

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

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

**Our Lady & St Michael's RC  
Primary School  
Pen-y-Pound  
Abergavenny  
NP7 5UD**

**School Number: 6793317**

**Date of Inspection: 09 February 2009**

**by**

**Edward Goronwy Morris  
78283**

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Our Lady & St Michael's 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 Our Lady & St Michael's School took place between 09/02/09 and 11/02/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Edward Goronwy Morris undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **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. Our Lady and St Michael's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School is centrally situated in the market town of Abergavenny in the County of Monmouthshire and is administered by Monmouthshire Local Authority. Pupils are drawn from right across the social/economic spectrum. Whilst some are prosperous, a small minority are economically disadvantaged. English is the first language spoken in the homes of 87 per cent of pupils. An increasing number of pupils' families are from other countries. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. Six per cent of the pupils are registered as entitled to receive free school meals. This is lower than the local authority's (LA) average of 10.2 per cent and the all-Wales average of 17.5 per cent. Pupils represent the full ability range. Information from baseline assessments indicates that pupils' attainment generally on entry to school is comparable to the LA average.
2. The school caters for pupils aged four to eleven years. Children are admitted in the September following their fourth birthday. The school has no nursery. Most children come to the school from several different early years settings. There are currently 214 pupils on the school register from reception to Year 6. Twenty nine pupils have been identified as having special educational needs (SEN), including 11 on school action plus. Four pupils have a statement of SEN. No pupils are 'looked after' by the local authority. Twenty six pupils receive support in English as an additional language.
3. In addition to the head teacher, there are six full-time teachers and four part-time teachers at the school. Pupils are arranged into eight classes. Pupil numbers at the school have fluctuated since the school was last inspected and are now slightly below the figures reported in March 2003.

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

4. The school aims to provide its pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum within a welcoming, distinctive, Catholic community of deep love and care where everyone is valued for whom they are.
5. The school's main priorities and targets outlined in the school development plan for 2008-2010 include:
  1. implementing the foundation, assessment and curriculum 08 pedagogy to improve teaching and learning;
  2. enriching the lives of learners by helping them to develop, nurture and repair relationships;
  3. maintaining a professional learning community through evidence based on reflective practice;
  4. promoting a culture of inclusion and respect for diversity;
  5. mobilising the commitment of all key stakeholders to promoting well being and respect;
  6. focussing unrelentingly on the core uses of learner and school performance;
  7. establishing a community based school.

## Summary

6. Our Lady and Saint Michael's School is a good school with many strengths. There are outstanding features in the way in which learners are cared for, guided and supported and in particular the quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs. The school is well led. Pupils benefit from the staff's dedication and commitment. Throughout the school, staff have good working relationships with pupils and create a positive and encouraging approach to learning. As a result pupils make good progress and achieve well. Good progress has been made since the last inspection.

### 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

7. The findings of the inspection team concur with the opinion of the school in its self-evaluation report in six of the key questions. In the other question the team awarded a lower grade.
8. Statutory teacher assessments in 2008 indicate that 80 per cent of pupils in key stage 1 achieved the core subject indicator i.e. the expected level 2 in the three subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is slightly below the national average of 80.7 per cent. In the same year in key stage 2, 85 per cent of pupils attained the core subject indicator at level 4 or above compared to the national average of 75.5 per cent.
9. Consideration of the data over the past three years indicates that pupil performance in both key stages compares favourably with similar schools. Generally the data indicates that the difference between the performance of girls and boys is similar to the national average.
10. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	85%	15%	0%	0%

11. These percentages are a significant improvement on the last inspection. They are generally in line with the figures published in HMCI's latest Annual Report

for 20007/08 where overall standards in primary schools in Wales are good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 84 per cent of lessons and standards are outstanding (grade 1) in 12 per cent of lessons.

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

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

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.

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information and communication technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical Education	Grade 2	Grade 2

13. All pupils succeed whatever their social, ethnic or linguistic background and achieve agreed learning targets and goals. Pupils with additional learning needs make outstanding progress.
14. Overall standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy and ICT in both key stage 1 and 2 are good. Pupils' problem solving and creative skills develop well throughout the school. Most pupils have a good understanding of everyday Welsh commands and greetings. However, their bilingual competence and skills have good features that outweigh shortcomings.
15. The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills is good. Pupils understand the importance of keeping healthy.
16. Most pupils behave well throughout the school day. They are considerate and courteous. This contributes positively and constructively to the quality of life in the school. Attendance and punctuality have good features which outweigh shortcomings.
17. Although most pupils work well on given tasks their capacity for working independently is underdeveloped.

18. Pupils' awareness of equal opportunities is outstanding. They display a responsible attitude, as well as respect towards the diversity of other faiths and cultural traditions. Pupils play an active role in the life and work of the local community.

## The quality of education and training

### Grades for teaching

19. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
13%	70%	17%	0%	0%

20. These figures are a significant improvement on the previous inspection. They are generally in line with the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest annual report 2007-2008 where the quality of teaching is good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 84 per cent of lessons of which 16 per cent were grade 1.
21. Where lessons have outstanding features, they include excellent classroom management skills, clarity of explanations and high quality questioning skills. In the majority of lessons where teaching is good teachers display good subject knowledge and sequence learning effectively. Teaching assistants make a very significant impact on pupils' learning. Where there are shortcomings, work is not well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils, particularly in challenging the most able. Inconsistencies in the approach to classroom management between classes make expectations variable. Opportunities are often missed to develop pupils' bilingual skills.
22. Arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements have good features which outweigh shortcomings. Pupils' work is marked regularly and in the best practice, comments provide guidance as to how work can be improved. Generally, however, pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and agreeing how they can improve. Arrangements for informing parents about their child's achievement are not wholly effective.
23. The curriculum meets legal and statutory requirements and responds well to pupils' learning needs. There is, however, some inconsistency in the way in which the curriculum is implemented. The school places appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' key and basic skills. There are outstanding activities, in and out of the classroom that enrich and broaden learners' experiences during the school day and beyond.
24. Strong emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' learning experiences are enriched by a range of productive partnerships. The school works hard to maintain and improve these links.

25. Good attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of sustainable development. Opportunities for developing pupils' entrepreneurial skills are less well developed.
26. The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is an outstanding feature of the school and makes an excellent contribution to pupils well being whilst in the school's care. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is a strength of the school. The quality of support within the Nurture Group (Rockets) is outstanding.
27. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the school's procedures for monitoring pupils' punctuality and attendance.
28. The school promotes equal opportunities and there is outstanding respect and recognition for diversity. The school enthusiastically embraces national priorities set by WAG. Pupils are given a very good grounding in the skills and attitudes required to successfully progress in a lifetime of learning.

### **Leadership and management**

29. The school is well led by the head teacher. Staff are hard working and very committed to the school and the pupils in their care. The school has a supportive and inclusive ethos and takes full advantage of local and national initiatives to promote high standards.
30. The governing body complies with all its legal duties and relevant policies are in place. Governors are very supportive and are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about the educational provision. The school is aware of the need to further develop their role with regard to monitoring the standards that pupils achieve.
31. Generally leaders and managers are well informed about performance in their areas of responsibility. The school's procedures for self-evaluation are inclusive. Planning for improvement is appropriately focussed on raising standards. The school recognises the need to develop a greater focus on pupil achievement rather than provision in order to come to a firm conclusion on whole school standards.
32. The school is well resourced. The school has sufficient, qualified, specialist teachers. Teaching assistants, support and administrative staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Accommodation and learning resources are utilised well. Financial management is systematic, methodical and innovative. The school manages its expenditure prudently in order to provide very good value for money.

## Recommendations

33. In order to further improve the school, the head teacher, governors and members of staff need to:
- R1 improve pupils' bilingual skills;
  - R2 raise levels of pupil punctuality and attendance;
  - R3 make better use of assessment to ensure greater consistency, progression and challenge in pupils' learning;
  - R4 ensure that all parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress; and
  - R5 create more structured opportunities for staff and the governing body to make judgements about how well pupils achieve;

The school has already identified R1, R3 and R5 as priorities within its own self-evaluation report and 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

34. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report
35. Statutory teacher assessments in 2008 indicate that 80 per cent of pupils in key stage 1 achieved the core subject indicator i.e. the expected level 2 in the three subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is slightly below the national average of 80.7 per cent. In the same year in key stage 2, 85 per cent of pupils attained the core subject indicator at level 4 or above compared to the national average of 75.5 per cent.
36. Consideration of the data over the past three years indicates improvement in pupil performance in both key stages and that pupil performance is consistently above local and national averages. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 5 at the end of key stage 2 is consistently above the LA and all Wales figures. National benchmarking data indicates that pupil performance in both key stages is generally in the top 50 per cent when compared with similar schools (i.e. schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals). Generally the data indicates that the difference between the performance of girls and boys is similar to the national average. The data indicates that girls consistently outperform the boys and that this difference is most marked in English
37. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
0%	85%	15%	0%	0%

38. These percentages are a significant improvement on the last inspection. They are generally in line with the figures published in HMCI's latest Annual Report for 20007/08 where overall standards in primary schools in Wales are good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 84 per cent of lessons and standards are outstanding (grade 1) in 12 per cent of lessons.

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

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

39. 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. They show positive attitudes to learning, co-operate well together and engage enthusiastically in challenging activities that strengthen and develop their learning. They make good progress in their communication skills and in their personal and social skills.

**Grades for standards in subjects inspected**

<b>Inspection Area</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information and communication technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical Education	Grade 2	Grade 2

40. Regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, the vast majority of pupils make good progress. Pupils with additional learning needs, including those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils receiving support for learning and behaviour in the Nurture group (Rockets) are achieving very well. Generally pupils make good progress towards meeting their potential and predicted levels of achievement. They are keen and ready to move on to the next stage of their learning.
41. Standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 are good. Most pupils listen attentively, speak confidently in discussion and offer contributions freely. Their reading skills progress well across the age range. Most have a very positive attitude to reading and read for pleasure as well as for information. They read with appropriate fluency and expression relative to their ages. Generally pupils' written work shows good imaginative and creative ability. However, there are limited examples of extended writing across the curriculum.
42. Pupils' numeracy, ICT, problem solving and creative skills develop well throughout the school. They apply their mathematical skills well across various subjects. Pupils in both key stages make effective use of ICT to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Older pupils produce good quality presentations which enhance their learning in a number of subjects. They make good use of the internet to support their work.
43. Most pupils have a good understanding of everyday Welsh commands and greetings. The majority respond appropriately to questions about themselves and the weather. However, their confidence in their own oral ability is not sufficiently secure for them to use Welsh on a regular basis in informal situations around the school. Consequently, their bilingual competence and skills have shortcomings.
44. Most pupils make good progress in acquiring new skills and developing their understanding and knowledge. However, they are only beginning to develop an understanding of their strengths and what they need to do to improve their

work. They are yet to develop the confidence to set their own targets for improvement.

45. Pupils are generally well motivated and show enthusiasm for their work. Most have positive attitudes to learning and show good levels of concentration and perseverance. Although most pupils work well on given tasks their capacity for working independently is underdeveloped.
46. Most pupils behave well throughout the school day, moving along the corridors in an orderly manner and sitting attentively in assemblies. In most instances pupils are considerate and polite. They show respect to each other and are courteous to adults who work in, or are visiting, the school. A very few, however, do cause some disruption in lessons through their inattention towards the teacher and lack of concentration on what they are being asked to do. Two pupils were subject to temporary exclusions from the school in the previous year.
47. Average attendance over the three terms prior to the inspection was below 93.7 per cent. Whilst this is above the Wales national average for primary schools it is below the average for similar schools (i.e. schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals). The figure is also below the level at the last inspection and 1.3 per cent short of the school's target, which reflects the typical level of attendance within the local authority. Although most pupils arrive punctually in the morning, a significant number arrive late. This causes disruption to some lessons.
48. Pupils are making good progress across the school in their personal, social and moral development. They have a good understanding of the importance of keeping healthy.
49. Pupils' awareness of equal opportunities, including different beliefs, attitudes and social and cultural traditions is outstanding. They are respectful of the individual needs of others. Through their studies of other countries, most pupils demonstrate excellent understanding of a wide range of differences in society. They play an active role in the life and work of the local 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

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

51. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
13%	70%	17%	0%	0%

52. These figures are a significant improvement on the previous inspection. They are generally in line with the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest annual report 2007-2008 where the quality of teaching is good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 84 per cent of lessons of which 16 per cent were grade 1.

53. Outstanding features were identified in 13 per cent of the lessons observed which included:

- Excellent classroom management skills.
- Clarity of explanations and high quality questioning skills.
- Outstanding links to other areas of learning.
- Very effective use of support staff.
- High expectations of all pupils.

54. Teaching in the Foundation Phase is consistently good or very good. The class teacher leads and manages the support staff and volunteer parents effectively to provide a wide and exciting range of activities closely linked to the expectations of the Foundation Phase. Members of staff who work with under-fives show a very good understanding of the principles of the Foundation Phase and work well together as a team. All adults intervene sensitively to extend children's use of language while skills and experiences are enhanced through careful planning and lively interactive delivery. Children receive a very good start to their school career.

55. Throughout the school teachers have good working relationships with pupils and create a positive and encouraging approach to learning. They act as good role models and work hard to raise self esteem by giving frequent praise and encouragement.

56. Teachers benefit from up to date, appropriate in service training and have good subject knowledge. Their knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the curriculum is good overall and they show enthusiasm in their teaching. However, there are insufficient opportunities for staff to share their good practice with colleagues and as a consequence there is inconsistency in practice between classes.

57. Lessons are generally well planned and include an analysis of previous learning and understanding. Planning identifies opportunities for differentiation within individual lessons but on many occasions differentiation is insufficiently clear in practice.
58. Teachers' use of incidental Welsh is improving and promotes the development of pupils' bilingual skills. However, there is generally insufficient regular use of Welsh to develop these skills progressively.
59. Lessons have clear objectives which are explained to pupils at the start of each lesson. Introductions are generally clear although on some occasions where there are shortcomings, pupils are not actively engaged during whole class introductions and are not clear about how to meet the lesson objective.
60. Teachers use a variety of appropriate teaching strategies including individual, paired and group work. However, overall, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and to be given responsibility for their own learning.
61. In the majority of lessons, teachers demonstrate good classroom management skills. They provide challenge and motivation in the tasks provided and set appropriate time limits for the completion of work intervening skilfully to ensure understanding. However, in a minority of lessons, where there are shortcomings, work is not well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils, particularly in challenging the most able. Inconsistencies in the approach to classroom management between classes make expectations variable.
62. All staff actively promote equal opportunities in the various aspects of school life and there is a well considered emphasis on issues of gender, race and disability equality. Overall, the teachers plan well to meet individual needs. They make outstanding provision for pupils with additional learning needs and good provision for those for whom English is an additional language. Provision for more able and talented pupils is not as clearly defined.
63. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting pupils' progress. Overall, the school's systems and procedures for assessment have good features that outweigh shortcomings.
64. The school's arrangements to formally assess pupils' attainment are good.
65. The progress of children in the Foundation Phase is carefully monitored and assessment information in the Reception class is used very effectively to meet children's needs. Assessment of pupils with additional learning needs is thorough and effective.
66. In key stages 1 and 2, the assessment system is based on a range of published tests mainly in English and mathematics. Teacher assessments are moderated within the school and within the local cluster of schools and effective portfolios of year group samples of work are kept. End of key stage assessments are analysed thoroughly to ascertain trends and for opportunities

to improve standards of learning. Teachers have a good knowledge of the standards achieved by pupils in English and mathematics. However assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding in the non-core subjects is less well developed.

67. The school has introduced learning journals to enable pupils to reflect regularly on their progress. These are as yet, in the early stage of effectiveness. Pupils are not always sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and agreeing how they can improve.
68. Pupils' work is marked regularly and in the best practice, comments provide guidance as to how work can be improved. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school.
69. Parental consultations are held twice a year in addition to an open door policy. Reports to parents contain areas for improvement and give clear information about progress in English, maths and science. Information about the non-core subjects is less clear and lacks specific detail. A significant minority of parents in response to the questionnaire indicated that they are not kept sufficiently informed about their child's achievement.

**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**

70. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The team considered the outstanding features identified by the school were not consistently and progressively implemented across the age range. As a result the team awarded a lower grade.
71. The school responds well to learners' needs and interests and provides equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements. Provision for collective worship also meets requirements.
72. 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 outcomes. Children experience a good range of well planned activities designed to help them to make choices and work independently. They receive a good start to their school career.
73. In key stages 1 and 2 there is good access to a range of learning opportunities, particularly for those pupils with additional learning needs, where provision is outstanding. There is, however, some inconsistency in the way in which the curriculum is implemented. On occasions planning lacks sufficient focus to ensure pupils move forward in a progressive manner and to provide suitable challenge for the more able pupils.

74. Good progress is being made in response to the requirements of the Foundation Phase. The school is aware of the need to build on this good practice in implementing the changes to the curriculum and assessment arrangements at key stage 2.
75. The school places appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' key and basic skills. These are evident in teachers planning. Pupils' creative skills are developed well and many opportunities are provided to develop thinking and problem solving skills.
76. There are outstanding activities, in and out of the classroom that enrich and broaden learners' experiences during the school day and beyond. Excellent sporting, musical and cultural opportunities are available which are developing and releasing the potential of pupils. Clubs, events and visits are well attended and supported. Trips near and far are organised to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and their national and international heritage.
77. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school takes good account of the Personal and Social Education Framework. There is an aura of care and empathy throughout the school. Pupils feel safe and cared for and show mutual respect to others. There is a strong sense of community within the school, which is further enriched by the strong links with the parish. There are positive relationships between all members of the school which are at the core of the schools' aims and values.
78. Pupils' learning experiences are enriched by a range of productive partnerships. The school works hard to maintain and improve these links. Many parents are involved with the school and support activities very well. There is a strong parent group working who work hard to raise funds and help in a variety of ways. For example, lessons are enhanced by parents from other cultures who bring artefacts and talk to the pupils about differences in dress, faith and climates around the world. However, in response to the questionnaire a small minority of parents indicated that they were not well informed about what their children are doing in school.
79. The school's links with business organisations are not fully exploited to ensure pupils' learning experiences provide an effective work-related education. The practice of teacher placement, while it has been tried, is not embedded within the school. As a consequence, pupils are not experiencing the benefits achieved from undertaking work-related projects.
80. The school has succeeded in creating a Welsh ethos. The school celebrates the language and culture of Wales in lessons, displays and photographs and also during extra curricular events. Aspects of the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* are well reflected across the curriculum. Although pupils in some classes receive regular encouragement to develop their oral skills in Welsh, bilingualism is not sufficiently nor consistently integrated into the life of the school.

81. Provision for tackling social disadvantage and ensuring equality of access to all learners is good and sometimes very good across the school. Provision for additional learning needs pupils is exceptionally good. There are very good examples of social inclusion in all activities. There is very good use made of Nurture group facilities and additional support for those pupils identified as requiring extra help to manage learning, language and behaviour difficulties. Overall, results show that provision for all pupils is ensuring good progress, both academically and socially, within the school.
82. The school is promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of global citizenship and sustainability well. There are opportunities across the curriculum to develop pupils' awareness of composting, recycling and respect for the environment. This is an ongoing process and the Eco committee are aware of the need to further develop the school as an eco friendly environment.
83. The school is doing much to introduce its pupils to skills such as problem solving and decision making during certain lessons and through activities such as the Challenge Days. However, there is no consistent plan for the introduction of the whole range of entrepreneurial skills.
84. The school enthusiastically embraces national priorities set by WAG. It is committed to raising the achievement of all its pupils, irrespective of their social background or academic ability, and ensuring their smooth transition to secondary education. Pupils are given a very good grounding in the skills and attitudes required to successfully progress in a lifetime of learning.

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

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

85. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
86. The arrangements for planning and managing care and support for all pupils is outstanding. There is exceptional pastoral and behavioural support available for the majority of pupils. In discussions, pupils feel valued, safe and secure and discuss their absolute trust in all staff and know who to go to when they need appropriate support and advice.
87. Enhancing these arrangements are the highly trained and experienced staff, both on site and from the community, who provide excellent support for individual pupils. The Nurture Group (Rockets) is invaluable in managing and supporting pupils who may otherwise be out of school.
88. The way in which the school works with parents and carers, in providing care, support and guidance for individual children, is a strength of the school. While nearly all parents are highly supportive of the head teacher and the school, a recent independent survey of parents' views identified areas for development in their mutual relationship. The newly formed Parent Consultation Group has discussed these and changes are already being proposed as a result.

89. The school council is well established and effectively represents pupils' opinions. Members are elected democratically and the involvement of a governor at meetings strengthens links with the Governing Body.
90. The school operates an effective system for helping pupils to settle in to the school, which is appreciated by both parents and their children. Those joining Reception are invited to a meeting with their parents, where they meet teachers and governors and find out about the school. They also receive a prospectus and DVD of what the school offers in the Foundation Stage. Children then visit the school several times in the summer term to get used to their new teacher and classmates. Pupils who join at other times visit their classes prior to joining and there is a meeting two weeks after arrival to discuss how they are settling in.
91. The school has clear and well documented procedures that contribute to all pupils' well-being, both in and out of school. There are effective programmes of personal and social education which are embedded in lessons. Healthy School initiatives are prominent in the school's guidance. Whenever necessary, specialist advice and services are provided.
92. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the school's procedures for monitoring pupils' punctuality and attendance. The school identifies those pupils with very poor attendance and punctuality and works closely with the education welfare officer to endeavour to resolve each individual situation. However, attendance figures are not systematically analysed and reported on a regular basis. There is currently no system of rewards, to encourage improvements in attendance and reduce lateness.
93. There is a clearly defined system for ensuring a disciplined approach to controlling behaviour, which works effectively most of the time. However, there is an inconsistent approach to behaviour management in classrooms.
94. The safety of pupils is given the highest priority within the school. Teachers and support staff have responsibility for designated areas and items of equipment within the school. The head teacher and caretaker carry out regular audits of the site and are supported by two governors with specific responsibility for health and safety. Risk assessments are carried out for activities within the school as well as trips outside it and the provision for first aid and distribution of medicines is appropriate.
95. The way in which the school seeks to encourage its pupils to develop a healthy lifestyle is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils are taught the importance of exercise and a healthy diet through various subjects and activities. There are numerous opportunities for them to develop their fitness through extra-curricular clubs and initiatives such as Physical Education in School Sports (PESS) and Dragon Sports. They are encouraged to drink water through the day, with personal bottles in the classrooms, and are regular customers of the fruit tuck shop in the morning break. The school has enthusiastically adopted the WAG Appetite for Life Plan and has worked closely with its catering staff to produce a menu, which provides an extensive

range of healthy and nutritious meals made from fresh, local produce. Also, a salad option, fresh fruit and low fat yoghurts are always available.

96. The Head teacher is the designated officer for child protection and the SENCO deputises in his absence. Both have received appropriate training and administer an effective system in accordance with the local and All Wales child protection procedures. The school's policy identifies these individuals as well as the contacts in the local authority. All members of staff receive awareness training, either as INSET or during a personal induction, and are aware of the school's procedures and the persons to whom concerns are to be reported.
97. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is outstanding. Pupils' individual needs are identified and assessed very efficiently as early as possible, and through a range of procedures. Professionals from a wide range of services are involved throughout in providing guidance and advice and they contribute effectively to the plans produced.
98. The quality of support given in groups, classes and within the Nurture Group (Rockets) is outstanding. It is tailor made to meet the individual needs of the full range of learning, language, sensory and behaviour difficulties. The results of this highly specialised and targeted support is to enable all additional learning needs pupils to be included in every aspect of school life. It is particularly beneficial in helping those pupils who have previously been excluded from other settings as a result of behavioural difficulties.
99. The school is an outstanding example of an inclusive community. Clear policies and guidelines for equal opportunities are put into practice throughout the school. All staff and pupils celebrate differences, both socially and culturally. Stereotyping is challenged and all pupils take part in the wide range of school activities, regardless of gender or race.
100. There are effective measures in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour, bullying and harassment. Pupils feel confident in staff and know that any concerns they may have will be listened to and acted upon. Planning for effective racial harmony is good.
101. Every effort is made to ensure equal treatment for disabled pupils. Appropriate accessibility planning is in place and the school is very well adapted to meet the full range of disabled learners and visitors.
102. There is outstanding respect and recognition for diversity. Pupils develop a comprehensive understanding of differences and equal opportunities through lessons, assemblies and celebrations. Parents from other countries are invited to talk to groups and give invaluable insights into their cultures, using an amazing array of artefacts and clothes which pupils can touch, discuss and wear. These experiences very effectively increase pupils' appreciation and understanding of the wider world.

## Leadership and management

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

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

103. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report
104. Leaders and managers give a clear direction to the school's work. The head teacher has a clear vision, based on sound values which focus on care, concern and equality of opportunity. He provides calm and sensitive leadership and is highly respected by the school community. He receives good support from the deputy head teacher and from all staff. They are hard working and very committed to the school and the pupils in their care. They are very supportive of each other. Curriculum co-ordinators carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. The head teacher recognises the need to review their school improvement roles in the light of the implications of the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales. Well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants make a major contribution to raising standards. Administrative, support and caretaking staff all make a positive contribution to the effective daily routines.
105. The school has a supportive and inclusive ethos. Pupils of all ages are valued and respected. Relationships between members of staff and between members of staff and pupils are very positive and impact well on pupils' personal, social and educational development. The school is a happy community that encourages civility, courtesy and equality for all.
106. The school takes full advantage of local and national initiatives gaining accreditation through the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, the Healthy and Eco Schools initiative. The school is actively involved in LEA and local initiatives and collaborates well with other schools within the cluster for example in the Physical Education in School Sports (PESS) programme and in moderating pupils' work. The school also works well with a range of local partnerships to promote a number of initiatives for example Kids Cymru and Appetite for life. These initiatives have a positive effect on pupil achievement.
107. Whole-school targets set for pupils at the end of key stages are realistic and are appropriately based on prior assessment and the likely performance of each pupil. The school recognises the need to make better use of benchmarked predictive information to provide additional challenge.
108. Effective Performance Management arrangements are in place based on agreed job descriptions. All staff are appraised annually and performance objectives have been agreed. Classroom observations by the head teacher are supportive. Procedures for identifying staff development needs are effective and positive support is provided for staff development and learning that helps to ensure continuing improvement of provision. This is particularly

evident in the development of the classroom assistants' role. The head teacher recognises the need to use classroom observations, monitoring and opportunities to share good practice more effectively as tools to further raise standards.

109. The Governing Body is very active in its support for the school. Enthusiastic and committed governors devote a considerable amount of energy in helping to lead the school forward. Each has one or more specific responsibilities in terms of membership of sub-committees or links with particular subjects or aspects of school life. They clearly understand their roles and readily undertake training where appropriate to enable them to carry these out effectively. A strategy sub-committee involves them in addressing the challenges and opportunities the school currently faces.
110. The head teacher reports verbally to the Governing Body on pupil performance and governors visit the school to monitor lessons and other activities. This helps them to gain a better understanding of the school's activities. The school recognises in its School Improvement Plan the need for the Governing Body to further develop their role as 'critical friends' with regard to pupil achievement. The Governing Body fulfils all the legal duties placed upon it.

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

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

111. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
112. Evaluation involves staff at all levels. Curriculum co-ordinators complete end of year evaluations which describe current practice in their areas of responsibility and identify areas for development. In the best examples they draw on discussion with colleagues, scrutiny of teachers' planning and the collation and moderation of examples of pupils' work. Curriculum co-ordinators are not currently involved in observing the quality of teaching and learning. The school recognises the need to develop a greater focus on pupil achievement rather than provision in order to come to a firm conclusion on whole school standards.
113. Good use is made of school data about pupil performance in National Curriculum assessments to identify trends over time.
114. The school's self-evaluation procedures are inclusive. The process takes account of the views of learner, staff and other interested parties. Governor visits to school are increasingly enabling them to share their views on current provision. Parents' views are sought via questionnaires and the parent consultation group. The School Council and pupil questionnaires provide valuable opportunities for pupils to make their views known on a number of

issues. External assessments by consultants and LA advisory staff are supportive.

115. The self-evaluation report produced by the school before the inspection is comprehensive and carefully considers strengths and areas for development in relation to each of the elements of the seven key questions of the inspection framework. Issues identified by the school as requiring further attention are similar to those identified by the inspection team. The grades awarded by the school match the grades awarded by the inspection team in six of the seven key questions. In the other question the inspection team awarded a lower grade.
116. The school is committed to continuous improvement. The head teacher plays a crucial role in identifying development priorities and planning, implementing and monitoring improvement strategies. The School Improvement Plan is comprehensive and detailed. It contains an evaluation of previous School Improvement Plan priorities and identifies principle actions and key issues for 2008 – 2010. The link between the outcomes of the self-evaluation process and the priorities listed is unclear. Good account is taken of the range of resources necessary to fund the various school improvement initiatives. The issues identified are generally appropriate to the school's development. Success criteria, however, are not sufficiently focused on pupil achievement.
117. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues and shortcomings identified during the last inspection. Standards have improved significantly in History and Geography in both key stages. Effective strategies have been developed to teach the key skills and to broaden the range of teaching strategies. An appropriate scheme of work for Design technology has been developed. The health and safety issues brought to the attention of the governing body have been successfully addressed.

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

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

118. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
119. The school has sufficient qualified, experienced and specialist teachers and support staff to deliver the curriculum and meet the needs of the pupils. All teachers have clearly defined roles and good subject knowledge and there is a good balance of staff in terms of gender, age and experience. Statutory arrangements for teachers to plan, prepare and assess the curriculum are organised efficiently with specialist staff employed to enhance physical education in particular. Two classes have job share arrangements which work effectively and also provide cover for their respective planning, preparation and assessment time.

120. The school is innovative in using teaching assistants very effectively in key roles. Two members of the support team have achieved Higher Level Teaching Assistant status while a third is currently training. Teaching assistants have very successfully taken on the role of SENCO and of leading the school's nurture group while another teaching assistant covers some classes for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time. In addition, they work very effectively to support speech, language and mathematical development across the school. They make an important and much valued contribution to the school.
121. There are effective arrangements for the performance management and continuous development of staff. Training is undertaken at externally organised courses and in school and the programme is appropriately linked to the priorities in the School Improvement Plan. Collaborative work with the local cluster of schools and comprehensive school has led to improved expertise in the moderation and levelling of pupils' work.
122. The school secretaries make a significant contribution to school administration and help to ensure that day to day routines run smoothly. Members of the ancillary staff, including midday supervisors, canteen staff, cleaning staff and the caretaker also perform their duties efficiently and effectively.
123. The quality and quantity of resources for teaching and learning are good overall. Resources match the needs of learners and are mostly deployed effectively. In particular, the quality and variety of resources for the under fives are very good. Resources are generally well matched to the school's priorities as set out in the School Improvement Plan.
124. Considerable improvements have been made to the buildings and grounds to address the concerns identified by the last inspection and there is now sufficient room for the number of pupils on roll. The building is in a good state of repair and decoration and the two demountable classrooms are now pleasant areas for learning. The computer suite and rooms for the Rockets and Michael's Mates activities have enhanced the learning and personal development of pupils. However, the lack of a library limits the opportunities for reading a range of fiction books. The outside improvements, which include the kitchen, peace and sensory gardens, the foundation play area and adventure trails, have been equally impressive.
125. The school operates under a budget deficit, a legacy of a reduction in pupil numbers of 17 per cent in just three years. However, it has introduced a budget recovery plan aimed to eliminate this over three years. This includes reviewing all service contracts and examining alternative sources of income.
126. The school manages its resources effectively, efficiently and prudently to give very good value for money. The head teacher and governing body are imaginative and innovative in the way they access additional financial resources and in enlisting external support.

## **Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning**

### **Foundation Phase**

127. 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**

128. Reception children generally behave well and respond positively to praise, encouragement and the high expectations set for them. They show a very good understanding of classroom routines and many show a good level of independence when putting on aprons or dressing for the outdoors for example. The majority of children play well together and readily share the equipment provided. They understand turn taking and are beginning to understand the needs and views of their peers.
129. Children are developing good relationships with adults and with one another and many show good levels of concentration and great interest in their activities. They show perseverance and enjoy opportunities to make choices. They take part in new experiences such as outdoor role play with confidence and enthusiasm.
130. Many children show confidence in approaching visitors and enjoy telling them about their activities and their classroom showing pride in their achievements.
131. Children are developing an understanding of their own and other cultures, for example, they know some facts about Chinese New Year and enjoy tasting Chinese food and experimenting with chopsticks. They also know that some children in their class come from other countries

##### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings.

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

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

##### **Good features**

132. The majority of reception children listen attentively in group and whole class situations. They respond well to questions and many answer confidently, the more able giving more extended responses. When discovering a range of adventurous objects hidden in a rucksack outside for example, they show great enthusiasm in describing the items and putting forward ideas about their

possible use. Many children are able to make up a story about the items using a developing vocabulary. They unwrap a giant handkerchief and give imaginative reasons as to what it could be used for, contributing their ideas confidently to the whole class.

133. The development of children's early reading skills is good. Children discuss the stories and pictures with a good awareness of detail and turn the pages appropriately. Nearly all reception children have a good awareness of initial letter sounds and use these skills effectively when undertaking reading activities. Many children read simple words accurately and a few more able children read simple books fluently.
134. Most children write their own names legibly and many enjoy a variety of mark making including writing simple words independently. Many children enjoy writing addresses, notes and invitations as part of their role play activities.

### **Shortcomings**

135. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Mathematical development**

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

#### **Good features**

136. Reception children are developing their awareness of number well. The majority count, sort and match a range of up to ten objects and many explore higher numbers and show a good understanding of numbers to twenty in practical situations.
137. The majority of children confidently order numbers from one to ten and successfully identify one more and one less. Many children understand ordinal numbers and count their place in a line appropriately.
138. Children in reception show good understanding of early mathematical concepts when they work with sand and water. They use mathematical vocabulary well and their understanding of more than / less than, full / empty and floating and sinking is good.
139. Nearly all children identify common two dimensional shapes. Taking part in activities such as folding and refolding a giant handkerchief reinforces and improves their understanding well.

### **Shortcomings**

140. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Welsh language development**

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

#### **Good features**

141. Children enjoy taking part in singing rhymes and songs in Welsh. The majority of children show that they understand a good number of instructions given in Welsh by responding quickly and purposefully in a variety of situations such as lining up, sitting on the carpet or going outside.
142. Some children count in Welsh and clearly understand their teacher when activities involve counting in Welsh.

#### **Shortcomings**

143. Children's ability to use simple phrases and everyday vocabulary in Welsh is underdeveloped. A minority of children do not always understand simple instructions given in Welsh.

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

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

#### **Good features**

144. Children in reception enjoy receiving letters and wrapping up parcels. They understand that letters and parcels need stamps and need to show an address. Some make good attempts to wrap parcels, draw stamps and write an address.
145. Reception children observe the snow on the mountains and on the playground. More able children know that there is more snow on the mountain because it is higher.
146. Children explore and identify items such as a whistle, torch, rope and magnifying glass. Many describe the materials they are made from and know what they would be used for. All children enjoy using a magnifying glass and describe how the viewed image changes.
147. Reception children make marbles and coins from clay and describe how clay changes after a period of time. They accurately sort plastic, clay and real coins and some describe how they differ and which would be used to go shopping.

#### **Shortcomings**

148. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Physical development**

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

149. All children enjoy physical activities and show good control over their bodies and co-ordination when they run, skip and balance. When working outdoors, many children show effective hand over hand movements in using a rope to suggest climbing a mountain.
150. Indoors, children confidently climb in and out of a giant "dark box" with a good level of control and awareness of obstacles.
151. Children's fine motor skills are well developed. They use clay confidently to make small objects and use tweezers to pick small beads out of the sand tray and water tray to reassemble a necklace.
152. Most children use the computer confidently and are developing good mouse control.

### **Shortcomings**

153. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Creative development**

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

#### **Good features**

154. Children paint confidently and enjoy choosing appropriate colours with pleasing results. Many know that they can mix two colours to create a new colour and enjoy experimenting with this.
155. When working with clay, children use a range of implements to make marks to represent coins and show skill in creating marbles of various sizes and painting them to match glass marbles.
156. Children show good skills of observation when drawing and show good awareness of texture and vocabulary to describe textures when exploring inside the "dark box".
157. Children use a variety of blocks and other materials to build large scale models and respond very imaginatively to opportunities to act out stories and situations and to become involved in role play.

### **Shortcomings**

158. There are no important shortcomings.

## Mathematics

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

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

### Good features

159. Most pupils in key stage 1 have a good understanding of number. Younger pupils count, order, add and subtract numbers to 10 correctly and can read and write the numbers involved. Most older pupils have a good understanding of place value. They count sets of objects reliably, counting forwards and backwards in steps of different size confidently. They recognise patterns in number. The majority, arrange, add and subtract numbers correctly.
160. Most pupils use every day standard and non-standard units with increasing accuracy to measure length and mass. Younger pupils are aware of the value of different coins and use them confidently to buy and sell items during a simple role-play exercise. Older pupils use mental calculation strategies competently to solve number, money and measure problems correctly.
161. Most pupils in key stage 1 can talk about their work using familiar mathematical language. Older pupils understand the purpose of gathering data and record their findings in simple charts and graphs. The majority successfully interpret the information shown.
162. In key stage 2, the vast majority of pupils develop a good understanding of place value, number patterns and number facts. The majority can use their knowledge and their understanding to solve problems using words, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing with increased confidence. The more able pupils respond swiftly using a variety of mental calculation methods to recall multiplication facts correctly and quickly.
163. Most use suitable standard measurements for length, mass, volume and time competently. Younger pupils use their measuring skills effectively for example to complete an orienteering exercise in the school grounds. Older pupils use measuring tapes accurately, recording their findings as a basis to explore the relationships between different body measurements. The more able use their estimating skills well, round answers to calculations to an appropriate degree of accuracy and explain their method of working effectively.
164. Most older pupils in key stage 2 work well collaboratively, communicating their ideas effectively to solve mathematical problems. The majority handle different types of data effectively, collecting and presenting the information using a range of graphs, tables and diagrams.

### Shortcomings

165. There are no important shortcomings. However, in key stage 2 less able pupils' recall of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts is insecure.

## Information and communication technology

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

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

### Good features

166. Most pupils in key stage 1 use the mouse effectively to click on icons, to follow prompts and to move items on screen for example when combining mathematical shapes to create houses. Their keyboard skills develop well and, with support, they type and save simple sentences. They recognise the different parts of the computer system. The majority of older pupils in key stage 1 use their word processing skills successfully to create and communicate information in different forms using words and pictures.
167. Most pupils in key stage 1 use a paint programme creatively. With support, they enter data into a simple data-handling package to create graphs.
168. In key stage 2 the majority of pupils log on, access programs, save, retrieve and print their work with increasing confidence. They develop their ability to communicate, share and exchange ideas and information in different forms, including graphs and pictures.
169. The majority of younger pupils in key stage 2 change font size, style and colour of text and introduce borders and backgrounds competently. They use the cut and paste function successfully to add images to the text for example when creating posters. Most older pupils manipulate text, graphics and pictures very effectively to prepare good quality presentations which support their learning in a number of subject areas.
170. Most younger pupils in key stage 2, with support, correctly enter information into a prepared database. They manipulate it successfully to produce simple bar charts. Older pupils add, sort and amend records in data bases to follow simple lines of enquiry.
171. Older pupils in key stage 2 make good use of the internet to support their work in a number of subjects. Most confidently download images and find information efficiently from a variety of sources for a defined purpose. They use the internet safely in accordance with given instructions and understand clearly that disclosing personal information puts themselves and others at risk.

### Shortcomings

172. There are no important shortcomings. However, older key stage 2 pupils' skill in using data bases and spreadsheets independently to ask and answer questions is insufficiently developed.

## History

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

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

### Good features

173. In both key stages, pupils are developing a good historical vocabulary. Across the school, all pupils benefit well from the wide range of good quality artefacts available and also from their visits to the Priory and other local places of historical interest.
174. Younger pupils in key stage 1 show good recall of the causes of the Great Fire of London, and what the conditions were that made it spread so rapidly. Their creative skills are good when constructing houses from that period in history. Most pupils can talk confidently and accurately about their feelings and concerns when they then witness their own model houses burning on the school yard. They are very well aware of health and safety issues during their experiments.
175. Most key stage 2 pupils relate with accuracy their thrilling experiences for example, when they visited The Priory to talk to Brother Jacque about medieval medicine. There are very good Power Point presentations from some pupils about the visit. All pupils listen avidly to each other during this session. Later, they are enthralled when they handle very good quality artefacts of medieval potions and other reproductions loaned by Brother Jacque. They are careful and systematic as they consider their uses and record them. Their questioning and sharing of views and opinions demonstrates a high level of understanding of the changes in history over time.

### Shortcomings

176. There are no important shortcomings.

## Geography

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

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

### Good features:

177. Pupils in both key stages show good knowledge and understanding of sustainable development. They re-use, recycle and regenerate as they show how important it is to care for the environment. Most pupils know how to locate places well using maps and many understand the impact humans can have on the local and global environment.
178. In key stage 1, there is a good level of understanding shown about India as pupils locate the country on the globe. A parent from India talks to the group about her country's climate, dress and culture. All pupils are eager to learn and show great excitement and many ask pertinent questions. All pupils have

the opportunity to try on exquisite Indian clothes and research well using the internet. Most pupils listen and learn well. A few are over excited but quickly re-engage as they work together in pairs and groups.

179. Most younger pupils in key stage 2 use geographical vocabulary well to identify locations using atlases. They discuss and decide where to go on holiday by accurately matching up their preferences from holiday brochures. There is animated self-assessment at the end of the session, as they compare and contrast how well they have chosen their ideal destinations.
180. Older pupils in key stage 2 are very aware of the importance of sustainability by classifying materials. In a lively, collaborative session, they sort and order different types of waste materials carefully. They show very good understanding of the negative impact of certain materials on our environment. Most pupils can select and record well, knowing that their opinions are valid. They assess their work individually and in groups, showing very good collaboration skills and good insight into their findings.

### **Shortcomings**

181. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Physical education</b>
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**Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

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

### **Good features**

182. In both key stages, all pupils know that warming up and cooling down is very important. They also show very good behaviour when moving to and from activities, either in the school or when walking to and from the leisure centre for swimming.
183. Younger pupils in key stage 1 use very good sequencing of movement as they choreograph and sequence a short dance using robotic movements. Most pupils can evaluate their work well, using appropriate adjectives. They enjoy their dance session and listen carefully to the music, alternating their attentiveness with exuberant displays of dancing.
184. Older pupils in key stage 1 explore movements as they respond imaginatively to Stravinsky's music; The Fire bird. There are good links with the work they are doing in history which inspire some pupils to re-create fire and flames well, using their arms and bodies as they move.
185. Key stage 2 pupils show very good swimming skills at a session in the local leisure centre. Pupils range from learners to competent swimmers. All pupils demonstrate very good listening skills as they await instructions from highly competent staff. Most pupils make very good progress in this session, ranging from floating and kicking to using effective front and back crawl. They end the session full of enthusiasm and eager to discuss their successes. Many have

achieved good accreditation during the course of their sessions. School records indicate that the vast majority of pupils swim 25 metres unaided, competently and safely by age 11.

186. In gymnastics and dance, key stage 2, pupils show imaginative ways of moving and can balance well, individually and in pairs. Most pupils co-operate well with partners and in groups. They show good interpretation skills and listen well to directions. Most use appropriate vocabulary to describe their movements, such as *symmetrical* and *balance*. It is evident that the majority of pupils enjoy their sessions and many talk about how they value their improved levels of fitness and agility.

### **Shortcomings**

187. There are no important shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection


The staff and governors of Our Lady & St Michael's School are delighted with the inspection report and that it recognises that Our Lady and St Michael's is a good school with many strengths. We are also particularly pleased that there has been improvement in many aspects of school life.

We are very proud that all pupils succeed and that the school is an outstanding example of an inclusive community. We appreciate the description of our provision for pupils with additional learning needs as outstanding. The Rockets group has had a significant effect and is a notable success.

The overall good grades received recognise the strong commitment, professionalism and hard work of all stakeholders in the school.

The Head teacher, staff and governors greatly appreciate the very professional and courteous way in which the Inspection Team carried out such a thorough audit of the school. Their opinions are valued and the recommendations will be embraced into the school Improvement Action Plan. A summary of the plan will be shared with parents and progress will be reported annually in the Annual Governors' report to parents.

All at this school are committed to building and sustaining success for all our pupils.



## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Our Lady & St Michael's RC School
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	4-11
Address of school	14, Pen-y-Pound, Abergavenny Monmouthshire
Postcode	NP7 5UD
Telephone number	01873 735080

Head teacher	Mr John Healy
Date of appointment	January 1992
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr A Campbell
Registered inspector	Goronwy Morris
Dates of inspection	9.02.09 – 11.02.09

## 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	N/A	20	33	25	25	49	36	26	214

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	4	9

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	N/A
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27:1
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	N/A	93.9	93.8
Summer 2008	N/A	91.7	93.7
Autumn 2008	N/A	91.8	93.9

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	6%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	2

## Appendix 3

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:		25		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	12	76	12
		National	0.2	3.5	13.8	63.0	19.4
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	4	12	76	12
		National	0.2	4.8	14.9	55.2	25.5
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	12	76	12
		National	0.2	4.8	15.9	67.8	11.3
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	88	8
		National	0.2	2.4	10.7	62.8	23.8
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	8	72	20
		National	0.2	2.0	10.9	65.2	21.6
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	76	20
		National	0.2	1.6	8.5	66.3	23.4

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

In the school	80%	In Wales	80.7%
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- D Pupils who are disapplied under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum (0.1% of pupils were also not awarded a level for other reasons)
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

N.B. The general expectation is that the majority of 7 year olds will attain level 2.

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y6:		33				
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0	0	6	58	33
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0	0	9	39	48
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	3	0	0	0	6	45	45
		National	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

#### Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment

In the school	85%
In Wales	75.5%

- D Pupils who are disapplied under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum (0.1% of pupils were also not awarded a level for other reasons)
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

N.B. The general expectation is that the majority of 11 year olds will attain level 4.

## Appendix 4

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

Four inspectors spent 10 inspection days at the school. The head teacher attended team meetings and acted as nominee on the inspection team.

The inspectors visited:

- 30 lessons or parts of lessons;
- every class; and
- daily acts of collective worship.

Members of the team met as a team at the start of the inspection and with:

- members of staff, governors and parents prior to the inspection; and
- the head teacher, teachers, support staff, the school council and groups of pupils during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-assessment report;
- 58 responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation prepared by the school prior to and during the inspection; and
- a wide range of pupils' previous and present work.

After the inspection, meetings were held with members of staff and governors.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Members	Responsibilities	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr.Goronwy Morris Registered Inspector	Context Summary and Recommendations Key questions 1, 5 and 6	Mathematics Information and Communication Technology
Mr Ted Tipper Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7	
Mrs Sue Parsons Team Member	Key question 2 and 7; and contributions to Key Question 1	Foundation Phase
Mrs Colette Gribble Team Inspector	Key question 3 and 4; and contributions to Key Question 1	History Geography Physical Education
Mr John Healy Nominee	Contributions to all questions by providing information.	

#### Contractor

Evenlode Education Ltd  
Little Garth  
St John's Close  
Hawarden  
Flintshire  
CH5 3QJ

#### Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank, the governors, the head teacher, the staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation during the inspection.