

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

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

**Sofrydd C.P. School  
Sofrydd Road  
NP13 5DW**

**School Number: 6772179**

**Date of Inspection: 16/03/09**

**by**

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

The inspection of Sofrydd CP School took place between 16/03/09 and 18/03/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Peter Mathias undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Context</b>	1
<b>Summary</b>	3
<b>Recommendations</b>	9
<b>Standards</b>	10
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	10
<b>The quality of education and training</b>	13
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	13
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	15
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	17
<b>Leadership and management</b>	19
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	19
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	20
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	21
<b>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</b>	22
Foundation phase	22
English	27
Science	28
Information and communications technology	29
Geography	30
Religious education	31
<b>School's response to the inspection</b>	32
<b>Appendices</b>	33
1 Basic information about the school	33
2 School data and indicators	33
3 National Curriculum assessments results	34
4 Evidence base of the inspection	36
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	37

## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Sofrydd Primary School is situated close to the once mining village of Crumlin. The Local Authority (LA) is Blaenau Gwent. The school provides education for boys and girls between the ages of three and eleven. There are 126.5 full-time equivalent pupils on roll including 21 nursery children who attend on a mornings only basis, making a full-time equivalent of 10.5 children. The school roll has declined significantly since the last inspection which took place in March 2003.
2. Nearly all pupils come from the locality which is economically and socially disadvantaged and is a designated Communities First area. Approximately 24% of pupils are considered eligible for free school meals, which is close to LA average of 24.3% and the Welsh average of 17.5%. Most children enter the nursery with below the levels of basic skills and experiences expected for their age. All pupils have English as their first language and only a very small proportion are of non-Welsh, white backgrounds.
3. About 49% of pupils are considered to have some degree of special educational needs (SEN). Three boys have statements of SEN for a range of reasons. No pupil has the National Curriculum (NC) disapplied.
4. In the previous school year there were 14 temporary exclusions which involved two boys and one girl. No pupil is 'looked after' by the LA. The school organises and teaches children in the nursery and reception classes in line with the Foundation Phase.
5. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the third time. The current headteacher was appointed with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008. Prior to that in the autumn term a temporary headteacher was in post who was also the substantive headteacher of a nearby school. During the inspection the deputy headteacher was absent on maternity leave. Her teaching responsibilities were fulfilled by a supply teacher.

### The School's Aims

6. The school's aims are to: -
  - create an interesting and stimulating environment which reflects our values and promotes a sense of community as well as an individual sense of self-worth;
  - develop a community of life-long learners where access to knowledge is a right and recognises achievement; and
  - provide learning experiences that will allow all pupils equal opportunities to develop their thinking and creative skills and promote social, cultural, moral and spiritual development, preparing pupils to be responsible citizens.

<b>The school's priorities and targets</b>
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7. The school's priorities and targets for 2008/2009 are to: -
- review whole-school approaches to reading;
  - implement new teaching approaches;
  - further develop problem solving in mathematics;
  - implement new schemes of work in science to focus on practical investigation, problem-solving and thinking skills;
  - further develop topic approaches to planning at KS2;
  - strengthening monitoring and evaluation procedures;
  - develop the role of subject consultants;
  - implement the Foundation Phase approach;
  - strengthen the implementation and application of key skills across the curriculum;
  - further develop school self-evaluation processes;
  - target literacy and numeracy support;
  - improve levels of attendance;
  - review and improve behaviour and management strategies;
  - further develop links with the community;
  - develop an approach to educational support grants across the curriculum;
  - continue to refurbish classroom furniture; and
  - work with the school council to pursue funding to develop the outdoor areas of the school.
8. The school's mission statement is, "Sofrydd Promotes Success."

## Summary

9. Sofrydd Primary School provides a sound education for all of its pupils. Children in the Foundation Phase and across the school make good progress. The newly appointed headteacher and staff are working purposefully towards the objectives they have recently set for themselves. The outcomes of these initiatives have in many cases yet to be seen. Since the last inspection the school has made some good progress in addressing a majority of the key issues of that inspection. However, there is still work to do in various aspects.

### Table of grades awarded

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

10. The inspection team agrees with all of the seven judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report about the standards pupils achieve and other areas of its work. The grade given to Key Question 5 does not match the grades given to Key Question 1 and Key Question 7 because although the new headteacher has made a purposeful start, many new initiatives have yet to have any significant impact.

### Standards

11. Overall, standards of achievement in the subjects and areas of learning inspected are as follows: -

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	76%	16%	0%	0%

12. These figures are the same as those reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) in the Annual Report 2007/2008 (Primary) where standards are Grade 2 good or better in 84% of lessons.

### Subjects and areas of learning for under-fives

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

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

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	N	R	KS1	KS2
Foundation Phase	2	2	N/A	N/A
English	N/A	N/A	2	2
Science	N/A	N/A	2	2
Information communication technology	N/A	N/A	2	2
Geography	N/A	N/A	2	3
Religious education	N/A	N/A	2	2

14. Many children begin school with below the expected levels of basic skills. They make good progress and are well prepared for the next phase of their education. Nearly all meet the predictions made for them at the ages of seven and eleven. Across the school pupils with SEN make good progress.
15. In the end of the 2008 KS1 national teacher assessments for seven year olds, starting from a low base, the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level (Level 2) in English and mathematics was below the LA and national averages. The results in science were also below these averages. The combined results were close to the local average and below the national average. The proportion of pupils who reached the higher level (Level 3) was below. In these assessments the relative performance of boys and girls has fluctuated. Overall, boys out performed girls. Since 2005 there is no consistent pattern in the relative performance of boys compared to girls at this age.
16. In the 2008 national teacher assessments for eleven year olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 4) in English and mathematics was above the LA and national averages. In science the results were in line with the LA average and just below the national average. The combined results were also just below the national averages. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (Level 5) was below these averages.
17. In the end of the 2008 national KS2 teacher assessments, boys out performed girls. However, since 2005 there is no clear pattern of the relative performance of boys compared to girls as these comparisons have varied considerably.

18. When the results in the 2008 national teacher assessments for seven year olds are compared to schools considered to have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals the results were low in English and below most of these similar schools in mathematics and science. The combined results were low. The results of eleven year olds in these assessments were above most of these schools in English and mathematics and below in science.
19. In previous years the school was placed in a band of schools with a higher proportion of pupils considered eligible for free school meals. In 2006 and 2007 for example, results were above most of these schools. In recent years the trend of improvement in the school's performance in these assessments has been static. In 2008 the school met the targets agreed with the LA.
20. Standards and progress in the key skills of literacy and communication in English have good features and no important shortcomings. In the Foundation Phase and in KS1 and KS2 nearly all speak confidently and listen carefully. They read well for their different ages. They write fluently for an increasing range of reasons and in different styles.
21. Overall, standards in communication in Welsh are good; bearing in mind children's starting points when they begin school. However, across the school they lack confidence and the opportunities to use English and Welsh regularly in their lessons and as part of their day-to-day lives, their writing skills in Welsh have some shortcomings.
22. Pupils' mathematical skills have good features which outweigh shortcomings. In the Foundation Phase children talk about different shapes they see and count accurately in a range of activities. In KS1 and KS2 pupils do not apply their knowledge and understanding of their work in mathematics sufficiently in different situations and subjects. Similarly while children in the Foundation Phase solve practical problems well in their play and in their general activities, older pupils in KS1 and KS2 do not use a range of strategies confidently to approach a problem logically in order to solve it.
23. Across the school pupils' skills in information communications technology (ICT) are good in the Foundation Phase but have shortcomings in KS1 and KS2. Pupils in both key stages do not regularly use ICT in their work in mathematics, science and geography to interpret data and to find solutions, pattern and relationships.
24. Understanding of Welsh culture and heritage is good. Pupils have a good knowledge of their local history and of the work of some Welsh artists, composers, musicians and writers.
25. Pupils' personal and social skills, their creative skills, their ability to work with others and their knowledge of how to improve their own learning and performance are consistently good with no important shortcomings.
26. Attendance at 91% is close to the LA average of 91.9% and below the national average of 93%. Nearly all pupils arrive punctually and the school day starts on time.

## The quality of education and training

### Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
16%	71%	13%	0%	0%

27. Figures are in line with the national picture reported by HMCI in the Annual Report 2007/2008 (Primary) where the quality of teaching is Grade 2 or better in 83% of lessons and Grade 1 in 16% of lessons.
28. In the Foundation Phase the planning and organisation of a wide range of stimulating and suitable activities are in line with the Foundation Phase outcomes. Planning for those with ALN and SEN is thorough and effective.
29. In the best lessons which have many outstanding features and are found in the Foundation Phase and in upper KS2, the outstanding features include: -
- very expressive and inspiring introductions to lessons;
  - very clear and explicit instructions;
  - a very secure understanding of teaching strategies to encourage pupils to read accurately;
  - lively and stimulating questioning to encourage logical thought;
  - outstanding relationships between all adults and pupils producing a very strong sense of teamwork; and
  - provision of outstanding opportunities for pupils to enjoy learning and to work very enthusiastically and purposeful.
30. Where teaching has some shortcomings these are: -
- slow pace to learning;
  - time wasted in unnecessarily long explanations;
  - time taken up with lengthy resolutions of individual concerns;
  - missed opportunities to extend pupils' problem solving skills; and
  - insufficient use of incidental Welsh.
31. Arrangements for assessment and its use in planning and improving learning are good and meet statutory requirements. Teachers are conscientious in measuring pupils' progress and encouraging them to be fully involved in the process. The school is working closely with nearby schools and with the local secondary school to agree standards particularly in English, mathematics and science. However, the process has only recently started and is incomplete.

32. The progress of children in the Foundation Phase is regularly reviewed and recorded as is the progress of pupils in KS1 and KS2. Work is marked regularly and teachers' marking and comments are detailed and constructive. Reports are of a good quality and meet statutory requirements. They highlight current achievements but do not always indicate ways forward.
33. The curriculum meets all legal requirements of the NC and the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. The school responds well to the learning needs of all of its pupils. Across the school the curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting and is carefully planned to match its provision to the recently revised NC.
34. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is actively encouraged in acts of collective worship which meet legal requirements. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn moral values and to understand what is right and wrong and also to reflect upon their experiences and beliefs.
35. Pupils' social development is fostered well through a wide range of opportunities to take on responsibilities. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about their Welsh heritage and culture. Good arrangements promote pupils' understanding of cultural diversity and their responsibilities as citizens of the world. There are appropriate arrangements to promote pupils' awareness and understanding of sustainable development, for example through a recycling project.
36. Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Those who have SEN are diagnosed early and well supported. The school has good arrangements to promote pupils' well being and safety. There are good links with local support services. Pupils are encouraged to eat and live healthily. The school council is well established and gives all pupils a voice in the way the school functions. As a result pupils have a good understanding of the democratic process. All have the same opportunities to be included in all school activities.
37. The school has good guidelines to encourage tolerance and understanding of others from different cultures and backgrounds and to address any issues of bullying or other forms of harassment. Child protection arrangements meet local guidelines and recommended good practice.
38. There are good arrangements to monitor pupils' punctuality, behaviour and attendance. A detailed survey of the site has been undertaken to review accessibility for those with physical disability. There is a suitable accessibility plan in place.

### **Leadership and management**

39. The newly appointed headteacher provides a purposeful lead and works positively with the deputy headteacher to set the long-term direction for the school. Teachers co-operate together willingly and nearly always have high expectations of their pupils and of what they themselves can contribute to the school.
40. The senior management team is well informed about the needs of the school. There are newly introduced arrangements for the senior management team and teachers to

manage their responsibilities effectively. These have yet to become fully effective. Co-ordinators have carried out detailed reviews to identify the strengths of their subjects and they contribute positively to the process of school development.

41. The school takes careful note of local initiatives and national priorities. There is, for example a thriving breakfast club. The introduction of the Foundation Phase has been well managed. However, pupils' bilingual skills are not encouraged sufficiently in lessons and in the everyday life of the school. Arrangements to provide teachers with time during the taught week to plan, prepare and assess are well organised, managed and well used.
42. The governing body is supportive of the school and meets all of its statutory duties. Several governors have been recently appointed and generally governors do not play a full and constructive role in holding the management of the school to account. They lack the means and experience to judge the success of decisions they have made and to decide whether or not money spent has been well used.
43. The process of self-evaluation is detailed and firmly based on first hand evidence. The process is new to the school and has involved all professional staff, governors, pupils and parents. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and carefully. However there has been insufficient time for the school self-evaluation process to be fully effective.
44. The school's self-evaluation document is closely linked to the school improvement plan (SIP) and to the school's performance management arrangements. The document is detailed and accurate.
45. Day-to-day administration is efficient and welcoming. The school runs smoothly and is well maintained. Many colourful displays around the school help to provide an attractive environment for learning where pupils' work is clearly valued.
46. The school is appropriately staffed with suitably qualified teachers and support staff. Resources are readily available and are well used. They are of a good quality and quantity to support learning.
47. Bearing in mind the overall quality of education provided and the progress pupils make, often from low starting points the school gives value for money.

## Recommendations

In order to improve the school in the areas inspected, the staff and governing body need to: -

- R1 raise standards in KS1 and KS2 in pupils' communication skills in writing in Welsh and their use of incidental Welsh;
- R2 raise standards in KS1 and KS2 in pupils' use of their mathematical skills and their ICT and problem solving skills;
- R3 improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world of work and commerce;
- R4 strengthen the role of the governing body as a critical friend of the school and utilise the information from the school self-evaluation process to set the priorities for future school improvement; and
- R5 take steps to raise levels of attendance \*

\* Which the school has already identified as a priority.

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

48. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
49. In the 2008 national teacher assessments for seven year olds, starting often from a low base, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level (Level 2) in English and mathematics were below the LA and below the national averages. In science the results were also below both of these averages. The combined results were in line with the local average and below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) was below these averages.
50. In these assessments girls out performed boys in English and boys out performed girls in mathematics and science. Since 2005 the relative performance of boys and girls has varied with girls out performing boys in 2006 and 2007 but vice versa in 2008.
51. In the 2008 national assessments for eleven year olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 4) in English and mathematics was above the LA and national averages. In science the results were in line with the LA average and just below the national average. The combined results were just above local and just below the national averages. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5) was below these averages in all three subjects and when these results were combined.
52. In recent years the performance of boys compared to girls has varied considerably. In 2005 boys and girls attained about the same. In 2006 boys results were higher than girls. In 2007 they were below and in 2008 above.
53. When these results are compared to schools considered to have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, for example between 16% and 24%, the results at KS1 were low in English and below most of these similar schools in mathematics and science. The combined results were low. The end of KS2 results were above most of these schools in English and mathematics and below in science. The combined results were below.
54. Previously the school was compared to schools with a higher proportion of pupils considered eligible to free school meals (24%-32%). In 2006 and 2007 results were above most of these schools. In 2008 the school met the targets agreed with the LA. In recent years the overall trend of improvement has been broadly static.

55. Standards of achievement in the lessons in the subjects and areas of learning inspected were as follows: -

**Subject grades for subjects inspected**

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	76%	16%	0%	0%

56. These figures are close to those reported in HMCI's Annual Report 2007/2008 (Primary) where standards are good or better in 84% of lessons. The school's figures are an improvement on the standards of achievement in the previous inspection.
57. The school plans and teaches children in the nursery and reception classes in terms of the curriculum for the Foundation Phase. The overall quality of educational provision for the under five is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.

**Grades for standards in subjects inspected**

Inspection Area	N	R	KS1	KS2
Foundation Phase	2	2	N/A	N/A
English	N/A	N/A	2	2
Science	N/A	N/A	2	2
Information communication technology	N/A	N/A	2	2
Geography	N/A	N/A	2	3
Religious education	N/A	N/A	2	2

58. Many pupils begin in the school with below expected levels of attainment. Nearly all make good progress and meet the targets predicted for them when they entered the school at three years of age. All pupils with SEN make good progress.
59. In the key skill of communication in English achievement is good with no important shortcomings. A significant strength is the ability of pupils across the school to express themselves verbally with confidence and competently. Older children in the Foundation Phase read with fluency and expression. Pupils' reading skills are well developed. Many read confidently and with feeling. In KS1 and KS2 they write well for an increasing range of reasons.
60. In communication in Welsh, pupils speak and listen well bearing in mind their starting points. However, their writing skills in Welsh are limited. Across the school pupils lack provision and as a result have inconsistent opportunities and the confidence to learn how to use Welsh and English together in their classes and in their day-to-day responses.
61. Overall, achievement in mathematical skills has good features which outweigh shortcomings. In the Foundation Phase key skills in numeracy in mathematics are good; in KS1 pupils create patterns reflecting their knowledge and understanding of symmetry. They talk confidently about a range of three dimensional shapes and use their counting skills to good effect. However, in KS1 and KS2 pupils do not utilise their knowledge and understanding sufficiently in, for example science and

geography to collect and interpret data or to measure accurately in design technology.

62. Pupils' application of their skills in ICT has good features which outweigh shortcomings. Older pupils make good use of web sites to support their enquiry skills in history. They edit record and improve their own work. In KS1 pupils are able to use digital cameras to record evidence of their practical work.
63. However, in KS1 and KS2 pupils do not regularly use ICT in their work in mathematics, science or in geography to interpret data, to help them find solutions, patterns and relationships.
64. Across the school pupils' personal and social skills are good. Pupils are motivated in their learning and feel positive attitudes to each other and adults. They are confident in expressing their thoughts. In KS1 and KS2 they understand the requirements of good teamwork and apply this in practice.
65. In the Foundation Phase children readily explore practical problems. Pupils' problem solving skills have good features which outweigh shortcomings. In KS1 they use fixing materials to support their making of musical instruments using junk modelling materials. They consider the resources they have and can sort them according to colour and pattern. However, many older pupils do not know how to approach a problem logically and do not know how to apply criteria well to come to a solution.
66. Pupils' creative skills are good. They express themselves well in art and music. They illustrate their work attractively using a wide range of media and materials, for example in their three dimensional clay houses depicting those in the locality.
67. Across the school pupils work willingly together. They share their ideas and resources, for example sharing maps and taking part in discussions. From the youngest children in the Foundation Phase they learn how to make choices showing consideration for others.
68. Across the school pupils show understanding of what they do and how they can improve. In KS1 and KS2 pupils use a variety of ways to express their level of understanding prior to the commencement of an activity and at appropriate stages throughout.
69. Pupils' attitudes to learning, interest in their work and ability to sustain concentration have many good features. They are keen to work in lessons and they respond and ask questions and work with enthusiasm.
70. Pupils are well behaved in and around the school. Good behaviour and positive attitudes and relationships are particularly evident during break times and lunchtimes. Teachers have good relationships with pupils as do the non-teaching staff. Pupils are friendly and courteous to each other, and to visitors contributing positively to the work of the school as a community.
71. The school registration procedures are good and comply with the National Assembly of Wales (NAW) Circular 47/06.

72. The average level of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is 91% which is close to the local average but below the national average of 93%. Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual at the start of the day.
73. The majority of the unauthorised absences by pupils not attending school are due to parents and guardians withdrawing pupils more than the 10 authorised days of holiday absences in the school year. Patterns of absence are systematically monitored. The school refers pupils who are persistently absent to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The headteacher examines the attendance summaries regularly for poor attendance and refers this to the EWO for action.
74. The school works hard to help pupils to develop the ability to work independently and make pupils see themselves as part of a community, supporting one another as they move through the key stages of the school. However, pupils have a limited understanding of the skills needed in the world of work and knowledge of how business and commerce function. Links with the educational business partnership are weak.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

75. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
76. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
16%	71%	13%	0%	0%

77. The quality of teaching is good or better, that is Grade 1 or Grade 2 in 87% of lessons. This figure is very close to the national figure reported by HMCI in the Annual Report 2007/2008 (Primary) where the quality of teaching was good or better (Grade 1 and Grade 2) in 83% of lessons with 16% of lessons at Grade 1.
78. Across the school teachers plan carefully and in detail to make their lessons interesting and to meet the needs of all pupils. In the Foundation Phase, teachers plan and teach very thoughtfully so that they provide appropriate experiences for all children. Planning for those identified as having some degree of SEN is thorough and effective.
79. In KS1 and KS2 pupils are given a clear picture of what they should aim to achieve during the lessons and their success is carefully reviewed at its end. Teachers generally show high expectations of their pupils and enthusiastically encourage them to achieve their objectives.
80. The best lessons which have many outstanding features are found in the Foundation Phase and in upper KS2. In these lessons teachers are very expressive when

explaining to children what they will be learning. They ensure that all pupils are sure of what they should do and know that much is expected of them. They have very good subject knowledge, for example when developing children's reading skills. They question in a lively and logical way to promote children's ability to think things out for themselves.

81. The teaching in the best lessons very successfully captures the interest of all pupils because the teachers have a very innovative and lively way of introducing subjects, for example when using alliteration in an English lesson.
82. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive and pupils are regularly challenged in a very constructive way to achieve high standards. Teachers very successfully promote and provide very rich opportunities for pupils to work with eager enthusiasm and to find learning fun. The pace of learning is very brisk and teachers ensure that pupils work very purposefully throughout the time available.
83. Where teaching has some shortcomings, the pace of learning is slow because the time is not well used to make pupils fully aware of what is expected of them. Lessons do not move forward with sufficient pace because time is unnecessarily taken up in dealing with individual problems. Opportunities are missed to promote pupils' use of incidental Welsh naturally in their lessons. Pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to think about ways of how to solve problems for themselves.
84. The quality of assessment is good. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing and reporting pupils' progress from entry into the nursery to the end of KS2. This process includes the analysis of results from a range of national and reliable tests. Assessment of children's progress in the Foundation Phase is good and used effectively to plan appropriate activities.
85. All teachers are conscientious in measuring pupils' progress. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to judge their success in meeting the lesson objectives and a system of 'one / two stars and a wish' enables them to evaluate how secure their new knowledge is. Good strategies are in place for assessing pupils with SEN who are provided with individual education plans (IEP's) of good quality. The school tracking system enables class teachers to monitor progress of pupils by providing clear and concise information.
86. Teachers know pupils individually and ensure that work is appropriately challenging. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide useful oral and written feedback to pupils about their work, including in some cases what the next step might be, but procedures are not always consistent within and between classes. Self and peer assessment is not used consistently well as a way of encouraging pupils to make better progress.
87. There are collections of pupils' work to indicate the standards pupils should achieve year on year. Collections of levelled work have been compiled for all subjects. The school is involved with other nearby schools including the local secondary school to agree standards in English, mathematics and science, but the process is in its infancy and little work has been completed to date to guide teachers.

88. Annual reports to parents conform to statutory requirements and provide information on pupils' progress in all subjects. Although both KS1 and KS2 reports include information about current achievements, targets for improvement only appear in KS1. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss the report with teachers.

**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**

89. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
90. The school responds to the learning needs of pupils well. The curriculum is broad, balanced and logically organised, accessible to all and fully meets legal requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. The school caters for all pupils, including those with additional learning needs and disabilities. The school is updating the curriculum to take into account the revised NC and the Foundation Phase. As a result subject policies and schemes of work are in various stages of development and contain a range of materials.
91. Early years provision is a strength of the school. Children both in nursery and reception classes benefit from a rich programme of work with well-planned activities.
92. There is a detailed policy in place for key skills. However, it is not used systematically. Skills in speaking and listening are planned well across the curriculum to enhance communication and understanding. However, planning to promote pupils' mathematical, ICT, problem solving and bilingual skills are not always put to good effect.
93. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is promoted effectively during morning acts of worship which meet legal requirements. Across the curriculum collective worship plays an important part in developing pupils' understanding of being part of the community. There are good links with the ministers of the local churches Pupils' moral development is good. The school provides pupils with a good understanding of what is right and wrong and these values are reinforced through effective strategies that promote personal and social education within the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and consider the beliefs of others.
94. Pupils are well supported in developing their social skills by many opportunities to take responsibility for their actions and to manage their behaviour.
95. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their Welsh heritage and culture and that of the local area. As a result pupils participate in a range of Welsh cultural activities, such as St David's Day, Eisteddfod and Welsh folk dancing. Their understanding of cultural diversity is successfully promoted by themes in religious education and geography. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is successfully promoted well through a variety of subjects, such as history, geography, religious education, art and

music. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about the culture, environment and history of Wales.

96. All pupils have equal opportunities to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities of a sporting, cultural and academic nature. In both key stages they benefit greatly from weekly music singing lessons taken by a specialist teacher. These extend the experiences of the school day and make an effective contribution to the personal and social development of all pupils.
97. Pupils' educational experiences are also enriched through visits to places within their locality such as the feeder high schools, local churches, Abertillery library and through residential visits such as Talybont outdoor pursuits centre. Visitors to the school also provide the pupils with opportunities to broaden and enhance their learning experiences.
98. The school's links with parents, the local and wider community including other schools are highly successful. Friends of the school are actively involved in the life and work of the school and they make a valuable contribution to the provision made. Parents are supportive of the school and have ready access to the headteacher and staff. The school promotes an 'open door' policy.
99. The school has good links with the local community and these are being further enhanced through projects such as the 'Big Beat'. Links with the local secondary school are good. Transfer arrangements are well established with good liaison between schools. Links with places of higher education are well established. Students are often placed at the school.
100. There are some links with local businesses. The police have good links with the school and often visit to provide advice and guidance to pupils. The school recognises the need for these arrangements to be developed further to provide pupils with an effective insight into the world of work.
101. The school is successfully developing the pupil's awareness and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship. The school is working towards the Eco-Schools Award leading to the 'Green Flag'. This important area is being further developed by the school, for example through, recycling projects which the school takes part in, and in geography and science. All pupils are involved in the Healthy Schools scheme and have obtained the award for initiatives undertaken for the last three years. The school has identified the development of the grounds as an initiative to promote sustainable development further, for example, through the Forest Schools initiative.
102. The school works hard to develop pupils' learning experiences for decision making and the skills needed to support economic development. The school is in the early stages of developing entrepreneurial skills. Currently pupils run a healthy fruit tuck shop, order produce, collect money and organise stalls at the Christmas Fayre. Links with the educational business partnership are weak.

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

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

103. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
104. Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. The school places and manages its care arrangements effectively and makes good use of its support services. Pupils feel that the school and staff work hard at helping them to raise their levels of achievement. The school council is active. It provides pupils with a good understanding of the democratic process. There are good links with outside agencies. The breakfast club is well supported.
105. The school works very well with parents and carers for support and the partnership link with parents is good. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting with the registered inspector parents felt the school was easy to approach and encouraged an active role for parents and carers.
106. The school has good induction programmes to help new pupils to settle into school. Pupils feel welcome and are supported by teachers and other pupils. The nursery and reception children have sufficient staff available to help and support them. Useful induction meetings are held for new nursery and reception pupils. At the start of each academic year, a week of activities is planned to help new pupils settle into their new classes.
107. The monitoring of pupils' attendance and behaviour is good. The school has a comprehensive procedure for ensuring good attendance and behaviour and a reward system in place for both, for example, in a regular achievement assembly and in an award system. These attendance procedures comply with the National Assembly of Wales (NAW) Circular 47/06. The school council is active and promotes successfully pupils' understanding of the democratic process.
108. The school makes the general safety and well being of pupils a priority. There is an effective policy and staff and pupils have an awareness of health and safety issues. The school also has good procedures and arrangements that encourage and enable pupils to be healthy. Appropriate arrangements are in place for pupils who are unwell or have had an accident. Risk assessments are completed by staff for educational visits.
109. The school has an effective policy and sound procedures for child protection which meet local guidelines and recommended good practice. The headteacher is the staff member responsible for child protection. All staff are given guidance and are aware of the procedures for reporting and recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse. Training is provided to school staff to keep up to date. A log book of concerns and contact with outside agencies is kept securely.
110. The identification, assessment and provision for learners with additional learning needs are good. The school provides clearly documented provision in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice and the framework for inclusive education. The

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) is efficient and works effectively with the whole staff and the governor with responsibility for SEN. The relationships and support for pupils is good.

111. There are effective systems for diagnosing SEN at an early stage. The school identifies those pupils who have specific learning difficulties and speech and communication difficulties and provide programmes based on pupils' individual needs. These are monitored effectively by the SENCo.
112. Individual Education Plans (IEP's) are well written and help inform all concerned of the way forward. These plans are monitored and reviewed termly. Annual reports and reviews meet statutory requirements.
113. All pupils with SEN make good progress considering their individual need and circumstances and have equal access to what is taught. Good use is made of outside agencies who provide good support to pupils requiring assessment. Teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs) work well as a team providing continuity of support and assessment of need.
114. The school's behaviour management programme 'It's good to be green!' is effective. It is based on the positive recognition of pupils' achievements and successes, for example.
115. Throughout the school, pupils develop a good awareness of equal opportunities issues through learning about the diversity of beliefs and social and cultural traditions in the wider society; they understand and respect the personal values of others well.
116. The school actively promotes gender equality and there is no stereotyping of boys and girls in the curriculum or in the school generally.
117. The school promotes good race relations across the curriculum and in all its activities. It has effective racial equality and equal opportunities policies in force.
118. The school applies an effective behavioural management and anti-bullying policy across the whole school. There is a clear anti-bullying charter which is understood by both pupils and parents. The school also has an effective 'Buddy' system in place for pupils to enable them to adjust to school life full-time.
119. Appropriate arrangements are made for pupils with disabilities to ensure that they are not being treated less favourably than other pupils. There is an access and disability policy following a detailed survey of the site. The school has a clear Disability Equality Scheme and action plan in place, which has been submitted to the LA.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

120. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
121. The grade given to this key question does not match those given to Key Question 1 and Key Question 7, because while the new headteacher has made a purposeful start since being appointed in December, insufficient time has elapsed since then for initiatives which have been put into place to bear fruit.
122. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher working enthusiastically together to provide a positive lead. Teachers co-operate together willingly and generally have high expectations of themselves, of each other and of their pupils. They ensure that all pupils have equal access to what is taught and in all aspects of school life.
123. The senior management team is well informed about the needs of the school and plans thoroughly to review the impact of decisions and policies which have been agreed. They have yet to evaluate the outcomes of these activities.
124. Co-ordinators have carried out detailed reviews of their areas of responsibility and some have visited classes to look at the quality of teaching and learning. There are now good arrangements for subject co-ordinators to address any weaknesses and to contribute to the SIP.
125. The school has detailed arrangements in place to review pupils' long-term progress and to identify when they are not achieving as well as they could. These are supported by good procedures to provide help on a regular basis.
126. The school takes note of local initiatives and national priorities. The breakfast club is well supported. While the school is giving increasing attention to developing pupils' abilities to use Welsh regularly in lessons and informally in their day-to-day lives in school, standards and progress are inconsistent across the school. There has been a successful introduction of the Foundation Phase and teachers in the reception and nursery classes have a good understanding of how to plan and teach children of these ages.
127. There are new systems in place for the senior management team to observe teaching and learning and to evaluate the progress the school is making. Recent initiatives have strengthened links between the school's performance management arrangements and lesson observations in order to identify and address in-service training needs. There are appropriate arrangements in place to support newly qualified teachers and teachers who are new to the school.
128. The governing body is supportive of the professional staff and meets all of its statutory duties. Some governors have recently been appointed and lack training and experience in their roles. Recent initiatives have enabled the governing body to be

made aware of the school's longer term needs. Currently it does not hold the professional leadership of the school constructively to account.

129. Governors lack the means and experience to judge the success of decision they have made and of the progress the school is making to address areas identified as priorities for improvement. They do not have the procedures in place to judge whether or not the initiatives which have been agreed provide best value for money and have met the objectives set when the decisions were made.
130. The school's finances are carefully managed and are now well focused on the educational needs of the school. The school's budget is linked to the school's performance management priorities and to the priorities set out in the SIP.

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

**Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

131. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgments made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
132. The process of gathering information about the performance of the school is detailed and firmly based on first hand evidence which has been systematically evaluated. The process was introduced and completed recently. It was begun by the acting headteacher and staff. As a result all professional staff have reviewed their areas of responsibility. The views of governors, pupils and parents have been considered. However, the process is not fully embedded in the life of the school, nor has the senior management team had sufficient time to ensure that all of the information is used effectively to address areas of weakness.
133. Teachers assess pupils' progress rigorously and on a regular basis. The comparative performance of the school is carefully considered and the information is now being well used systematically to raise standards further.
134. The school self-evaluation document is comprehensive and carefully constructed. It accurately describes the school's strengths and areas for development. It is closely linked to the SIP which is accurately costed and set out. Governors are in the early stages of being made fully aware of the progress being made to priorities they have agreed. There are now close links between the process of school self-evaluation and the school's performance management programme which had previously not existed. The performance management programme is also closely linked in turn to local and national priorities.
135. The inspection team agrees with the seven judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report in the seven key questions and with all of the school's identification of its strengths and areas for development.
136. Since the last inspection in the spring term 2003, the school has made good progress in some but not all of its efforts to address the key issues identified. Standards in nearly all subjects of this inspection have improved. However,

standards in geography still have some important shortcomings and pupils' bilingual skills remain in need of improvement.

137. Assessment arrangements across the school are now sufficiently rigorous and provide teachers with a clear picture of the progress pupils are making. The building now provides good accommodation for all of the pupils. However, there is still work to do in raising pupils' standards in the key skills, in promoting their abilities to think for themselves and to solve problems through challenging and open-ended tasks.
138. Recent initiatives have begun the process of extending the roles of all subject co-ordinators and in strengthening their contributions to how the school is led and managed.

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

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

139. The findings of the inspection team matched the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
140. The school is appropriately staffed with suitably qualified teachers who provide a wide range of subject expertise, experience and skills, which are readily shared throughout the school. Support staff contributes effectively to the overall learning and teaching throughout the school. Together they help to make the school a happy and productive environment.
141. All staff benefit from appropriate training that has improved their expertise in their subject areas and has had a positive impact on standards in most subjects. In addition, whole school training has addressed priorities indicated in the SIP.
142. The school clerk, caretaker, catering staff, cleaners and lunchtime supervisors are a valued part of the school team and carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.
143. All members of staff have job descriptions and receive regular updates to their training and are appropriately developed through performance management. All teachers receive appropriate regular time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). Workforce remodelling has resulted in strengthening the role of the deputy headteacher in the senior management team. The school uses and deploys its teaching staff and assistants well.
144. The accommodation is clean and well maintained. Classrooms are of a good size and attention is paid to pupils' learning and daily needs. Throughout the school the many displays in classrooms and shared areas celebrate pupils' achievements and provide a colourful and stimulating learning environment. Although there is only a small outdoor area for reception children to use, it is imaginatively developed and provides a good outdoor play space for them. There is a new school entrance with disabled access.
145. The school has appropriate resources to meet its needs in all curriculum areas. The school library is well stocked with carefully selected books that cover an appropriate range of subjects and provide for the needs of the pupils. The computer suite is

spacious and there is sufficient equipment for pupils' use. All classrooms have an interactive white board which are well used in supporting learning.

146. The school has also made good use of funding allocated for the development of the Foundation Phase to ensure a good ratio of adults to children in both nursery and reception.
147. Effective and efficient use is made of resources around the school. Pupils respect the equipment and also make good use of available off-site facilities, for example, the local area to support the curriculum and enhance their learning experiences.
148. The headteacher and the governing body carefully monitor spending and save money in a variety of ways. This is accounted for accurately. All school initiatives are carefully costed and developments are prioritised in line with the SIP. Bearing in mind the overall quality of education provided and the progress pupils make, the school gives value for money.

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

### **Foundation Phase**

149. The overall grade for nursery and reception is Grade 2.

#### **Language, Literacy and Communication skills**

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

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

##### **Outstanding features**

150. Reception children make very good progress in speaking and listening for their age. They speak very clearly and confidently, expressing their opinions well.
151. In reception children are very enthusiastic readers and they know many simple words. They read very expressively and use their knowledge of letter sounds very well to read new words and establish meaning. They use their phonic skills very well and most show a very good recall of the sounds they have learnt.

##### **Good features**

152. Younger and older children's skills extend their speaking skills well through different role-play situations such as in the toy shop or going on a bear hunt.
153. Nursery children talk appropriately and respond to questioning on their interests and activities. They form good relationships with their practitioners and their peers.
154. Nursery children take part in a range of activities to enhance their pre-writing manipulative skills which develop well. Nearly all reception children are skilful

emergent writers and make accurate representations of letters and simple words through using a range of tools and materials.

### **Shortcomings**

155. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity**

### **Nursery and Reception Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.**

#### **Outstanding Features**

156. Children are very happy and confident when they come in to school and engage in learning enthusiastically. They have very good relationships with one another and with their teachers. They concentrate very well and work hard.

157. Older children in the nursery are very good role models for the more recent entrants because their personal and social skills have been well developed. They know their routines well, settle to tasks quickly and are happy, secure learners.

#### **Good features**

158. Nursery and reception children are good listeners and follow instructions well. They play willingly together.

159. Reception children's ability to concentrate for long periods of time is good. They take turns, share equipment readily and work co-operatively. They complete tasks within a specified time and their ability to communicate and socialise in small groups is very good. Behaviour is exemplary and they are independent learners.

160. Children enjoy their outdoor experiences and understand simple rules for their health and safety. They greet new experiences with enthusiasm and confidence.

161. Reception children begin to develop a positive understanding of their own and other cultures.

### **Shortcomings**

162. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Mathematical Development**

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

#### **Good Features**

163. Children quickly understand that mathematics is part of everyday life. They make simple calculations and estimations frequently during daily play activities inside and outside the classroom.

164. All children enjoy counting activities and join in with enthusiasm number rhymes, songs and counting games. They successfully engage in a range of activities that help them match, sort, order and count.
165. Reception children explore capacity and time through their play activities. Their understanding of full and empty; more and less is well developed. They use mathematical language effectively when involved in tasks.
166. Older children recognise the importance of money in the role-play area as they experiment with paying and giving change in the toy shop.
167. Nursery children can count reliably to five. They recognise regular two dimensional and three dimensional shapes and copy and finish patterns accurately.
168. Reception children count accurately to 20 and beyond. They readily understand addition to 10 and name a range of two dimensional and three dimensional shapes and identify their properties. They effectively input right and left, forward and back instructions into a movable toy, for example a 'Beebot', to enable it to reach its destination. They use computer programmes competently to sort and classify objects.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no important shortcomings

### **Welsh Language Development**

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

#### **Good features**

169. Children across the Foundation Phase make good progress in their Welsh language development and enjoy using the language during discussion and sharing times. They use simple words and greetings accurately
170. Reception children understand simple commands using the Welsh language and so carry out simple tasks that are asked of them, such as in physical education lessons.
171. All children join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes in Welsh. Their pronunciation is generally good and clear.

### **Shortcomings**

172. There are no important shortcomings

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

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

#### **Good features**

173. Nursery children work co-operatively with an adult to make fairy cakes. They know the names of the ingredients and recognised their colours. All are able to use a large mixing spoon to good effect. Picture clues on the recipe cards help them follow the instructions. They notice how substances change.
174. Reception children develop a good understanding of the use of technology in everyday life. They use a digital blue microscope to sort and group fabric samples. They have a good understanding of which fabrics are best at keeping water out and of the concepts of 'permeable' and 'water-proof'. Reception children also give simple instructions to a programmable toy, helping it to move and turn correctly.
175. Nursery and reception children enjoy studying the natural world in the areas surrounding the school and competently use magnifying glasses to look for interesting objects.
176. Nursery children begin to develop early mapping skills when they read and solve clues to find lost presents that have been hidden outside. In the nursery and reception, children are beginning to appreciate the meaning of faith and are developing a real sense of awe and wonder in what they see. They understand that there are different beliefs and religious traditions in the world.
177. Reception children's investigation skills are developing well. They can solve simple problems confidently.

#### **Shortcomings**

178. There are no important shortcomings

## **Physical Development**

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

#### **Good features**

179. Nursery children confidently catch and throw large and small balls.
180. Reception children participate enthusiastically in physical activities in the hall and in outdoor spaces. They use a good range of climbing and balancing equipment, with good control and co-ordination. Children fully understand and explain the need for 'warm up' and 'cool down' in their physical education sessions inside in the hall. They run, jump, hop and land appropriately.
181. Children demonstrate a good level of engagement as they role-play the bear hunt story and try and find the hidden presents. They move in a variety of ways.

182. All children in nursery and reception handle small tools, such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes, with good control and are developing their skills well. They also carefully manipulate small construction equipment and materials such as clay and play dough with dexterity.
183. During outdoor activities, children skilfully manoeuvre a range of wheeled vehicles, avoiding other children.
184. When reception children use the computer, they control the mouse well and are able to 'drag and drop' items on the screen accurately.

### **Shortcomings**

185. There are no important shortcomings

### **Creative Development**

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

#### **Good features**

186. Children explore and experiment with a wide range of art and craft techniques with confidence and skill. These include cutting, sticking, painting, colour mixing, printing and pattern making. They make choices of materials, colour and shape. Paintings in the classrooms are bold and distinctive and they create colourful and effective pictures.
187. Children in the nursery and in the reception manipulate small tools effectively to create their cakes from clay. They concentrate, adapt and embellish their work well.
188. Younger children successfully make and decorate fairy cakes while older children ice biscuits.
189. Nursery and reception children imaginatively indulge in role-play, particularly when they play in the gift shop and 'siop tegannau'.
190. Children in nursery and reception join in enthusiastically with musical activities and this has a positive impact on the progress they make. Most can recall a range of songs and rhymes. Musical skills involving rhythm and a range of instruments are also evident.

### **Shortcomings**

191. 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**

192. Across KS1 and KS2 nearly all pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. They respond clearly to questions and discuss confidently using appropriate tone and inflection, for example when taking on the role of a character in a story. They ask their own questions and share their ideas articulately. Nearly all listen with interest and concentration.
193. In KS1 and KS2 pupils read with enthusiasm and growing accuracy. From Y1 they have a good understanding of the sounds which letters make and of how to use these skills to read unfamiliar words. Nearly all in KS1 enjoy reading a broad range of fiction and non-fiction books in their group reading sessions and when reading as a class or as an individual. They recall the main events of the story and the feelings of the characters. They copy the examples set by their teachers when varying their voices to match the characters of those in the story. They recognise the difference between direct and indirect speech and how it can be expressed in 'speech bubbles' as well as by using 'speech marks'.
194. Across KS2 many read well for a range of reasons. They use reference books newspapers and the Internet to find out information for themselves confidently and quickly. They are familiar with the different parts of a reference book such as the index and glossary and use them efficiently. Nearly all discuss the content of the books they read in detail and accurately describe the characters and events in them.
195. In KS1 nearly all pupils know about the purpose of adjectives and adverbs and use them effectively in their writing. They write well in direct speech. They use speech bubbles to retell the story. They write detailed character sketches and continue a story, for example inventing a skeleton plan on which to develop their ideas further and in a systematic order.
196. Within KS2 younger pupils write for an increasing range of reasons. They compose newspaper articles and short stories. They construct poems and carefully choose words which convey the meanings which they wish to give to their work. They use a thesaurus well in the process.
197. Older pupils in KS2 discuss words which have different meanings but sound the same. They recognise a rhythm in a word and in a line of poetry. They choose combinations of words to convey meanings and to make their work come to life. They know how to construct a poem and do so effectively. They record their ideas neatly and legibly. They write detailed biographies linked to their work in history and retell well known stories from Monmouthshire. They cleverly use their knowledge of alliteration, similes and metaphors in order to make their writing lively and effective.

## Shortcomings

198. 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

199. Within KS1 nearly all pupils recognise that humans change as they grow from babies to adults. They make sensible predications about which objects will float and which will sink. They access the properties of objects by their texture. They reach realistic conclusions as a result of the information they gather for themselves. They recognise that electricity is a force which is dangerous but is of great significance in their daily lives.
200. Many older pupils in KS1 know how important it is to be healthy and to eat and drink the right food. They know that food provides energy. They know how to create a fair test.
201. Nearly all younger pupils in KS2 build successfully on what they have learnt previous, about healthy eating and lifestyles. They plan a healthy meal. They know the main organs and bones of the body and how our senses work. They appreciate the importance of saving energy. They know that some soft drinks are harmful and that acids and bacteria are corrosive. They carry out carefully constructed tests to illustrate how these work.
202. Nearly all younger pupils in KS2 appreciate the forces at work when, for example a model car is rolled down a ramp to run across different surfaces. They distinguish accurately between magnetic and non-magnetic materials. They devise a simple experiment to test the strength of different magnets.
203. Many older pupils in KS2 recognise that transparent and opaque materials have different properties. They deduce logically what are the purposes of having curtains in windows both in hot and cold environments.
204. Nearly all older pupils in KS2 recognise that physical activity impacts on the function of the heart and lungs. They measure accurately changes in breathing rates comparing them before and after exercise. They pose interesting hypotheses, for example that taller people jump further and test to find out if it is true. They are very aware of the importance of constants and variables when conducting an investigation of this type.
205. Within KS2 many older pupils have a good understanding of how simple circuits function. They know that voltage is a measure of electrical force. They experiment to see how a change in voltage affects the brightness of a light or the sound of a buzzer. They know that some materials are good insulators and others are effective

conductors. They record their work neatly using appropriate circuit diagrams and symbols.

### **Shortcomings**

206. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Information communications technology</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**

207. In both key stages, nearly all pupils find their files and save their work independently to their personal number on the school's server.
208. All pupils in KS1 use the computer effectively to present their written work. They know the layout of a computer keyboard using 'shift', 'enter' and 'backspace' confidently when entering text. They skilfully use the mouse and develop good keyboard skills.
209. In KS1 nearly all pupils create and colour their own pictures using painting programs and using different painting tools. They combine text and graphics well when writing about 'The Rainbow Fish'.
210. Younger pupils use a digital camera with confidence to take photographs of places in their locality.
211. All pupils in KS1 understand how to control a programmable toy to complete a series of movements into specific locations.
212. In KS2 all pupils understand the function of different icons on a desktop. They use different fonts to form an effect when producing a document. They show confidence when using data handling packages to good effect and record findings accurately by choosing the most appropriate graph.
213. In KS2 they make effective use of the Internet to research topics such as local historical issues, Egyptians, space and World War II. They discover facts through appropriate use of a search engine. They make electronic presentations based on their investigations.
214. Nearly all older pupils in KS2 use computer generated spreadsheets appropriately to record information. They construct a variety of graphs to illustrate features of the planets such as about surface temperature and distance from the sun.

### **Shortcomings**

215. There are no important shortcomings.

## Geography

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

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

### Good features

216. All pupils in KS1 have a good understanding of the routes they take to come to school. They record important physical features they see on the way to school. They identify the different types of housing around them. In KS1 nearly all pupils have good enquiry skills. They identify in their area which features they consider to be attractive and those which they dislike and wish to improve.
217. In KS1 pupils have a good knowledge of life in the village of Chembokoli in India. They deduce information about employment and the land use from a close study of photographs of the area.
218. Within KS2 younger pupils extend their understanding of their local area, recognising different parts of it from photographs. They accurately locate the images on outline maps and recognise when some photographs are out of place. They know how their own area has changed since the removal of their famous viaduct and how the land around the viaduct has been put to new uses.
219. All pupils in KS2 compare the climate of Wales with that of the Maldives and of Egypt. They contrast the different air temperatures found in different parts of Egypt. They compare from maps and photographs the land use in Cardiff Bay with that in rural Pembrokeshire and with their own area.

### Shortcomings

220. Within KS2 pupils have insufficient opportunities to express their views about ecological issues.
221. KS2 pupils have too little experience in conducting geographical investigations, for example about the likely impact of environmental changes and how these affect the lives and activities of people.
222. Pupils in KS2 do not use geographical enquiry skills sufficiently to make measurements and to record observations.

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

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

**Good features**

223. In both key stages nearly all pupils know about the main festivals of some world religions. For example, they celebrate the main Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter, the Jewish festival of 'Bar Mitzvah' and the Hindu festival of 'Diwali'.
224. KS1 pupils know about places of worship of both the Christian and Islamic faiths. They are aware of the importance of gratitude and have written their own prayers of thanks. They have a good awareness of the Hindu religion related to celebrations through the story of 'Rama and Sita'.
225. Many younger pupils in KS2 talk about their special places in the locality and have a good knowledge of the Creation Story.
226. All KS2 pupils discuss and understand that people believe in things that they cannot see, for example, in relation to the Old Testament story of the flight of the Israelites from Egyptian captivity.
227. All older pupils talk knowledgeably about war and Remembrance Day and they discuss lucidly about possible ways to remember people after they have died.

**Shortcomings**

228. There are no important shortcomings.

## **School's response to the inspection**

229. The governors and staff have considered the outcomes of the inspection and are delighted that the findings acknowledged that Sofrydd Primary School is good school with some outstanding features, providing a sound education for all its pupils.
230. It is very reassuring that our self-evaluation has provided a good indication of the school's current position with which the inspection team has agreed.
231. We are pleased that the inspectors found pupils' standards of achievement and the quality of teaching as being comparable with those reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI). This is a reflection of the hard work of pupils, all staff and governors of Sofrydd Primary School.
232. We are delighted that the report confirms that a significant strength is the ability of pupils across the school to express themselves verbally with confidence and competence.
233. An action plan to include the recommendations will be produced by the staff and governors and will be incorporated into the school's strategic plan.
234. An outline of the school's action plan will be sent to all parents and the governors' annual report to parents will report on progress.
235. It was felt that the process was open and transparent and stakeholders were given every opportunity to be involved in high quality, constructive professional dialogue with the inspectors.
236. The school would like to thank the registered inspector and members of the inspection team for the professional, courteous and empathetic manner in which the inspection was conducted and for their contribution to future school improvement.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Sofrydd C.P. School
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Sofrydd Road Crumlin Newport
Postcode	NP13 5DW
Telephone number	01495 244003
Headteacher	Mr Robert Reeves
Date of appointment	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2008
Chair of governors	Mr Edward Carr
Registered inspector	Mr Peter Mathias
Dates of inspection	16 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2009

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y 1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	10.5	16	16	8	25	16	16	19	126.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	6	2	7.2

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	18.7
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	23.2
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	76.8%	82.2%	88%
Summer 2008	80.5%	89%	91%
Autumn 2008	83.9%	92.5%	93.3%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	24%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	3

## Appendix 3

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:		24		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	26.1	56.5	17.4
		National	0.2	3.5	13.8	63.0	19.4
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	26.1	47.8	26.1
		National	0.2	4.1	14.9	55.2	25.5
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	13.0	26.1	60.9	0.0
		National	0.2	4.8	15.9	67.8	11.3
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	13.0	69.6	17.4
		National	0.2	2.4	10.7	62.8	23.8
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	17.4	65.2	17.4
		National	0.2	2.0	10.9	65.2	21.6
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	8.7	87.0	4.3
		National	0.2	1.6	8.5	66.3	23.4

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English according to teacher assessment			
In the school	69.6%	In Wales	80.7%

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:**

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008</b>			Number of pupils in Y6		11				
<b>Percentage of pupils at each level</b>									
			D	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	9.1	9.1	81.8	0
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	18.2	72.7	9.1
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	18.2	63.6	18.2
		National	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

<b>Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and English by teacher assessment</b>	
In the school	72.7%
In Wales	75.5%

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

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent the equivalent of seven inspector days in the school with a nominee from the school and a peer assessor.

The inspectors visited:

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

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

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

The team also considered:

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

After the inspection, the team held meetings with the staff, senior managers and governors.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Peter Mathias (Registered Inspector)	Context Summary and Recommendations Contributions to Key Questions 1 & 2 Key Question 5 Key Question 6 Appendices English Science Geography
Mr Stewart Hammond (Lay Inspector)	Contributions to Key Questions 1 3 & 4
Mrs Meinir Howells (Team Member)	Contributions to Key Questions 2, 3 & 4 Key Question 7 Early Years Information communications technology Religious education
Mrs Claire Donald (Deputy Headteacher/Nominee)	Attended meetings Schools Response
Mrs Nikki Dargie (Peer Assessor)	Contributions to all Key Questions

### Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to thank the governing body, the headteacher and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.

### Contractor:

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