

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

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

**Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School  
Maes y Garn Road  
Oakdale  
Blackwood  
Caerphilly  
NP12 0NA**

**School Number: 6762392**

**Date of Inspection: 14 April 2008**

**by**

**Robert Stuart Wormleighton  
12572**

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Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary 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 Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary took place between 14/04/08 and 17/04/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Robert Stuart Wormleighton undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **full** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School is a new school established in September 2006, following the amalgamation of Oakdale Infant School and Rhiw Syr Dafydd Junior School. The head teachers of both these schools retired and the current head teacher was appointed on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2006. The current deputy head teacher, who had previously been deputy head of the infant school, was appointed in April 2007. Due to delays and problems with the construction of the new school it was eventually opened on the Oakdale site in September 2007.
2. The school serves the Village of Oakdale and surrounding area, although over fourteen per cent attend from outside the school's catchment area. The area has developed considerably in the last five years and continues to grow. Many families have moved into the area from other areas of Wales and from England. The school is over subscribed and a new classroom is to be built.
3. Although the catchment is fringed by areas of social disadvantage, employment is currently high and the area is described by the school as being not socially disadvantaged. Nine percent of pupils have an entitlement to free school meals, which is below the Local Education Authority (LEA) average of 21 percent and the national average of 17.5 per cent.
4. Pupils' attainment on entry covers a wide range of abilities. Ninety-nine per cent of pupils come from English speaking homes and less than one per cent has Welsh as their first language. No pupils are learning English as an additional language. Fifteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. This figure is below the LEA average.
5. The school caters for pupils age three to eleven and admits pupils at the beginning of the term after their third birthday. Currently the school has 490 pupils on role plus forty-five nursery children who attend on a part-time basis in the morning and forty-one pupils who attend in the afternoon.
6. The new school is awaiting accreditation for the Basic Skills Agency's Award, the previous infant and junior schools having been awarded it on three occasions. The school has also received the Health Promoting Schools' Award and the Eco-schools' Silver Award.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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7. SCHOOL VISION / MISSION STATEMENT

We are

Respectful of everybody and everything

Sharing our knowledge and understanding throughout the community

Determined to make a difference

Passionate about life long learning

Saying 'YES TO SUCCESS'

Summary of Targets outlined in the School Improvement Plan

8. The school plans to:

- Complete the amalgamation of the two schools on one site.
- Prepare for the introduction of the Foundation Phase of education.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Continue to improve the Special Educational Needs provision throughout the school; and
- Improve community links.

## Summary

9. Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School is a good school overall, although it has outstanding features in certain aspects of how it cares for, guides and supports its pupils, the behaviour of its pupils and the good working relationships engendered between adults and pupils.
10. Although the school was established in September 2006 due to delays and problems with the construction of the new school it was only opened on the Oakdale site in September 2007, two terms ago.
11. The school has made very good progress since the amalgamation of the infants and junior schools in creating a primary school ethos and introducing appropriate structures for the further development and improvement of the school.

### 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 2
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	Grade 2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	Grade 3
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	Grade 2

### Standards

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

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	2	2
Welsh second language	2	4
Mathematics	2	2
Science	2	2
Information technology	2	2
Design technology	2	3
History	2	2
Geography	2	2
Art	2	2
Music	3	3
Physical education	2	2
Religious education	2	2

12. During the inspection, standards of achievement in the lessons observed were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	79%	8%	4%	0%

13. These figures are above those identified in the most recent Chief Inspector of Schools Annual Report where standards are good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 80 per cent of lessons. But are just below the targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government in its publication 'Vision into Action', that state that by 2010 the quality of learning assessed by Estyn should be grade 3 or better in 98 per cent of classes.
14. The assessment of pupils in the nursery shows that children's attainment is in line with the expected LEA and national averages. They make good progress and assessment in the reception classes indicates that overall children are scoring well above local and national averages. 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 Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children's Learning.
15. All pupils make good progress in both key stages and pupils with additional learning needs, including those with SEN are well supported. The statutory targets set for pupils are realistic and are mostly met by pupils.
16. Throughout the school skills of speaking and listening are good. Pupils' reading and writing skills are developing well and standards of numeracy and information and communication skills are also good. Although pupils' bilingual skills are developing well with the under-fives and in key stage 1, overall achievement in key stage 2 has shortcomings in important areas.
17. End of key stage 1 statutory assessment results in the core subjects in 2007 were above the national average in English and well above the average for mathematics and science.

18. Statutory assessment results at the end of key stage 2 in 2007 were well above the national average in all three core subjects.
19. An analysis of the rolling averages for this year and those years just prior to amalgamation indicates that the school is achieving good standards in both key stages.
20. Overall most pupils make good and sometimes very good progress towards fulfilling their potential within individual lessons and throughout each term and year. Although pupils' own awareness of how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve is limited.
21. A strength of the pupils' learning is the effectiveness of 'The Critical Skills Programme' which is reflected in their personal and social education skills. This prepares them well for their future learning.
22. Attendance, at 94.5 per cent, exceeds the local and Welsh national averages and the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target for primary schools.
23. The behaviour of pupils is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils develop self-esteem and confidence and are learning to collaborate well. They are developing a strong moral sense and increasingly take responsibility for their own actions. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, enjoy coming to school and benefit from its warm, friendly ethos.
24. Throughout the school, pupils' understanding of equal opportunity issues are good. They respect diversity within society. Pupils' understanding of their place in the community and of the working world is good.

## **The quality of education and training**

### **Grades for teaching**

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
13%	77%	8%	2%	0%

25. Where lessons have outstanding features, these include clarity of explanations, very good quality of questioning techniques and purposeful use of a variety of effective teaching strategies including the well planned use of ICT.
26. Where teaching is good, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning, activities are well matched to the abilities of the pupils, planning is thorough and takes account of the needs of individuals and lessons have clear learning objectives that systematically develop pupils' skills and understanding.
27. Where teaching has shortcomings, there is insufficient challenge in the work set for higher achieving pupils and time limits are not always appropriate for the completion of work.

28. The quality of assessment in Early Years is thorough and effective. In key stage 1 and 2 much of the school's work in assessing pupils' progress and using the information to improve learning is at an early stage of development. Staff are starting to use assessment information to support pupils and are beginning to encourage pupils to become more aware of their targets and how they can improve their work.
29. Annual reports are variable in content and style but meet statutory requirements and give useful information about pupils' progress.
30. The school's vision of "Creating a happy and productive community of learners" is well reflected in the work of the school. The curriculum meets pupils' needs and interests well, although some subjects currently lack continuity and progression, overall it is broad and balanced. It is accessible to all pupils, and meets all the legal and course requirements of the National Curriculum.
31. Pupils irrespective of their social background or gender are positively included in all appropriate school activities. This is a strength of the school.
32. Pupils in the early years have access to a wide spectrum of well planned activities both indoors and outdoors, practices that are enabling the school to work positively towards the Foundation Phase.
33. A particularly effective element in the curriculum is the provision for out-of-school activities and visits to places of educational interest. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Spirituality is developed during assemblies and during certain aspects of many curriculum areas. The school actively promotes pupils' cultural development and appropriate attention is given to the '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*'.
34. Arrangements for pupils' Personal and Social Education are good and are enriched by very effective partnerships with the whole community. Work related education is good. Under-fives learn about work and work-related activities enhance projects for older pupils.
35. Pupils have a wide range of abilities and backgrounds. The school actively pursues and enthusiastically promotes equal opportunities and challenges stereotyping. Every pupil is treated as an individual and encouraged to participate fully in all activities.
36. Promotion of sustainable development receives a high profile throughout the school. Eco-committees are effective and pupils clearly understand the need for recycling. Promotion of global citizenship and their understanding of multiculturalism are developing well through assemblies, visitors to the school, international charities and links with schools in Palestine and Africa.
37. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are developing well for example through the school's Healthy Tuck Shop. Pupils' learning experiences enable them to

achieve very positive attitudes to a range of life long learning skills and ease their transition to the next stage of their education.

38. The school has very clear procedures to ensure the arrangements for providing care for its pupils are planned and managed well. Pupils, from across the school, are highly appreciative of the way adults within the school care for them.
39. The school works very well with parents and carers in providing personal support and guidance for their children. The arrangements for supporting pupils when they join the school are outstanding. A good transition plan has been introduced to ensure appropriate links are in place for pupils who transfer to the local high school.
40. The school treats its responsibility for assuring the healthy development, safety and well being of its pupils very seriously. Pupils are taught the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle.
41. The provision for learners with additional learning needs is good. The school is committed to early identification and support for pupils. SEN staff liaise effectively with class teachers and support staff to ensure the learning programmes for pupils are well supported.
42. The school has very clear procedures for ensuring its pupils recognise and respect the diverse nature of society and does much to promote racial tolerance. An outstanding feature is the way in which pupils with disabilities are included in school.

### **Leadership and management**

43. The head teacher has provided clear leadership and direction as he has led the school through the challenging process of amalgamation and the building of the new school. He is well supported by the newly appointed deputy head and the senior management team. There is a good structure in place for communication and liaison within all areas of the school and much has been achieved to create a one-school ethos.
44. The school has responded well to the Welsh Assembly Government initiatives and priorities, although progress to meet WAG's targets for Welsh language development is uneven.
45. The governors are supportive and know the school and its community well. They have overseen the amalgamation of the two schools, and have been effective in resolving many of the difficulties that followed. They are well led and bring a valuable range of skills to the school and fulfil their statutory duties well.
46. Although self-evaluation processes are at an early stage of development the self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection is good overall.

47. Generally the head teacher, governors and senior management team, have a good overview of the school. However, subject leaders and senior managers need opportunities to monitor a broader range of school practices.
48. Since amalgamating, there have been many positive examples of school self-evaluation and the school is beginning to implement effective strategies to raise standards linked to the school improvement plan. Because of the changed nature of the school, it is not possible to judge the overall progress since the time of the previous inspections.
49. There are a sufficient number of well qualified teachers and support staff to provide for the educational needs of all pupils and they are well deployed. Teachers have a good range of specialist skills to deliver the curriculum.
50. There are good links between budget spending and priority areas identified in the school development plan. The school is aware of some shortcomings in resources however in nearly all areas the school has a good level of learning resources to meet the needs of its pupils and uses them effectively.
51. Indoor accommodation is very spacious and the school grounds when completed will provide a very stimulating learning and play environment for all pupils. The school manage finances effectively and provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

- R1 To continue to improve pupils' standards of bi-lingualism and ensure that strategies are developed whereby continuity and progression in the teaching of Welsh will lead to the raising of standards in the subject.
- R2 Address the areas of shortcomings identified in other subject areas.
- R3 Further reform assessment recording and reporting systems to assist planning and improve pupils' learning.
- R4 Further extend the school's procedures to evaluate and improve standards through the further development of the roles of the subject leaders and the senior management team.

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

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

#### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	79%	8%	4%	0%

53. These figures are above those identified in the most recent Chief Inspector of Schools Annual Report where standards are good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 80 per cent of lessons. But are just below the targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government in its publication 'Vision into Action', that state that by 2010 the quality of learning assessed by Estyn should be grade 3 or better in 98 per cent of classes.
54. The assessment of children when they start nursery shows that their attainment is in line with the expected LEA and national averages. Improvement is evident in all areas of children's performance, and they make good progress. Assessment data in the reception classes indicates that overall children are scoring well above the LEA and national averages. 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 Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children's Learning. By the end of the reception year children are well adjusted to school life, settle quickly to tasks and work hard with good levels of concentration.
55. For children aged under five, standards in the areas of learning inspected are as follows:

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

56. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

<b>Inspection Area</b>	<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>Key Stage 2</b>
English	2	2
Welsh second language	2	4
Mathematics	2	2
Science	2	2
Information technology	2	2
Design technology	2	3
History	2	2
Geography	2	2
Art	2	2
Music	3	3
Physical education	2	2
Religious education	2	2

57. All pupils make good progress as they move through key stage 1 and key stage 2, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. Pupils with additional learning needs, including those with SEN, make good progress. The statutory targets set for pupils are realistic, but challenging, are based on the good knowledge of the pupils' abilities and needs, and are mostly met by pupils.
58. Throughout the school good features outweigh the shortcomings in pupils' achievement in key skills. Communication skills of speaking and listening are good. Pupils listen attentively and express themselves with increasing confidence. Pupils' reading and writing skills are developing well and are used to good effect across the curriculum. The development of numeracy and information and communication skills, in different subject areas and learning situations, is also good, especially with the older pupils in key stage 2. However although pupils' bilingual skills are developing well with the under-fives and in key stage 1, overall achievement in key stage 2 has shortcomings in important areas.
59. Statutory assessment results in the core subjects at the end of key stage 1 in 2007 were above the national average for English and well above the national average for mathematics and science. The Core Subject Indicator (the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 in each core subject) of 86 per cent, for 2007, was above the national average of 81 per cent.
60. When compared with similar schools (those with approximately the same percentage entitled to receive free school meals), the 2007 key stage 1 results were just in the bottom 50 per cent for English and in the top 50 per cent for mathematics and science.
61. At the end of key stage 2 in 2007 statutory assessment results were well above the national average in all three core subjects. The Core Subject Indicator (the percentage of pupils reaching level 4 in each core subject) of 86 per cent, was well above the national average of 74 per cent.

62. When the key stage 2 results are compared with those in schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to receive free school meals the school was in the top 25 per cent for English and mathematics and within the top 50 per cent for science.
63. An analysis of the rolling averages for this year and those years just prior to amalgamation indicates that the school is achieving good standards in both key stages. Currently there is no discernible pattern in the variation of the performance of boys or girls at either key stage.
64. Pupils acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills, both within their individual lessons and over time, throughout each term and year. Even though there are shortcomings in certain subjects, overall most pupils make good and sometimes very good progress towards fulfilling their potential.
65. Pupils' own awareness of how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve is limited. However pupils are becoming increasingly involved in evaluating their own work and the work of others. They are beginning to analyse their own performance in both key stages and are becoming more aware of what they need to do to improve their learning, although the process is still developing.
66. A strength of the pupils' learning is the effectiveness of 'The Critical Skills Programme' which is reflected in their personal and social education skills, their problem solving skills, their ability to work with increasing independence and their team and collaborative work. Throughout the school, pupils have a very clear understanding of their role within the team, such as scribe or manager, allowing them to work efficiently. This prepares them well for their future learning.
67. Attendance, at 94.5 per cent, exceeds the local and Welsh national averages and the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target for primary schools. Most pupils arrive punctually at the beginning of the school day and the school is working closely with the families of the very few who have difficulty in doing so.
68. The behaviour of pupils is an outstanding feature of the school. They move around the school in a very quiet and orderly fashion and behaviour in assemblies, where they are highly attentive throughout, is exemplary. At playtimes, pupils play together extremely co-operatively, especially on the sanded play area. In nearly all lessons they are extremely well behaved. The number of incidents requiring follow-up by the head teacher, or his deputy, is very low for a school of this size.
69. Through effective strategies such as 'Golden Time', pupils develop their self-esteem and confidence and are learning how to collaborate well. They feel they have a voice within the school, take their responsibilities seriously and show a commitment to their roles. They are developing a strong moral sense and increasingly take responsibility for their own actions as they progress through the school. This development is evident as they become involved

with the school council, The Eco Schools Club, the Healthy Schools Club, and through participation in the community projects.

70. The pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective. They enjoy coming to school and benefit from its warm, friendly ethos. The staff are good role models and relationships are good. Pupils have a strong feeling of belonging to a happy orderly community where learning can thrive and this is also acknowledged by the parents.
71. Throughout the school pupils' understanding of equal opportunity issues are good. They recognise, understand and respect diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within society. The school has recently forged links with a school for blind pupils in Palestine.
72. Pupils' understanding of their place in the community and of the working world is good with no important shortcomings.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

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

74. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
13%	77%	8%	2%	0%

75. This is above the figures identified in the most recent Chief Inspector of Schools Annual Report where the quality of teaching is good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 79 per cent of lessons, but it is below the figure of 17 per cent reported for the quality of teaching that is outstanding (grade 1) in lessons. The figures are also above the 2010 targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government for 80 per cent of lessons to be grade 2 or better.

76. Teaching in the Early Years is good and sometimes very good. A wide variety of activities are planned which are closely linked to the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

77. The working relationships within classes between the adults and pupils is an outstanding feature. Teachers provide good and sometimes excellent role models for pupils and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect in almost all lessons which encourages pupils to want to succeed. Consistent use of praise and encouragement helps to raise pupils' self esteem and makes a significant contribution to their confidence, progress and achievement. All pupils are treated equally, irrespective of their race, gender or disability.

78. In the majority of lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils, there is an appropriate level of challenge in the tasks provided and activities are well matched to the abilities of the pupils. However, where there are shortcomings, tasks are less well matched to the interest and understanding of the pupils, and time limits are not always appropriate for completion of work.

79. Planning is thorough and is undertaken in teams across parallel classes so that pupils of similar ages have access to common experiences. Lessons are planned with clear learning objectives, which are explained to pupils at the start of each lesson. Where there is best practice, lessons systematically develop pupils' skills and understanding in well sequenced steps. Planning takes account of the needs of individual pupils including those with additional learning needs, however on some occasions there is insufficient challenge in the work set for higher achieving pupils.

80. Interactive white boards are used skilfully and confidently by staff to enhance the quality of introductions to lessons and to motivate pupils. Where lessons are identified as having outstanding features, these include the clarity of explanations, the good quality of questioning techniques and the purposeful use of a variety of effective teaching strategies including the use of ICT.
81. The teaching of bilingual skills in key stage 1 is good and teachers make every effort to include incidental Welsh throughout the day. In key stage 2 it is inconsistent. Where there is good practice, this is reflected in the good standards, however infrequent practice impairs progress. Opportunities for pupils to use Welsh in informal situations throughout the school day are often lost.
82. Teachers have good and often very good subject knowledge and are familiar with recent developments in primary education due to a comprehensive training programme. The school has adopted 'Critical Skills' strategies into its daily teaching and encourages pupils to work collaboratively in a range of groupings, to share experiences and to solve problem based challenges. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning, but the school's analysis of its overall effectiveness on standards is at an early stage of development.
83. Teaching assistants and learning support assistants are generally effective in their roles and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. The majority are capable and knowledgeable and make a significant impact on pupils' achievements and well-being. They are deployed effectively across the school.
84. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress and has worked hard to move forward from the different assessment systems in operation prior to amalgamation to a cohesive assessment framework for the new school. The quality of assessment in Early Years is thorough and effective and enables teachers to plan effectively and meet the needs of all. In key stages one and two the new systems and procedures have good features which outweigh shortcomings.
85. Much of the school's work in assessing pupils' progress and using the information to improve learning is at an early stage of development. New initiatives such as the electronic system for tracking individual pupils' progress are now in place but have not yet had time to affect provision within the school. Staff are starting to use and analyse assessment information to support pupils' progress and target setting but again this is at an early stage of development.
86. The school systematically implements a range of standardised tests mainly in English and mathematics, and arrangements to formally assess attainment in these subjects are good. Assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding in the foundation subjects is less well developed and although portfolios of work are in place for most subjects, they do not all contain levelled examples of work and are less useful in helping teachers to identify the standards expected at each National Curriculum level. In the Early Years, staff are

developing an assessment structure based on skill development, but again this is at an early stage of development.

87. The school is actively involved in the LEA's arrangements for the moderating of standards through its Voyager system. Catchment initiatives to develop assessment portfolios to moderate standards within the catchment area are developing.
88. Pupils in each class have individual targets but these vary greatly in their usefulness. Many are too imprecise to have an effect on learning, and generally practice within the school regarding pupils' involvement in identifying and evaluating their own targets is at an early stage and is often inconsistent.
89. Marking varies widely within the school. Where there is good practice, comments enable pupils to move forward with their learning and to consider the next step but often, comments refer to completion of work or to encouragement.
90. End of year written reports comply with statutory requirements and give useful information about progress in individual subjects. However the reports sent out at the end of the first year of amalgamation showed inconsistent practice in report writing across the school and varied practice in the use of including targets and general comments.

**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**

91. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
92. The school's vision of 'Creating a happy and productive community of learners' reflects in the work of the school well. All pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities, receive equal access to the curriculum, which meets the statutory requirements. Pupils irrespective of their social background or gender are positively included in all appropriate school activities. This is a strength of the school.
93. Pupils in the early years have access to a wide spectrum of well planned activities which ensure continuity and progression in their learning, across the six areas of the curriculum.
94. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Children enjoy a good range of experiences both indoors and outdoors, that are enabling the school to work positively towards the forthcoming Foundation Phase.

95. All schemes of work are under review following amalgamation. Not all of the schemes of work have yet been fully implemented. However, where these are established in both key stages they are beginning to offer effective guidance for teachers to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning. However, this is not the case in all subjects, in particular Welsh, design and technology and music.
96. Learning experiences are generally coherent, productive and show good progression. However, due to timetabling arrangements, on occasions activities, particularly for the older pupils in English and mathematics, are interrupted by playtime and activities in other subjects. As a result, pupils sometimes become less involved, can lose concentration and some lessons become less productive.
97. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils' provision for the development of the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) across the curriculum is good. The development of bilingual skills is good in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, there are some good features, but there are shortcomings in important areas. Both infant and junior schools gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the new school is awaiting reaccreditation.
98. The school has moved forward in the development of critical skills since adopting "The Critical Skills Programme". This programme is reflected in most teachers' planning for personal and social education skills, problem solving skills, and for skills whilst working with others.
99. A particularly effective element in the curriculum is the provision for out-of-school activities and the enrichment of the curriculum by a very good range of clubs, cultural and sporting activities. In addition the curriculum is considerably enriched by visits to places of educational interest, including historical and industrial sites and local buildings. All pupils have access to a wide range of activities and the take up is high. Pupils in years 5 and 6 have opportunities to take part in residential visits to Llangrannog and Ynys Hywel. Overall this is an outstanding feature.
100. The curriculum is further enhanced by music lessons for pupils provided by peripatetic teachers of violin, brass and flute. The school has a small choir. Pupils take part in sporting fixtures and musical activities arranged by the local cluster of schools.
101. The school promotes pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school has strong links with the local clergy of differing denominations and representatives of other religions. Spirituality is developed during assemblies and during certain aspects of English and many lessons across the curriculum. The school provides pupils with a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to behave as responsible members of their local community and of the wider world. Collective worship takes place daily. A whole school weekly service is

used appropriately to celebrate pupils' achievements and raise their self-esteem.

102. The school actively promotes pupils' cultural development. Appropriate attention is given to the '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*' at both key stages. Pupils are given opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of the traditions, culture and history of Wales. Pupils visit places of interest and celebrate St David's Day with the 'Eisteddfod' being a notable feature. Pupils gain a good understanding of the cultures' of others especially through studies in history, geography, art and music.
103. Arrangements for pupils' Personal and Social Education, including health and sex education are good in both key stages. The school runs an effective Healthy Schools Club. The school provides many good opportunities for pupils from reception to year 6 to learn to take responsibilities and make decisions when representing their peers on the School Council or when submitting ideas to it. Year 6 pupils sensibly carry out their roles as school prefects and are actively involved with a variety of tasks where they have responsibilities to carry out.
104. The school is enriched by very effective partnerships with parents, the cluster group, the Church and the whole community. A weekly newsletter is provided for parents. Visiting speakers enhance several aspects of the curriculum. Excellent links exist with the comprehensive school, which promote curriculum initiatives and continuity between phases.
105. Work related education is good. Under-fives learn about work through a range of well organised role play activities and through visitors such as the crossing patrol officer who share their experiences. Work related activities enhance curriculum, projects for older pupils, for example, during 'Industry Week in School', through links to a local building company and through the establishment of the Newspaper Club and a Media Club which has successfully marketed a selection of school activities in DVD form. Resources and sports equipment have been purchased with donations from local businesses.
106. Pupils at the school have a wide range of abilities and backgrounds. The school actively pursues and enthusiastically promotes equality of access, equal opportunities and challenges stereotyping. Policies for equal opportunity and racial equality are consistently and sensitively implemented and fully meet statutory requirements. Good links with external agencies help support any socially disadvantaged pupils. Every pupil is treated as an individual and encouraged to participate fully in all activities provided by the school. A Register of More Able and Talented pupils has recently been introduced.
107. Promotion of sustainable development and environment issues receives a high profile throughout the school. There is an influential Eco Schools Club, pupils clearly understand the need for recycling and operate a wide variety of recycling systems. Promotion of global citizenship is also developing well

through, pupils' enthusiastic response to international charities and their keen understanding of multiculturalism.

108. Pupils' entrepreneurial skills are developing well with pupils, particularly in year 6, involved in several initiatives and raising funds for school and charities including the running of the school's Healthy Tuck Shop which is extremely popular with most pupils, selling a range of fruit at realistic prices through the medium of Welsh.
109. Pupils' learning experiences enable them to achieve very positive attitudes to a range of life long learning skills and ease their transition to the next stage of their education. They are given the opportunity to work individually and to collaborate very well in pairs and small groups, helping and supporting each other. This prepares them well for living in a community.

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

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

110. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
111. The school has very clear procedures to ensure the arrangements for providing care for its pupils are planned and managed well, this is an outstanding feature. At the weekly team meetings, staff discuss 'pupils causing concern' and thorough action plans are agreed and followed through. During the inspection, several instances of impromptu acts of personal support given by all staff, including support and administrative, were witnessed. In discussions with pupils, from across the school, they were highly appreciative of the way adults within the school care for them.
112. The school works very well with parents and carers in providing personal support and guidance for their children. The responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and at the parents' meeting, show that nearly all are appreciative of this. Parents are encouraged to express their views on the support that their children receive.
113. The overall arrangements for supporting pupils when they join the school are outstanding. Parents and their children are provided with a high standard of written information prior to joining the classes. The children also have opportunities to visit the school to acclimatise themselves while staff talk with their parents. Extreme care is taken to ensure a smooth transition between the infant and junior sections of the school with year 2 pupils visiting year 3 classes where they are given 'buddies'. A good transition plan has been introduced to ensure appropriate links are in place for pupils who transfer to the local high school. There is also a clear process for enabling pupils who join during the school year to settle in quickly which are appreciated by those involved.

114. The school very effectively identifies the needs of particular pupils at the weekly team meetings. The needs of individual pupils are also well known to their class teachers. The system for sharing this information with colleagues is in its infancy but a computerised system is being introduced to track pupils' personal development throughout the school. Appropriate use is made of specialist agencies, such as the health and psychological services, to help those pupils who require such professional assistance.
115. There are good systems in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality and following up with the families of pupils causing concern, in liaison with the education welfare officer. Behaviour management within the school is very good; standards of behaviour are outstanding and have a positive impact on the achievement of pupils. The few instances of any inappropriate behaviour are promptly and effectively dealt with.
116. The school treats its responsibility for assuring the healthy development, safety and well being of its pupils very seriously. It has a very good system of regular safety audits of the buildings and grounds, which are well recorded and prompt action is taken to resolve concerns identified. It also carries out risk assessments for activities within the school, and educational visits, and has appropriate first aid arrangements.
117. Pupils are taught the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle in their science and Personal and Social Education lessons. Year 6 pupils run a well supported fruit tuck shop during break times and all pupils are encouraged to drink water during the day with the provision of water fountains. The wide range of extra curricular sporting activities promotes the importance of regular exercise. In recognition of the efforts being made, the school has achieved Phase 1 of the Healthy Schools Award. The democratically elected School Council's views and decisions are respected and they are involved in the life of the school.
118. The head teacher is the designated senior member of staff with responsibility for child protection who is fully trained, as is his deputy who is also the SENCo. He administers a system in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government and LEA guidelines. While all staff receive awareness training, the head teacher is conscious that this could be carried out on a more regular basis.
119. The provision for learners with additional learning needs is good with no important shortcomings and the school fully complies with the current Code of Practice for SEN. The school welcomes pupils with a range of learning needs and disabilities and these pupils are effectively integrated into their classes and the life and work of the school.
120. The school is committed to early identification and support for pupils with additional needs and uses information from the Health Visitor, playgroups and baseline assessment to establish need and highlight problems at the start of a pupil's school career. An additional SENCo for Early Years ensures that the

needs of younger pupils are met and every effort is made to develop links with parents and carers.

121. Detailed information on pupils is gathered from teachers' day to day assessments and from a wide range of standardised tests. The school works closely with the Caerphilly Council Inclusion Services and a joint planned programme of support is discussed annually and put into place by the SENCo and head teacher. There is regular liaison with the Educational Psychologist, Inclusion teacher, SEN support teacher and other appropriate outside agencies. Within the school, SEN staff liaise effectively with class teachers and support staff to ensure that the learning programmes for pupils with SEN are well supported.
122. Individual Education Plans are of good quality and are produced in a child friendly format. Individual Student Programmes which give more detailed information, are also in place for pupils with specific learning difficulties. The school works closely with pupils and parents to involve them in target setting and pupils make good progress towards their targets, which are reviewed regularly.
123. Support programmes are also organised for parents to give practical suggestions as to how best to help their children to succeed in literacy. A variety of specific programmes are run in the school including the Student Assistance Programme, utilising data from the Pupils' Attitude to School Survey that encourages pupils' self-esteem and initiatives such as Catch Up, to help pupils with literacy and Teaching Talking, which raises standards in speaking and listening. Pupils receiving such support achieve well and clearly benefit from the additional provision.
124. The school has an appropriate policy in place with effective sanctions and rewards to ensure that pupils whose behaviour impedes their progress make good progress and that other pupils are able to learn without interference and disruption.
125. An established School Council and a variety of Eco-committees prepare pupils to contribute formally to decision making and the fruits of their labours are clearly visible in the newly erected playground equipment. The company awarded with this contract reflected the smallest carbon footprint to the pupils.
126. The school takes careful consideration of a pupil's social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background when drawing up any individual programmes for personal and academic support and guidance. This ensures such pupils receive support appropriate to their needs and are not disadvantaged in any way.
127. The school makes no differentiation amongst its pupils in terms of gender and actively discourages stereotyping through the teaching and example shown by staff. Also, sports clubs, for example, are open to both boys and girls. Pupils questioned confirmed there was no gender discrimination in the school.

128. Despite having few pupils within the school from ethnic minorities, pupils are clearly aware of the diversity of race throughout society. The school does much to promote racial tolerance through links with overseas schools. It also encourages the sensitive discussion of situations that arise in the wider world, which receive widespread media attention. This is done in assemblies and during Personal and Social Education lessons.
129. The school experiences little in the way of oppressive behaviour such as bullying and racism. Pupils spoken to confirm that bullying is promptly dealt with and parents do not see it as a major problem. Racism has not been experienced within the school. However, its response to an incident concerning the defacement of a sign outside the school, suspected to be racially motivated, shows an appropriate system is in place.
130. The new school building has been designed to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities with many effective features such as disabled showers and toilets, a 'looped' hearing system and access to all areas. An outstanding feature is the way in which pupils in the school with a physical or mental disability are given a high level of discreet, sensitive support by staff and their fellow pupils.

## Leadership and management

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

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

131. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
132. The head teacher has provided clear leadership and direction as he has led the school through the challenging process of amalgamation and the building of the new school. He provides a framework of clear guidelines and procedures through which the school is made aware of the school's values, aims, objectives and targets. These have been developed with the school community and are becoming understood and acted upon by pupils and nearly all of those involved in providing education within the school.
133. The head teacher is well supported by the newly appointed deputy head and members of the senior management team. There is a good structure in place for communication and liaison within all areas of the school through the team leaders and the year groups they represent and manage. Much has been achieved since their appointment; however their roles are still evolving and need time and further development to be truly effective as a structure to fully promote the values aims and objectives of the newly amalgamated school.
134. Leadership and management of provision for the under fives have some outstanding features. The recently appointed subject leaders are beginning to develop an overview of their subjects. In the case of English and mathematics, for example considerable progress has been made in re-writing the policy and the schemes of work and reviewing and evaluating the subject as part of a rolling programme of subject review. All members of staff have clear guidance of their roles and have prepared interim subject leaders' rubrics to make initial evaluations of their subjects and areas of responsibilities.
135. The appraisal system and performance management procedures meet statutory requirements. Since amalgamation the process has been reviewed and training for team leaders has been carried out and evaluated under the guidance of the head teacher, providing a much more effective system linked to the school's priorities and the needs of staff. These are carried through a rigorous and comprehensive system of teachers' continuing professional development that identifies the training needs of individual staff linked to the demands of the school improvement plan.
136. The school has responded well to nearly all the Welsh Assembly Government initiatives and priorities. The school is a 'Health Promoting School' and actively and effectively promotes education for sustainability and global awareness. Managers and leaders work well in partnership with the local secondary school and its 'feeder' primary schools, as part of their transition plan. However initiatives to meet WAG's targets for Bilingualism and the

development of Welsh as a second language are underdeveloped particularly in upper key stage 2.

137. The governors know the school and its community well. The governing body is supportive of the school and is beginning to act appropriately as its 'critical friend'. They have overseen the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, and have been effective in resolving many of the management and logistical difficulties that followed, including the delayed completion of the new school premises. The school is now beginning to run smoothly as a single unit. Governors bring a wide and valuable range of practical and professional skills to the school. They are well led, and work efficiently with the head teacher in the strategic management of the school.
138. The governors aim to provide the best possible support for the school, its pupils and staff. They take a keen interest in the progress and welfare of pupils. They have a secure understanding of their responsibilities and are kept well informed by the head teacher. The role of the governors in monitoring the curriculum is a developing feature. Links exist within all subject areas and all governors are aware that further work in this area will be necessary for them to correctly determine targets for improvement.
139. The financial management of the school is an important element of the governors' work and they successfully endeavour to obtain best value for money. Governors meet regularly and their decisions are carefully recorded. They receive regular written and verbal reports from the head teacher each term. The annual report to parents is issued in the form of a 'Governors Gazette' and a meeting is arranged for parents to meet the governors and discuss its content. The school meets all statutory requirements.

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

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

140. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
141. Self-evaluation processes are at an early stage of development. Overall, the head teacher, governors and senior management team, have a good overview of the strengths and shortcomings of the school. However, more emphasis needs to be placed on providing subject leaders and senior managers opportunities to observe lessons and monitor a broader range of school practices, with findings shared together effectively to bring about improvement.
142. Since amalgamating, there have been many positive examples of school self evaluation across both key stages, these include the in depth analysis of end of key stage tests to evaluate pupil and school performance, and whole staff involvement in carefully identifying and prioritising curriculum issues that need

addressing, such as improving standards in information technology (IT) and English. Overall, the school is beginning to implement effective strategies to bring about improvement including a targeted focus on teaching and learning.

143. The relatively new governing body works carefully with the head teacher analysing the information that he prepares for them. As a result of subsequent discussions and suggestions, matters of key importance are included in subsequent plans. The current School Improvement Plan is a useful, clearly written document, which focuses on appropriate targets for improvement. The main priorities are linked directly to the information included in the self-evaluation report. The plan includes detailed actions, success criteria, time scales and resource implications. The acquisition of resources is costed and linked to the school's priorities.
144. Governors and senior managers, assisted by the finance department in the LEA, carefully allocate appropriate resources to identified priorities. For example, the decision to spend a healthy surplus budget on additional IT equipment and the appointment of additional support assistants has had a direct impact on improving provision.
145. Good progress has been made in English and IT, following the amalgamation of both schools; however changes in staff-roles and responsibilities have resulted in the role of subject leader being under developed. To date there have been insufficient opportunities for all subject leaders to evaluate standards and quality based on first hand evidence. The role currently focuses on monitoring resources and short/medium-term planning, rather than on outcomes such as standards and continuity of learning and progression.
146. The head teacher places great emphasis on seeking the views of all stakeholders. Meetings for parents to discuss the school improvement plan, budget and class organisation helped significantly to give them a clearer understanding of the decision making processes within the new primary school. The school council is a forum that allows pupils' views to be heard constructively and questionnaires sent to pupils and parents as part of the school's self-evaluation process highlight areas of satisfaction or concern. They have been very involved in the exciting playground developments and can talk about the difference this has made to their enjoyment of school life.
147. The self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection is good overall. It correctly identifies the main strengths and shortcomings of the school. It identifies a way forward and also details the evidence sources for the judgements. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report in all of the seven key questions.
148. The current inspection is the first one since the school's establishment as Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School. Significant improvements have been made and the school is beginning to move forward. Because of the changed nature of the school, it is not possible to judge the overall progress since the time of the previous inspections.

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

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

149. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
150. There are a sufficient number of well-qualified teachers and support staff to provide for the educational needs of all pupils. Workforce remodelling has provided appropriate arrangements for the reduction of teachers' workload. Staff in the main are well deployed and teachers use time to plan, prepare and assess their work constructively for most lessons and for undertaking some of their subject leadership responsibilities. As many are new to their leadership responsibilities, this area is at an embryonic stage of development.
151. The office staff provide very efficient and effective administrative support. Other staff oversee a breakfast club and after-school clubs. A healthy and nutritious lunch is provided by the catering staff. Their role is recognised as an important aspect of the daily life of the school, contributing successfully to an effective and caring community.
152. There is a developing commitment from the school to resource subjects areas annually and there are good links between budget spending and priority areas identified in the school improvement plan. The school has spent considerable funds on information and communication technology provision and this is clearly matched by pupils' overall attainment in this subject. Pupils have access to a good number of computers and the interactive whiteboards are making a positive impact on teaching and learning. However, the school is aware of some shortcomings in resources such as good quality equipment to enhance learning in design technology throughout key stage 2.
153. Indoor accommodation is very spacious and maintained to a very high standard by the care-taking staff. There are good displays throughout the school, which reflect pupils' work and are a stimulus for further teaching and learning in many classrooms. There has been a whole school involvement in the design and development of the school grounds and at present the extensive playing field and playground areas are undergoing their final transformation and will be a very valuable asset to the school in the years ahead. They will provide a very stimulating learning and play environment for all pupils.
154. The accommodation for children under five is very good with facilities and resources used imaginatively. The ease of access to the outdoors in the nursery provides children with opportunities to develop their physical development and investigate the environment.
155. Teachers have a good range of specialist skills to deliver the curriculum and provide for the needs of all the pupils. Some subject leaders, however, are not full time and find it difficult to give sufficient time to leading their subject.

Performance management outcomes and priorities in the School Development Plan ensure that teachers receive appropriate training.

156. The head teacher, bursar and governors manage finances effectively. There are appropriate mechanisms for reviewing spending and ensuring the budget is used effectively. The school provides good value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Under 5s

#### Language, literacy and communication skills

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

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

#### Good features

157. Children in nursery listen attentively for extended periods, enjoy talking about themselves and their experiences and make very good progress. They understand simple questions in Welsh and English and respond appropriately in both languages to instructions. Children enjoy listening to stories and enthusiastically join in rhymes and songs. They independently choose books from the book corner and are eager to explain the story using the picture clues. Children show an awareness that written symbols have a sound and meaning. They enjoy mark making, developing their skills in a variety of contexts both indoors and in the outside environment.

158. Children in reception have good listening skills and respond enthusiastically to questions using a wide range of vocabulary. Many children recognise initial sounds and are able to name objects beginning with that sound. A majority of the children can write their name and many use the correct letter formation. They handle books correctly and know that words and pictures carry meaning. Their phonetic and word building skills are developing well. Many children read with accuracy and a few self correct to make sense of the text.

#### Shortcomings

159. There are no important shortcomings.

#### Personal and social development

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

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

#### Outstanding features

160. Children in nursery make very good progress in developing personal and social skills. They demonstrate a high degree of independence when selecting activities and resources. Their eagerness to explore new learning both in the classroom and outdoors is an outstanding feature.

#### Good features

161. Children enter the nursery confidently and settle in quickly at the start of each session. On entry they choose an activity and happily play alongside other children and adults. Children are well behaved and many concentrate for a sustained period on a particular activity. They experiment and make choices

about the use of tools and equipment in both adult-led and independent activities.

162. During registration and snack time children in nursery wait quietly and patiently for their turn and when playing with children they demonstrate the ability to share. Children show an understanding of caring for living things carefully stroking and cuddling the puppet caterpillar. They calmly follow routines to prepare for outdoor activities and independently dress, undress and change their footwear before and after using the outdoor area. Personal hygiene skills are very good and children wash their hands regularly during the day.
163. Children in nursery and reception have a good understanding of greetings, praise and simple commands given in Welsh and many respond to adults using words or simple phrases. They are beginning to develop an awareness of other cultures through their work on Divali and the Chinese New Year.
164. Reception children behave well and respond to one another in a calm, quiet manner. Most children concentrate well and are developing the skill of perseverance to complete a task. Children are developing independent learning skills and making choices. They self register when joining a group activity, placing their name card on the board and checking the number allowed in has not been exceeded.
165. They demonstrate an understanding of the need to care for all living things when talking about the puppy that visited school and when caring for the animals in the vet's surgery. They recognise the need to wash their hands after using the toilet, after painting and before eating their fruit.

### **Shortcomings**

166. There are no important shortcomings.

### **Mathematical development**

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

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

### **Good features**

167. The children in both nursery and reception know a wide range of mathematical rhymes and songs.
168. Children in nursery confidently use mathematical vocabulary and skills in a number of different contexts. Outside they play skittles and count the number knocked down. They chant and sing a wide range of mathematical rhymes and songs developing their skills of adding and taking away. Most count up to nine in the caterpillar song and many understand the meaning of more than. Children make a good attempt to display the correct number by holding up the correct number of fingers. They are able to sort objects according to shape and colour and use money when playing in the ice cream shop.

169. The majority of reception children accurately count to 100 using the number square. Most are able to correctly say what is one more and one less and are able to point to the number before and after a given number. They are able to record their counting of numbers up to 20 and a few children record simple subtraction sums. Children confidently use mathematical language in different contexts, writing numbers on the pages of books, counting the number of pieces of fruit in the bowl to see if there is enough for everybody. Cutting up the bananas into 10 pieces, rolling the dice then eating the number rolled and then saying how many are left.
170. Children in reception are using money when playing in the shop and are beginning to develop the concept of giving change.

### **Shortcomings**

171. There are no important shortcomings.

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

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

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

### **Good features**

172. Children in nursery enjoy a range of first hand learning experiences that stimulate their interest and develop their problem solving skills. They show great interest in the outdoors and they confidently explore their immediate environment making interesting observations about the creatures they find. Their understanding of the world around them is enhanced by the use of the Forest School.
173. Children have a basic understanding of the seasons and the weather and know about suitable clothing and footwear for different weathers. They are beginning to identify healthy foods and know that animals need food to grow.
174. They show an understanding of the world of work. Following visits by the fireman, hairdresser and vet, children act out situations, draw pictures and talk confidently about the work.
175. Children in reception have a good understanding of the passing of time and most know the seasons of the year. They recognise the need to care for the environment and to treat living things with respect. Through topic work and role play they are developing an understanding of the world of work. They explore and select suitable garden materials to make houses for the Three Little Pigs.

### **Shortcomings**

176. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Physical development**

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

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

### **Outstanding Features**

177. Children in the nursery display very good control and co-ordination of their gross motor skills when using the large outdoor equipment.

### **Good features**

178. Children move confidently and demonstrate good spatial awareness both inside and outside. Children confidently ride and manoeuvre a range of wheeled vehicles demonstrating their ability to push, pull, scoot and pedal. They march and walk at different speeds with increasing control as they participate in action rhymes. Their gross motor skills are good and they demonstrate confidence and co-ordination when climbing on, crawling through and balancing on the outdoor equipment.

179. Children demonstrate good fine motor skills when handling mark making equipment, paintbrushes and scissors.

180. Children in reception further develop their manipulative skills handling small tools with increasing control and co-ordination. They move their bodies confidently and demonstrate good control and co-ordination when performing the Dragon Dance.

### **Shortcomings**

181. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Creative development**

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

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

### **Good features**

182. Children in the nursery and reception achieve good standards and progress in their creative activities. They enthusiastically sing a wide range of songs in Welsh and English. In nursery they experiment with un-tuned instruments, both in and outside the classroom, working happily together to make a simple musical piece. Reception children demonstrate a good awareness of rhythm when performing action songs and an understanding of loud and soft when singing a prayer and an action song.

183. Children make choices about colour and medium. They select from a range of materials to create individual pieces of work using the skills of cutting and sticking and freely paint and experiment with colour.

### **Shortcomings**

184. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>English</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**

185. Speaking and listening skills are good throughout key stage one. Year 2 pupils are keen to answer; they speak confidently and clearly and sensibly explain what they are doing.
186. In key stage 1, pupils' basic language skills are developing well. There are good standards of achievement. Less able pupils achieve well at their own level and many more able pupils extend their skills appropriately. Year 1 pupils correctly identify and sort vowel sounds, place them in sets and match them to pictures and words. They identify real words developing a good knowledge of basic sounds and phonic blends.
187. Younger pupils in key stage 1 are developing a good knowledge of basic phonics and sounds. They recognise differences between spelling patterns and sounds and read aloud from Big Books with reasonable fluency. Pupils express themselves confidently and identify and show a good awareness of simple and more complicated rhyming words.
188. Pupils read simple sentences accurately, sequence sentences placing them in the correct order to show understanding of the story. More able write stories in their own words. Some read, edit and correct their writing identifying mistakes. The majority have a good recall of stories they have created and those that have been read to them in English and in other areas of study such as religious education.
189. Older pupils in key stage one are aware of the features of good hand writing they have good standards of letter formation and good standards of handwriting are being achieved.
190. Younger pupils in key stage 2 listen well and are confident when talking to partners and when expressing themselves to their teachers. They speak clearly with extended answers. All children listen really well to stories, they follow text and predict accurately. They gain a good understanding of the facts being presented and discuss these confidently.
191. Pupils in lower key stage 2 understand the concept of informal writing and discuss and record ideas accurately, articulately and confidently. Most use similes and metaphors appropriately with understanding and suggest suitable comparisons for similes.
192. Younger key stage 2 pupils make good use of word books; make a good independent start to writing stories, understand the role of connectives and express themselves well.

193. Pupils in years three and four show good progression in their knowledge of basic punctuation, basic speech marks, exclamation marks and apostrophes and use them in their written work. They have developed a good knowledge of phonics, show good spelling skills and are able to edit and correct their mistakes. Pupils have good language awareness.
194. Pupils in year four read text accurately, with understanding, expression and good levels of comprehension. They understand the imagery contained in phrases and stories and are becoming more aware of similes and metaphors.
195. Pupils are aware of the structure and characteristics of a story and plan a story with a series of chapters. They make suitable suggestions for their own writing. Pupils write their own exciting adjectives and similes with good achievement from all abilities, their use of thesauruses is developing well.
196. Pupils in years five and six continue with improving their skills of speaking and listening and standards of achievement are good.
197. They make good use of all their senses in their creative writing. They have a good command of vocabulary, and use interesting and creative adjectives to good effect. Pupils show and use good language knowledge in their work and know and use writing techniques such as similes, onomatopoeia, alliteration and personification to good effect. They have a good knowledge of adjectives and adverbs and use them appropriately in their writing. They understand what they have written and are able to edit, extend and improve their work. Good standards of writing are achieved.
198. They write in a range of genre from creative to factual and for a range of audiences, using suitable information and appropriate language. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses to check spelling and improve their choice of words. Less able pupils make good progress in their basic spellings and respond to simple dictation with good levels of accuracy.
199. Pupils have a good recall of previous learning regarding a range of poetry such as Haiku, kennings and limericks. They use ideas from brainstorming sessions to write creatively to a good standard.
200. Throughout the key stage standards of reading are good and are used to good effect across most curriculum areas, especially in IT.

### **Shortcomings**

201. There are no important shortcomings.

## Welsh second language

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

**Key stage: Grade 4: Some good features but shortcomings in important areas**

### Good features

202. In key stage 1, pupils enjoy their lessons and show enthusiasm in learning the language. They understand a range of familiar questions and the majority respond appropriately in simple words or short phrases. Pupils know and readily use simple greetings such as 'bore da, 'prynhawn da' and they successfully use questions such as 'pwyt wyt ti?' to retrieve personal information. They recognise and respond well to a series of commands and instructions.
203. Year 1 pupils read and begin to understand the names of the fruits. They understand most of the words and sentences in the 'Big Book'. Pupils correctly ask 'Ga i' followed by the name of the fruit.
204. Year 2 pupils know a range of useful sentence patterns to describe body parts and certain illnesses and competently take part in role play. They speak clearly with correct pronunciation. Most pupils write simple sentences with minimum support.
205. Most year 3 pupils extend their range of vocabulary by repeating and extending set phrases about the weather and their clothing. They answer in complete sentences and ask questions themselves. Pupils confidently join two phrases together and add colours to make the sentences more interesting. They use the correct spelling when completing an appropriate worksheet.
206. Year 4 pupils know the names of a variety of food items. They can answer questions in the affirmative and negative. Pupils enthusiastically take part in role play whilst visiting a café and read confidently from a menu which they prepared during a previous lesson. They gain confidence whilst working in pairs and groups. Their pronunciation is good.
207. Older pupils in the key stage read the names of some items of clothing from flash cards and the interactive whiteboard and describe the clothes they are wearing. Pupils design a poster, which includes two language patterns and six items of clothing and use a simple dictionary to find some of the items.
208. Pupils in another class are introduced to three joining words and begin to join phrases together.

### Shortcomings

209. In key stage 2 many of the language patterns used by the older pupils are too repetitive and pupils do not effectively consolidate and extend knowledge acquired in previous years' work.

210. Older pupils in key stage 2 are unable to make extended contributions in conversation or when conveying information and are unable to understand and respond to a sufficiently broad range of topics.
211. By the end of the key stage pupils are unable to read accurately a range of materials appropriate to their age and ability and are not confident in using the past tense.

## 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**

212. Throughout both key stages 1 and 2, pupils respond well in oral and mental mathematics sessions. They develop an increasing range of mathematical vocabulary relating to all areas of the subject.
213. In key stage 1 the majority of pupils make good progress in their understanding of number and money. Pupils confidently identify odd and even numbers, add and subtract single and double digit numbers and make appropriate progress in exploring a range of simple number patterns. Most year 1 pupils quickly recognise missing numbers in number sequences up to thirty and some higher achieving pupils well beyond, in some cases up to one hundred. By the end of the key stage most pupils have a firm grasp of simple multiplication facts and count from a given number in twos, fives and tens correctly to fifty. Most pupils confidently recognise halves and quarters in relation to shaded shapes as parts of a whole. Older pupils use and explain different strategies for calculating and recording their findings.
214. Key stage 1 pupils show a good knowledge of the names and properties of two-dimensional shapes and are beginning to understand the concept of regular and irregular shapes. Most pupils measure and weigh every day objects accurately using standard and non-standard measures. Most older pupils tell the time correctly to hour and half hour intervals. The majority of year 2 pupils interpret data presented in simple bar graphs and pictograms correctly using a range of appropriate computer software.
215. In key stage 2 most pupils develop an appropriate understanding of place value. They understand what each digit represents in a three or four digit number and position three and four digit numbers into thousands, hundreds, tens and units correctly. Most make steady progress using their multiplication tables and develop their quick thinking skills when related to every day problems. Nearly all pupils tell and record time accurately in hours and minutes. Generally pupils understand analogue time to five minutes around the hour.
216. By the end of key stage 2 most pupils have a good knowledge of data handling and the more able present information accurately in a range of forms.

Pupils' information technology skills are used well to support learning throughout the key stage.

217. The majority of pupils across the key stage make good progress in their understanding and use of fractions. Several higher attaining pupils in year 6 have a very good understanding of the relationship between equivalent fractions, decimals and percentages.
218. Most pupils throughout key stage 2 develop a good knowledge of the associated properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils in year 4 begin to develop an understanding of symmetry when related to simple two-dimensional shapes. The majority of older pupils in key stage 2 develop a good understanding of the relationship between area and perimeter when applied to regular shapes. Pupils measure accurately, make sensible estimate and show a good understanding of the appropriate units of measure to use.

### **Shortcomings**

219. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Science</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**

220. In both key stages, pupils undertake a good range of practical work and make good progress in the development of scientific enquiry skills, including some well developed investigation skills.
221. In key stage 1 a significant number of pupils demonstrate confidence in planning systematic enquiry and carrying out experimental work purposefully and enthusiastically. Many have a good understanding of sorting, fair testing and predicting. They communicate their ideas in a variety of ways. For instance, pupils in year 2 when undertaking practical work on healthy and unhealthy foods make suitable suggestions about how to organise data and record their work in a rational way.
222. Older pupils in key stage 1 recall well their work on electricity, forces and materials and their properties; they identify key characteristics and their suitability for purpose. They use key vocabulary well when talking about the use of electricity. They recollect very well the dangers of electricity and safety issues in the home and produce very good examples of simple circuits in working lighthouses.
223. Pupils throughout key stage 2 make good progress in developing further their practical skills and carry out experiments and investigations confidently.

224. In lower key stage 2 they make good use of a variety of methods to record their work including graphs and ICT to record results. They make predictions, explain fair testing and present their findings clearly. Pupils have a generally good understanding of the relevant topics in the programmes of study. For instance, they recall quite accurately work carried out on the human body and can name the major skeletal bones.
225. Younger pupils in key stage 2 are building a detailed knowledge of living things. They make good use of ICT research skills to find out about animals and their habitats around the world. They make very good use of the school environment and Pen-Y-Fan pond for their investigation of mini beasts and use well developed enquiry skills to predict, identify and explain their habitat.
226. Older pupils in key stage 2 know the purpose of the internal organs of the body and understand the need for exercise and good diet to keep them healthy. They make good use of detailed key vocabulary when investigating and explaining how the heart pumps blood round the body. They show a good understanding of seed dispersal devising creative ways to explain the different processes using a wide variety of resources. They talk confidently about work previously covered on insulators and conductors.

### **Shortcomings**

227. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Information 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**

228. Year 1 pupils investigate text, sound, pictures and symbols as a means of conveying information. During an 'information walk' they confidently record the information on a tally chart. They competently take photos using a digital camera and sensibly discuss their findings after downloading the photos to the computer and viewing them on the interactive whiteboard. They use a tape recorder to listen to and identify sounds.
229. Year 2 pupils understand that computer programs can be used to find information. They confidently use a modelling program to complete a seaside question trail. They answer a series of questions and then create questions of their own. They use a graphics package to create pictures. They save and retrieve their work easily.
230. Year 3 pupils use a simulated situation to respond to and send e-mail. They competently send an e-mail using the correct e-mail address style and learn how to use an address book.
231. Year 4 pupils create a new database using data that they have collected about themselves in a previous lesson. They understand the key words of database,

table, record and field. They work well in pairs making good use of the help sheets to interpret the data.

232. Pupils in year 4 collect data in their work in science about the pond, input the data into a data handling package, produce a block graph and interpret the data confidently. They use a digital camera during the field trip and sensibly choose relevant pictures to enhance an eye catching poster. Pupils independently use the internet and an appropriate search engine to find information about pond life.
233. Older pupils in key stage 2 use the digital camera to take still photos and a series of video clips from their lessons in physical education. They create a well planned portfolio in the form of a multimedia presentation. Year 5 pupils insert the still pictures into their presentations and use a microphone to record sound to accompany the pictures. Year 6 pupils insert the video clips and a few pupils delete the recorded sound where appropriate in order to enhance the presentation with some additional information that they feel is interesting and informative.

### **Shortcomings**

234. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Design technology</b>
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**Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.**

**Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.**

### **Good features**

235. Throughout key stage 1 most pupils achieve good standards in designing and making objects which are closely linked to their experiences. Most key stage 1 pupils show a good understanding of the need to plan before making a product and they demonstrate an enthusiastic ability to collaborate very effectively when working in pairs and small groups. They produce good pictorial plans, clearly labelled which indicate their choice of their design. Most pupils use a range of basic tools sensibly and successfully when working on their products. They evaluate their work sensibly by identifying the most pleasing features, for example in work related to the joints and movements in articulated figures.
236. Older pupils in key stage 1 successfully apply their knowledge of simple electrical circuits to light up model lighthouses.
237. In key stage 2 most pupils plan and design their products carefully and accurately, giving appropriate attention to the design brief. Younger key stage 2 pupils carry out investigations and acquire knowledge on how mechanisms work before applying them to products. They use basic tools with safety and care.

238. Most older pupils in key stage 2 are accumulating a good vocabulary to describe their work in design technology. For example, in year 6 pupils show a good understanding of computer graphics when drawing appropriate packaging for healthy snacks. Most pupils confidently evaluate the size of the proposed package to suit the purpose. The majority are aware of suitable materials to use and the need for any packaging to appear attractive to the consumer. They gain a good understanding of the features of a good package to house a healthy snack. Most explain clearly their likes and dislikes and recognise that it is important to eat healthy snacks.
239. Throughout the key stage pupils show a good awareness of health and safety requirements. They have a sound understanding of hygiene in relation to food preparation and understand the importance of checking for food allergies.

### **Shortcomings**

240. Pupils in key stage 2 do not sufficiently develop the design technology skills and techniques progressively, building upon what has gone before. This has a direct impact upon the quality and standards of their finished work.

## **History**

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

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

241. In key stage 1, pupils describe their visit to Abertillery Museum with great enthusiasm and knowledge. They are aware of differences in the past and present and have good understanding of methods of laundry in Victorian times. They accurately name the artefacts on display in school and have a good understanding of what life was like in Wales in the past.
242. Pupils in year 2 listen to the story of the life of a pit girl and show good understanding of the differences in the life of a child in Victorian times and nowadays. Pupils use appropriate historical vocabulary and give sensible reasons why they think life was different and how they can find out about the past.
243. In year 3, pupils show very good understanding that the Celts and Romans had different views of the same events. They describe Celtic homes and hillforts and recall interesting information about their visit to St Fagans. These pupils show great interest in finding out about the past and use a variety of sources including the internet to further their knowledge. Hotseating (role play) shows that pupils have understood the conflict between the Celts and the Romans very well.
244. Pupils in year 4 empathise well with how people in Wales felt before William Morgan translated the Bible into Welsh. They have a developing understanding of how the lives of ordinary people changed during Elizabethan times and show that they are able to consider historical events from different points of view.

245. In upper key stage 2, pupils categorise artefacts into different historical periods. Pupils have good ideas about what the various artefacts might be and draw on their knowledge of work covered previously to group the artefacts together successfully into periods from Roman, Tudor, Victorian and second World War times.
246. Pupils at the upper end of key stage 2 also study leisure time in 2007 and in the 1960s and 1970s. Over a period of time, they work co-operatively to produce a play based on a Welsh family in their sitting room in 1979 and use the internet and books to research the period. Pupils appoint script writers, musicians, costume and prop designers and work independently to perform a play for the whole school to watch. Discussion with pupils shows that they gained a thorough knowledge of the period and delivered a quality performance.

### **Shortcomings**

247. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Geography</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**

248. In both key stages, pupils benefit from well planned first hand experiences such as visits to the local area and beyond and Forest School experiences, which help them to develop their geographical understanding.
249. In key stage 1, pupils know interesting facts about Botswana and state some differences between life for children and adults there and in Wales. They have a good understanding of the difference in climate and houses and successfully sort or draw clothes, which would be suitable for an imaginary character to take on a visit.
250. Pupils in key stage 1 explore the local area and draw their journey from school to the church. They draw maps of real and imaginary places using pictures, symbols and a simple key. They successfully use letter, number co-ordinates and understand that co-ordinates can be used to locate features on a range of maps and plans.
251. In lower key stage 2, pupils correctly identify the main features of the local village of Oakdale. Pupils know the names and purpose of the various buildings and amenities, successfully describing how Oakdale differs from a city. Pupils use their research skills well to locate features and match photographs to a range of maps of the village.
252. Pupils in year 4 talk knowledgeably about their visit to Cardiff Bay. They explain changes in the use of land before and after the Cardiff Barrage Scheme and put forward reasoned arguments for and against the scheme.

They successfully annotate photographs of Cardiff Bay and demonstrate good skills of enquiry and research.

253. At the upper end of key stage 2, pupils look at the amount and type of litter found in a range of sites around the school. They successfully categorise and weigh the litter and represent their findings in the form of a graph. Pupils regularly give power point presentations on global issues and show a strong awareness of ways in which people affect the environment.
254. Throughout key stage 2, pupils make very good use of the internet to access information.

### **Shortcomings**

255. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Art</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**

256. Pupils are generally very enthusiastic in their approach to art and are keen to participate in lessons. They collaborate well and can evaluate each others work.
257. In key stage 1 pupils make good use of a wide range of equipment, materials and techniques to create paintings, prints and collage. They experiment with colour, mixing shades and by year 2 the standard of drawing and painting is good overall.
258. By studying a colour theme, pupils in key stage 1 demonstrate a good knowledge of colour tones and understand the difference between primary and secondary colours. They develop good brush stroke skills, for example, when experimenting and painting pictures using different size brushes inspired by the book 'The Smallest Whale'. Pupils also develop good drawing, cutting, rubbing and weaving skills when producing a collage of the sea.
259. Younger key stage 2 pupils study Celtic patterns and link shapes to produce their own patterns. They develop their understanding of line and tone through their drawing based on the work of Gwen John. They imitate the work of Matisse effectively by using pipe cleaners and foil to make moving figures.
260. Older key stage 2 pupils investigate abstract art using oil pastels. They explore colour mixing, demonstrating their knowledge of secondary and tertiary colours. They use textile materials imaginatively, creating class banners based on Mexican tile designs. When studying art from other cultures the pupils examine African masks, making good use of viewfinders to examine patterns and texture before producing their own. Pupils explore ways

of combining a variety of media to produce imaginative artwork. They make accurate sketches from observational drawings.

261. Throughout the key stage pupils link art successfully with other aspects of the curriculum and they develop a very good understanding of the work of many Welsh artists such as Selwyn Jones Hughes and Catrin Howell.

### **Shortcomings**

262. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Music**

### **Key stage 1: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

### **Key stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

#### **Good features**

263. Singing develops well throughout both key stages. Most pupils sing enthusiastically and with clear diction, paying appropriate attention to breathing and quality of sound. Key stage 2 pupils involved in the music project are aware of musical elements such as tempo and dynamics and accurately keep a beat and clap simple rhythms. They appreciate and respond to different types of music through singing and movement and evaluate and improve their performance.
264. In key stage 1 pupils discriminate between different instruments when listening to a piece of music and recall repeated phrases and musical patterns. They choose and play a variety of percussion instruments well in response to the rain and sun verse of a song.
265. In lower key stage 2, pupils perform confidently using body percussion and instruments. They investigate the sounds of a number of un-tuned instruments and work collaboratively to compose a musical picture in response to a sports day picture. They vary the dynamics producing loud and soft sounds to tell the story. They meaningfully evaluate their own and other pupils' compositions and recall musical vocabulary well.
266. Older pupils listen attentively to traditional Javanese music and confidently express how the music makes them feel. They correctly sing the cyclic melody and successfully play this pattern on tuned percussion.

#### **Good features**

267. In both key stages, pupils' composition skills are not sufficiently extended.
268. Key Stage 1 pupils' appraisal skills are underdeveloped and their musical vocabulary is limited.

## Physical education

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

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

### Good features

269. Pupils throughout both key stages understand the need to warm muscles before vigorous exercise begins, they have a very good understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies and how it helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
270. Pupils develop a range of movement skills in floor work during gymnastics and practice these with considerable energy. They co-operate well in small groups to create sequences of movements that they perform confidently. The pupils' ability to reflect on their work is a good feature across all aspects of physical education.
271. In year 1 pupils show good progression in gymnastic skills by combining balance and movement, using a good variety of body parts, levels and pathways. Spatial awareness is very good. Instructions are followed accurately showing good understanding of vocabulary related to movement.
272. In games, key stage 2 pupils send and receive balls, catch and bat using different sized apparatus with control and accuracy. They change pace quickly and safely and collaborate well in a team situation. The pupils' ability to listen, understand and answer in Welsh is also a good feature.
273. In Year 2 Welsh dancing is approached enthusiastically by all the pupils. They interact well with each other are sensible and work effectively within the group. They use a very good range of dance steps and moves whilst responding very well to commands in Welsh. Older pupils demonstrate that they can think for themselves and their movements are creative and precise.
274. In dance pupils in key stage 2 apply their knowledge and skills imaginatively to depict the movements of snooker balls. Through repeat movements and changes of levels they respond increasingly rhythmically to a steady beat and show good understanding of a range of moods and feelings. Good spatial awareness is consistently evident when working individually and with others.

### Shortcomings

275. There are no important shortcomings.

## Religious education

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

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

### Good features

276. In key stage 1 pupils study the story of Moses, carrying out a range of cross curricular activities, making Moses baskets and retelling the story. They have a good recall of the story of Moses. They understand that he was a special person for the Jews and compare him to special people in other religions such as Jesus in Christianity.
277. Many pupils in key stage 1 know that the Torah is the sacred book of the Jews and a special book for them. They know the practices that appertain to its use and the role of the Yad and the Ark.
278. The younger pupils in key stage 2 respond well to a visitor who talks about Islam and Muslims. They ask sensible questions and learn about special clothing, prayers, the Mosque the Quaran and other features. They have a good recall of their visit to a Mosque. Some pupils sensibly compare and contrast similarities and differences between the Muslim and Christian faiths.
279. Pupils in year 4 have developed a good understanding of the key features of the festival of Ramadam and list significant facts about how it began, its timing, the celebratory meal Zakat-ul-Fitr and why Muslims celebrate it and its place in their culture.
280. Older pupils build on and have a good recall of previous work, and visits to places of worship show a very good knowledge of four religions they have studied. They confidently compare and contrast Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. They research the internet to find out about the artefacts practices and key features of these religions and discuss them in plenary sessions at the end of lessons.

### Shortcomings

281. There are no important shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection

Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School welcomes the inspectors' findings and that their judgements matched the schools' self-evaluation of all key questions. We are pleased they recognise that we have a good school with outstanding features in aspects of how it cares for, guides and supports its pupils, their behaviour and the good working relationships engendered between adults and pupils. We are also pleased the inspection team acknowledge the very good progress made since the amalgamation and recognise the significant problems encountered during the construction of the new school.

We note that the inspectors identified the very good standard of learning throughout the school and we acknowledge the need to continuously improve to meet Welsh Assembly Government targets. Particular attention will be paid to Welsh language development, music and design technology. Attendance figures that exceed local and national averages for primary schools clearly indicate that our children enjoy coming to school.

The report highlights the positive effect of the Critical Skills programme that is preparing pupils well for future learning and that assessment for learning processes need to be further embedded. Careful consideration now needs to be made to establish a more effective timetable in order to increase the coherence of pupils' learning.

The inspection team recognise that a strength of our school is that pupils, irrespective of their social background or gender, are positively included in all activities. We appreciate the findings of the inspection team regarding the effective partnership with parents and the wider community and will continue to involve and encourage all interested members of the school neighbourhood to participate in all aspects of school life.

We are pleased that the inspectors acknowledge the hard work carried out by the Head teacher and senior management team (SMT), although, it is recognised that the roles of the SMT and the subject leaders need to be developed further. We are reassured that the inspectors recognise the support and enthusiasm of the governing body and the effectiveness of the support staff.

The impact of the new building and the development of the outdoors were clearly identified as a very positive feature by inspectors and this will be further enhanced in order to provide a safe and stimulating learning and play environment for all pupils. We are reassured that the inspection team felt that finances of the school are in good order and acknowledged the hard work of the school bursar and her team.

Finally, we would like to thank the inspection team for the professional manner in which all stages of the inspection process have been conducted.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Oakdale, Blackwood,
Postcode	NP12 0NA
Telephone number	01495 222829

Head teacher	Mr Steve Rees
Date of appointment	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2006
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Cllr. Alun Pritchard
Registered inspector	Mr. Stuart Wormleighton
Dates of inspection	14 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2008

## 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	43	71	70	64	75	71	67	72	533

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	20	3	21.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	3:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	25
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:0.84

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2007	88.6	93.6	94.7
Autumn 2007	91.1	91.3	95
Spring 2008	90	91.5	94

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	8.6%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	4 (fixed-term)

## Appendix 3

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y2:		69		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	13	70	17
		National	0	3	13	63	20
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	14	62	23
		National	0	4	14	55	27
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	20	74	6
		National	0	5	14	68	12
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	3	71	26
		National	0	2	10	63	24
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	3	72	25
		National	0	2	10	64	23
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	61	35
		National	0	2	9	66	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	85.6%	In Wales	80.6%

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2007							Number of pupils in Y6		62		
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	51	43
		National	0	0	0	1	1	4	16	48	30
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	49	44
		National	0	0	0	1	1	3	14	48	33
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	43	52
		National	0	0	0	1	0	2	12	52	34

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by teacher assessment		by test	
In the school	85.7%	In the school	n/a
In Wales	74.2%	In Wales	n/a

- D Pupils who are excepted under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
- A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
- F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
- W Pupils who are working towards level 1

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

A team of seven inspectors spent a total of twenty-four inspector days in the school. A team meeting was held prior to the inspection. A Peer Assessor was also a member of the team for four days and the head teacher acted as Nominee.

Inspectors visited and observed:

- one hundred and nine lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship;
- lunch times and break times; and
- extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began, and
- a representative of the local education authority, teachers, governors, support and administrative staff, the school council and groups of children during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self evaluation report;
- one hundred and eight responses to the parents'/carers' questionnaire;
- a comprehensive range of documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- documentation from the local authority; and
- samples of pupils' work from across the age and ability ranges were scrutinised.

The inspection team held post-inspection meetings with staff and governors.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<b>Team member</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Stuart Wormleighton Registered Inspector	Key questions 1 and 5. English and Religious Education.
Jeff Beecher Team Inspector	Key questions 5 and 6. Science, Art, and Physical Education.
Helen Smith Team Inspector	Key question 3 and contributions to key question 1. Welsh Second Language and Information Technology.
Sue Parsons Team Inspector	Key question 2 and 4. History and Geography.
Peter Clarke Team Inspector	Key question 7. Mathematics, Design Technology
Linda Vittle Team Inspector	Key question 7. Early Years and Music.
Ted Tipper Lay Inspector	Key question 4 and contributions to key questions 1 and 5
Marion Jones Peer Assessor	Lesson Observations Contributions to Team Meetings
Steve Rees Head teacher	Nominee Provision of information

**The contractor was**  
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, staff, pupils and parents for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.