings

174. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

175. All children make good progress in applying their mathematical skills in their play and other activities. Their use of mathematical language in talking about their work is also developing well.
176. Through regular practice in relevant practical contexts, all children make good progress in counting, ordering, reading and writing numbers. They enjoy practising writing numbers with interesting materials such as foam and sand. Younger children are beginning to match the appropriate number of objects to numbers up to 5. Most reception children can accurately order numbers to 10.

A few of them recognise and are beginning to put numbers up to 20 in the right order.

177. Younger children enjoy playing with, and moving, shapes on the interactive whiteboard. Nearly all the older children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes and many understand the difference between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. More-able children understand the properties of three-dimensional shapes and can explain, for example, that a cube has square faces. They apply their knowledge of shapes effectively when making model rockets and robots.
178. Children's awareness of the passage of time is developing well through activities such as reciting the days of the week and considering differences between day and night. Through role-play activities in the class shop, they are developing a good understanding of the purpose of money. By reception, most children can use simple measuring equipment to weigh ingredients and can compare the lengths and height of two or more objects.

Shortcomings

179. There are no important shortcomings.

Welsh language development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

180. Nearly all children make good progress with their Welsh language skills. The youngest children progress well in their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language. They enthusiastically listen to, and engage with, songs and finger rhymes such as 'Bore Da' and 'Hwyl fawr ffrindiau'. They respond well to daily greetings in Welsh and display cheerful responses to praise. Most begin to know and use the primary colours in Welsh.
181. Older children build well on this knowledge and extend their repertoire of songs and rhymes. They use Welsh throughout the day with increasing confidence, for example when discussing the weather. They know the colours of the rainbow in Welsh. Their reading skills develop steadily through reading words and labels around the classroom.

Shortcomings

182. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

183. Through frequent observations and activities in the school grounds, children are becoming very aware of seasonal changes in the environment. By reception, they make simple distinctions between the present and the past, such as identifying old castles and new houses.
184. Younger children confidently follow directions around the school and enjoy following a trail of picture clues in their search for a lost bear. They can sort bears into different hoops according to a variety of criteria, such as colour and size, and justify their decisions in simple terms.
185. Children make good progress in understanding themselves and other living things. Reception children, for example, can name several common birds that visit the woodland area and know what they like to eat. They enjoy making bird feeders that successfully fulfil their purpose. During a 'bug hunt' they demonstrate good knowledge of where insects are likely to live and use equipment such as 'bug pots' and magnifying glasses sensibly and safely.
186. They are familiar with, and confident in using, ICT equipment for a wide range of purposes.

Shortcomings

187. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

188. All children make good progress in developing fine manipulative skills. They demonstrate increasingly good control of the mouse on the computer and cut, stick, sew and weave competently. Their control of writing implements is developing well. They dig and rake in the nursery garden with a good sense of purpose, handling tools appropriately. Older children use potato peelers carefully to scrape bark off elder twigs to make bug houses.
189. During physical activities in the hall, younger children appreciate the differences between walking, running and jumping and enjoy trying to hop on one leg. With help, they recognise one or two of the changes that occur to their bodies during exercise, such as getting hot. Older children demonstrate good co-ordination in balancing bean bags first on one foot, then another, and on their heads while turning gradually. They understand the need for 'warm-up' and 'cool down' time at the beginning and end of physical activity.

190. Outdoors, children jump on and off a balancing beam and walk across it confidently. Many children climb, jump and land, slither and crawl on the climbing apparatus with confidence, co-ordination and some degree of control.

Shortcomings

191. Although there are no important shortcomings, a few younger children lack co-ordination and have underdeveloped balancing skills.

Creative development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

192. Early colour mixing skills are developing well in the nursery, where children enjoy freely experimenting with paint. They explore a range of natural resources such as leaves and twigs and combine them to make interesting collages. Older children build well on these skills and develop an increasing awareness of shape, pattern and colour in their designs and prints. Their drawings and portraits, following close observation, include growing attention to detail. They manipulate and paint salt dough very well to create patterns for Welsh love spoons.
193. Children make good progress and achieve good standards in their musical skills. They enjoy exploring various sound sources and experimenting with a range of instruments to create interesting sound effects to accompany familiar stories. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes in English and in Welsh.
194. All children relish many opportunities to engage in imaginative play. In the nursery, for example, they use the puppet theatre productively and imaginatively to create an animal puppet show. Most children play independently and appropriately in the home corner to create a tea party.

Shortcomings

195. There are no important shortcomings.

Art

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

Good features

196. During key stage 1, pupils make good progress in developing their observational, drawing, painting and making skills in a wide range of contexts and using a good variety of materials and techniques. Their work with textiles, clay and collage is also developing well.
197. All pupils use ICT increasingly well to support their work in art. For example, pupils in year 1 competently use 'spray' and 'fill' tools and select different shapes on a computer program effectively to create images of Paddington

Bear. Pupils in year 2 build well on these skills to explore line and colour in their drawings.

198. Most pupils in year 1 appreciate the textures of different fur on an assortment of teddy bears and make good attempts to represent these textures using different implements and techniques. They produce original drawings and paintings of bears showing good awareness of shape, line and texture and attention to detail.
199. Pupils talk about their work and give good reasons for their selection of particular techniques. For example, in discussing his pencil drawing of a teddy, one child said he had done "wiggly lines because his fur is fluffy". Another explained that she had used dabs of paint in "splashes" to represent the "scratchy" texture of a bear made from bristles.
200. In year 2, pupils are inspired by stories they have shared, such as 'The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark'. Most of them create very effective pastel drawings of owls both motionless and in flight.
201. Pupils in year 2 are familiar with the styles of major Impressionist artists such as Cézanne and Van Gogh and can identify one or two distinctive characteristics in their work. They enjoy mixing and matching colours and successfully make lighter and darker tones in order to recreate the colours used by Van Gogh in 'Starry Night'. Most of them talk confidently about how to do "swirly things" using white and yellow paint to produce stars in the manner of the artist.

Shortcomings

202. There are no important shortcomings.

Design technology

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

Good features

203. All pupils across key stage 1 have a good understanding of the sequence of steps required in the designing, making, testing, and evaluating process. They use their writing skills well to record the different steps in an interesting variety of ways.
204. They are also aware of the need for personal hygiene and safety when handling food, tools and equipment. In most cases the finished product closely resembles the pupils' original designs.
205. Pupils in year 1 make informed choices based on a tasting experience when they make a marmalade sandwich. Most of them use pictures and drawings independently to describe what they want to do, assemble their materials thoughtfully and carefully follow instructions. They manipulate small tools effectively to spread and cut.

206. Most pupils in year 2 use good research skills to identify and draw a variety of fruit in preparation for making a fruit kebab. They talk confidently about the properties of various fruit, and express likes and dislikes, with reasons, after tasting them.
207. They sensibly explain what they are doing and researching, using suitable vocabulary. They work independently to solve problems and make simple decisions, such as which fruit would look more attractive in their kebabs, giving reasons for their choices.
208. By year 2, most pupils use their mathematical skills effectively to create a class graph of favourite fruits using a computer program.

Shortcomings

209. There are no important shortcomings.

Geography

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

Good features

210. Throughout key stage 1, pupils' geographical skills, their ability to observe and collect information in the field, to use simple maps and apply appropriate vocabulary to their geography studies is well developed.
211. All pupils develop a good understanding of the school and immediate vicinity through first-hand observation. They explore, name and record a variety of features while walking around the locality. In discussion, most pupils give good directions and sequence features from their earlier work.
212. In Year 1, most pupils understand that an atlas is a book which shows where they can find other countries and they can identify Wales and other countries that they are studying. They show a good awareness of places beyond their locality.
213. Through their study of the travels of 'Tedi Twt' and Paddington Bear, most pupils in year 1 understand that journeys have a purpose. They sensibly discuss journeys they frequently make. .
214. In year 2, most pupils accurately follow simple maps of the locality. They identify key features and street furniture, design their own maps based upon observations and make appropriate use of keys.
215. They express views about the attractive and unattractive features of Litchard and describe some physical and human features of Bridgend. They write letters to children in another country giving them clear information about their town.

216. Most pupils make good progress in developing their enquiry skills by exploring and comparing features in their own locality and the contrasting area of Newton in Porthcawl. Through Internet information and first-hand research on visits, they develop a thorough knowledge of the area.
217. Throughout key stage 1, pupils are developing a good understanding of the importance of sustainable development and geographical issues which affect environmental change.

Shortcomings

218. There are no important shortcomings.

Religious education

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

Good features

219. During key stage 1, all pupils develop a good understanding of the significance of Christian celebrations such as Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter. They show a growing knowledge of some of the key beliefs and practices of Christianity.
220. Throughout key stage 1, most pupils develop a secure knowledge of key features of religious ceremonies through drama, role-play and the investigation of religious artefacts. All pupils become familiar with a widening range of Bible stories.
221. Through their study of people who are special, most year 1 pupils appreciate that everyone is special in some way. More-able pupils identify personal talents that make them special and record their thoughts in simple sentences. All pupils know that certain figures, such as Jesus and Moses, are of central importance to believers.
222. Nearly all pupils in year 1 are aware that families differ in size and composition, but that members of their family are particularly important to them personally.
223. Most pupils make good progress in understanding the significance and purpose of prayer for believers. In year 1, pupils write simple prayers thanking God for "food", "the sun" or "our world". By year 2, more-able pupils are beginning to understand that people have differing beliefs.
224. In year 2, most pupils understand why people get married and all of them have an excellent understanding of key features of a wedding ceremony through their role-play at the local Baptist church. All pupils appreciate that marriage is a very important life experience and that it has its own special service and traditions.

225. By year 2, most pupils are aware of other major faiths such as Judaism. They write in some detail about Chanukah, the Jewish festival of light, and customs associated with it, such as lighting the candles on the Menorah.
226. All pupils make excellent progress during key stage 1 in developing a strong moral awareness. By year 2 they give many examples of ways they should treat others and things they should not do. Their understanding is very effectively reinforced through songs and action rhymes that help guide their relationships with one another.

Shortcomings

227. There are no important shortcomings.

Welsh second language

Key stage 1 – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

228. By year 2, most pupils demonstrate excellent skills in using familiar patterns in new situations. They develop very effective writing skills and extend their use of a variety of sentence patterns. They write a wide range of phrases and sentences and have begun to write effective dialogues relating to the topic of food.

Good features

229. All pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning Welsh and make very good use of opportunities to use the language incidentally during the day. Across the key stage, they make very good progress in pronunciation and intonation.
230. At appropriate levels, pupils listen very well with good levels of understanding in a variety of situations.
231. Most Year 1 pupils use greetings and introduce themselves appropriately. They competently use an interactive display to discuss or record the daily weather. They can say the names of animals with correct pronunciation.
232. Most pupils in year 1 recognise and say the names of familiar toys and successfully match the correct picture to the printed word. They work well in pairs to ask and answer questions about the topic using the sentence pattern 'Oes'. They correctly draw and label a variety of items of clothing, successfully count up to ten objects and write the corresponding number.
233. By year 2, most pupils make good use of pictures of food items to ask a variety of different questions and to develop their skills of carrying out a simple conversation in pairs. They use digital equipment effectively to record their conversations and evaluate their performances.

234. Nearly all pupils know parts of the body in Welsh. Most of them make a list of clothes they like to wear and relate the clothing to the weather. They correctly count up to twenty objects and write the corresponding number.
235. Pupils enjoy using a sentence jigsaw, confidently piece together the sentences and copy them to a whiteboard.
236. Many pupils read their own work effectively and demonstrate very good reading and comprehension skills.

Shortcomings

237. There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection


The acting head teacher, staff, pupils and governors would like to thank the inspection team for their professional, thorough and rigorous approach to the inspection. We would also thank the team for their courtesy and sensitivity while they were here at Litchard Infant School.

This is a very positive inspection report which reflects the efforts of the team here at Litchard. It is pleasing to note that the inspection team recognises that Litchard Infants is a 'good and improving school with outstanding features in Welsh and bilingualism, the quality of care, support and guidance and the use it makes of all available resources.' The report recognises the outstanding provision for pupils who have additional learning needs and the way in which the school meets the needs of all pupils.

The report identifies the good progress made by the school in addressing the issues identified in the last inspection. It is also reassuring and pleasing to note that the findings of the inspection team match exactly the view of the school in its self-evaluation report which is recognised as being comprehensive and which draws on a wide range of information.

We are pleased that the report identifies the extremely carefully targeted investment made by the governors and head teacher in priority areas and the consistency of approaches that are successfully demonstrated throughout the school by all members of staff who form a good hardworking team and this has also been recognised.

The recommendations identified in the report will be addressed in the post inspection action plan and we will endeavour to deal with these issues in the lead up to the school being closed in August 2009.



Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Litchard Infant School
School type	Infant including Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 to 7
Address of school	Garfield Avenue Bridgend
Postcode	CF31 1QB
Telephone number	01656 815680

Acting head teacher	Terry Williams
Date of appointment	Seconded January 2008
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mike Brough (elected October 2008)
Registered inspector	Stephanie James
Dates of inspection	12/01/09 to 15/01/09

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Total
Number of pupils	52	45	50	37	184

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	8	0	8

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	22:1
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	22
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	N/A	91.3%	90.0%
Summer 2008	N/A	90.7%	91.0%
Autumn 2008	N/A	91.0%	91.7%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	23%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results of Pupils in the School (2008) and Nationally (2007) at the end of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Year 2					57
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	5.3	15.8	49.1	29.8	
		National	0	3	14	63	20	
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	7	19.3	42.1	31.6	
		National	0	4	15	55	26	
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	5.3	22.8	47.4	24.6	
		National	0	5	16	67	11	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	5.3	10.5	45.6	38.6	
		National	0	3	14	63	20	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	17.5	56.1	26.3	
		National	0	2	11	65	22	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	19.3	56.1	23.4	
		National	0	1	9	66	24	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English by teacher assessment			
In the school	74	In Wales	80

- D Pupils who are exempted or disapplied under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
- W Pupils working towards level 1

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Four inspectors spent the equivalent of 11 inspector days in the school. The nominee from the school was the head teacher. The inspectors and nominee met as a team before the inspection. There was no peer assessor on this inspection.

Inspectors visited:

- twenty-four lessons or part lessons, eighteen in the six subjects and areas inspected and six in other subjects;
- registrations, assemblies and acts of collective worship and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils;
- the school council; and
- representatives of organisations associated with the school.

The team also considered:

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

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

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Stephanie James Registered Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1 and 2 Key question 5 Context Summary Recommendations Appendices Art Foundation Phase Religious Education
Kay Andrews Team Inspector	Contributions to key question 4 Key question 6 Design and Technology
Ivor Petherick Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3 and 4
Helen Smith Team Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 2 and 3 Key question 7 Geography Welsh Second Language
Terry Williams Acting Head Teacher and Nominee from the school	Contributions to team meetings and provision of information

The contractor was:

Evenlode Education Ltd
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Acknowledgement

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