

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

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

**St Helen's Catholic Primary School  
Lansbury Park  
Caerphilly  
CF83 1QH**

**School Number: 6763310**

**Date of Inspection: 24/11/08**

**by**

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

The inspection of St Helens Catholic Primary School took place between 24/11/08 and 27/11/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Linda Jane Williams undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. St Helen's Primary School is a Catholic Voluntary Aided school situated on the outskirts of Caerphilly and is the only faith school in the county borough. In accordance with Section 50 of the Education Act, acts of collective worship and religious education are being inspected and reported upon separately.
2. Pupils from all parts of Caerphilly attend the school, with a third of pupils residing in Communities First Areas. The school considers that some pupils experience a high level of social deprivation and disadvantage, whilst others do not. Approximately 15 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is slightly below the national and LA averages. The figure has increased significantly since the last inspection.
3. The governing body controls admission to the school which caters for children aged three to eleven years. Children are admitted to the nursery at the start of the academic year following their third birthday and attend on a part-time basis. At the time of the inspection there were 332 pupils on roll, including 50 part-time nursery-aged children. Numbers have increased steadily in recent years with a significant number of pupils joining the school at times other than normal admission times. Four of the thirteen classes within the school have a mixed-age range.
4. Assessments undertaken during the first term in nursery, when compared by the Caerphilly local authority (LA) to similar schools within the county on the basis of free school meal entitlement, indicate the ability of the majority of children is well below that in similar schools. Pupils represent the full range of ability.
5. English is the home language for 98 per cent of the pupils. Two per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), and the first languages for these pupils are Philippino and Italian.
6. Seventy-one pupils, which is just over 21 per cent, are identified as having special educational needs (SEN), which is broadly similar to other schools in Wales. Five pupils have statements of SEN. No pupil has been excluded from the school in the past twelve months.
7. The school has achieved a number of awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investor in People, Sports Marc Cymru, Healthy Schools and the Eco school green flag. Since the last inspection, substantial development of the school's grounds has taken place.

## The school's priorities and targets

The school's agreed mission statement is: *The best education is the word of God.*

The school's priorities for development are:

- raising standards in religious education;
- improving standards in the teaching and learning of mathematics throughout the school;
- raising standards in the teaching and learning of Welsh in key stage 1 and key stage 2; and
- raising standards in the teaching and learning of music.

## Summary

8. St. Helen's Catholic Primary School is a good school which provides outstanding care, support and guidance for its pupils.
9. The inspection team agrees with the school's self-evaluation in all of the seven key questions. The school has made good progress since the last inspection.

### 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?	1
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

10. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed during the inspection are as follows:

Grade1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
20%	66%	14%	0%	0%

11. These figures are above the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest annual report 2006-2007, where standards were good or better in 80 per cent of lessons, including 10 per cent of lessons with outstanding features. The number of lessons where outstanding features were observed is particularly high.

### Areas of learning for under-fives

Foundation Phase	Overall Grade 1
Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity	1
Language, literacy and communication	1
Mathematical development	1
Welsh Language Development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	1
Physical development	1
Creative development	1

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

### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	1	2
Design and technology	2	2
Geography	1	2
Music	2	2
Physical Education	2	2

13. Standards achieved by children in the Foundation Phase and key stage 1 in the key skill of communication are outstanding. In key stage 2 pupils' standards in the key skill of communication are good overall, although pupils' speaking skills are also outstanding. Pupils across the school are exceptionally confident and competent speakers, relative to their age and ability.
14. Throughout the school pupils' problem-solving and creative skills are outstanding. Standards in the key skill of ICT are good across the school; pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 achieve good standards when using their numeracy skills across the curriculum and in the Foundation Phase children's numeracy skills are outstanding.
15. Children in the Foundation Phase make good progress in developing their use of the Welsh language. However, pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 do not develop their confidence in using the language consistently. They react positively to questions and instructions but overall make insufficient use of the language on a day-to-day basis. Pupils' knowledge of Welsh heritage and culture, *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, is also underdeveloped.
16. National Curriculum assessment results at the end of key stage 1 in 2008 show that 79 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 or above in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results are slightly below the national average of 81 per cent. At the end of key stage 2 in 2008, the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in each of the core subjects was below the national average.

17. When the school's results in the core subjects at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are compared with similar schools, based on free school meal entitlement, the school has been in the lowest 25 or 50 per cent in each subject over the last three years.
18. The overall averages achieved by the school in the core subjects, particularly at the end of key stage 2, are affected by the significant number of pupils who enter the school at times other than normal admission times. Detailed records maintained by the school show that pupils who attend the school from nursery to the end of key stage 2 make good and sometimes very good progress, with pupils who join the school at other times achieving well from their starting points.
19. Pupils of all ages are extremely well motivated. They concentrate very well and have exceptionally good attitudes to learning. As a result of continually assessing their own work and that of others, all pupils have an exceptionally well developed awareness of their strengths and what they need to do in order to improve. Pupils' behaviour and the respect they show to adults and each other is good. There are times, for example, when pupils work outdoors in the wooded area in the school grounds, designated as a Forest School, when behaviour is exemplary.
20. At 94 per cent, the average rate of attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is above the LA and national averages. Most pupils attend school regularly but a small number arrive late at the start of the school day.
21. Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development. Pupils are beginning to develop a good understanding of the world of work although the entrepreneurial skills of pupils in both key stages are underdeveloped.

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

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

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
26%	58%	16%	0%	0%

23. These figures are above the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest annual report 2006-2007, where the quality of teaching was grade 2 or better in 80 per cent of lessons, including 14 per cent of lessons where the quality of teaching had outstanding features. The proportion of Grade 1 teaching during the inspection exceeded that found nationally.
24. There are good working relationships in all classrooms. Teaching assistants provide very effective help and guidance for individuals and groups of pupils in all areas of the curriculum. The planning of lessons is detailed in all classes and includes a high level of attention to the correct match of work to pupils' abilities within lessons. Although many adults provide a good role model in their frequent use of incidental Welsh, they do not consistently provide opportunities for pupils to respond orally to the use of Welsh. This adversely affects the standards achieved by the pupils.

25. Overall assessment and its use in planning and improving learning is good with no important shortcomings. Assessment in the Foundation Phase is particularly effective. Pupils evaluate their own work and that of others with clear understanding and relevance, both in end of lesson plenary sessions and in their written work.
26. There are many good features to the learning experiences that the school provides for its pupils. In the Foundation Phase and key stage 1, there are several outstanding features to curricular provision. The school has been innovative in developing a stimulating curriculum for the under-fives and key stage 1 pupils based on outdoor learning and the Foundation Phase philosophy.
27. The broad and balanced curriculum meets legal requirements. The curriculum effectively addresses the needs of all groups of learners including a number of pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties who particularly benefit from experiential outdoor learning.
28. The promotion of pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with outstanding features. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship issues.
29. Pupils develop a basic understanding of the unique culture of Wales through their work in geography, in some of their musical activities and as a result of links with local community activities, such as Welsh Folk dancing and the Urdd camp. However, there are insufficient planned activities to fully develop pupils' awareness of the heritage and culture of Wales, *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*.
30. Opportunities for pupils to develop skills required to support their economic understanding have good features that outweigh shortcomings. The school is aware of the need to develop pupils' entrepreneurial opportunities further.
31. Pupils are cared for, guided and supported very well in a happy and nurturing environment. The school is an exceptionally inclusive community. The strong Christian ethos of the school ensures that every pupil is a valued member of the school community. Outstanding features of care and support include the way in which the school works in partnership with parents, induction programmes and the quality of personal support and guidance the school provides for pupils.
32. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. All statutory requirements are fully met. All staff are very knowledgeable concerning pupils' additional needs and use their knowledge very effectively to identify pupils' needs at a very early stage. The level and scope of additional support provided for pupils with SEN is outstanding. There is also significant and very effective support for those pupils who have behavioural difficulties.
33. The school has clear and well-documented procedures that contribute to the safety, health and well being of the pupils in its care.

## **Leadership and management**

34. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a purposeful sense of direction for the school. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. All staff, both teaching and support staff, work together as an exceptionally close team.
35. The extent of the school's involvement in national priorities is an outstanding feature. The school has achieved an extensive number of awards, many of which particularly relate to national priorities. Although continuing to teach the National Curriculum in key stage 1, the school has very successfully embraced the philosophy and practices of the Foundation Phase. The way in which the school has developed opportunities for outdoor learning is outstanding.
36. Governors meet regularly and are well aware of their roles and responsibilities. Their role in self-evaluation and helping to set the strategic direction of the school is good. The governing body fulfils all legal and statutory requirements.
37. The procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are good. The process of self-evaluation is well established and the self-evaluation report is comprehensive and accurate. Areas for development are identified and incorporated within the School Development Plan and the School Strategic Business Plan. These are effective documents providing good strategic direction.
38. The senior management team is well informed about many areas for which they are responsible. Subject leaders work hard to develop curricular provision. However, their evaluations and annual reviews focus too heavily on provision and do not inform the senior leadership of the school sufficiently well about the standards pupils achieve.
39. There is a good ratio of teachers to pupils, and staff are suitably qualified to teach every aspect of the curriculum fully. They develop their professional knowledge well, and keep up-to-date with current developments. Support staff make a substantial contribution to pupils' learning.
40. The inside accommodation of the school provides limited learning space for the number of pupils on roll, but the school works hard to ensure that this does not impact adversely on pupils' learning opportunities. Displays of pupils' work in classrooms, corridors and other whole school learning spaces make the environment bright and attractive. Learning resources are of good quality and organised well. The resources for outdoor learning are an outstanding feature of the school provision.
41. The school budget is managed well by the headteacher, supported by the LA finance officer, governing body and school secretaries. Overall the school provides good value for money.

## Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve the current good standards, staff and governors should:

- R1** Raise standards in bilingualism\*\*\* and further develop pupils' knowledge of Welsh culture and heritage, *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*.
- R2** Ensure that the work of subject co-ordinators clearly focuses on raising standards.
- R3** Develop the entrepreneurial skills of pupils in key stages 1 and 2.\*\*\*

\*\*\* These recommendations had been identified by the school as areas for improvement prior to the inspection.

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 with no important shortcomings

42. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
43. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed during the inspection are as follows:

Grade1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
20%	66%	14%	0%	0%

44. These figures are above the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest annual report 2006-2007, where standards were good or better in 80 per cent of lessons, including 10 per cent of lessons where standards were outstanding. The number of lessons during the inspection where outstanding features were observed was particularly high.

#### Areas of learning for under-fives

Foundation Phase	Overall Grade 1
Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity	1
Language, literacy and communication	1
Mathematical development	1
Welsh Language Development	2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	1
Physical development	1
Creative development	1

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

#### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
English	1	2
Design and technology	2	2
Geography	1	2
Music	2	2
Physical Education	2	2

46. Assessment undertaken during the first term in nursery, when compared by the LA to similar schools within the county on the basis of free school meal entitlement, indicates the ability of the majority of children is well below that of similar schools. Baseline assessment undertaken within the first term in the

reception class indicates that many children have average baseline scores. These results, together with records maintained by the school, show that children in nursery and reception make outstanding progress during their time in the Foundation Phase. Pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make good and occasional very good progress as they move through the school.

47. The school has established a detailed pupil progress tracking system, which is used effectively to set individual targets for pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2. Although individual targets are based on high expectations of pupils, nearly all succeed in achieving the targets set. Challenging whole school targets are set annually and the majority are exceeded.
48. Standards achieved by children in the Foundation Phase and pupils in key stage 1 in the key skill of communication are good with outstanding features. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are outstanding and they achieve exceptionally well when developing their early writing skills across all areas of learning. They make good progress in developing their early reading skills. In the Foundation Phase children also make outstanding progress in developing their numeracy skills.
49. In key stage 2, pupils' standards in the key skill of communication are good, although pupils' speaking skills are outstanding. All pupils are exceptionally confident and competent speakers, relative to their ages and abilities. They express their ideas and opinions with great clarity, using a very good range of appropriate vocabulary. All pupils listen well to their teachers and to other pupils. Pupils in key stage 2 continue to develop their skills well when they write in a range of different styles and for different purposes. They also make good progress in developing their reading skills. Many older pupils read very confidently, both to obtain information and for pleasure
50. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 achieve good standards in their numeracy skills and all pupils across the school are making good progress in developing their skills in information technology (IT) across the curriculum. The problem-solving and creative skills of pupils across the school are outstanding.
51. Children in the Foundation Phase make good progress in developing their use of the Welsh language. However, pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 do not develop their confidence in using the language consistently. They react positively to questions and instructions but overall make insufficient use of the language on a day-to-day basis. Pupils' knowledge of Welsh heritage and culture, *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, is also underdeveloped.
52. National Curriculum assessment results at the end of key stage 1 in 2008 show that 79 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 or above in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Results are slightly below the national average of 81 per cent. The number of pupils achieving the higher than expected level 3 was well above the national average in science and similar to the national averages in English and mathematics.

53. At the end of key stage 2 in 2008, the number of pupils achieving level 4 or above in each of the core subjects was below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher than expected level 5 was also below the national averages in all the core subjects.
54. When the school's results in the core subjects at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are compared with similar schools, based on free school meal entitlement, the school has been in the lowest 25 or 50 per cent for each subject over the last three years. Trends in performance in the core subjects at the end of key stage 2 from 2005 to 2007 show a fall in the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 and above. However, results in 2008 when compared with 2007 were higher in each of the core subjects.
55. The overall averages achieved by the school in the core subjects, particularly at the end of key stage 2, are affected by the significant number of pupils who enter the school at times other than normal admission times. Of the pupils currently in key stage 2, 34 per cent have joined the school since the end of their year in reception. Detailed records maintained by the school show that pupils who attend the school from nursery to the end of key stage 2 make good and sometimes very good progress, with pupils who join the school at other times achieving very well from their starting points.
56. Data provided by the school indicates that pupils, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background make good and sometimes very good progress from their starting points. Pupils with SEN achieve well compared with the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Analysis of the results achieved at the end of key stage 2 shows no significant difference in the achievement of boys compared to the results achieved by the girls.
57. As a result of continually assessing their own work and the work of others, all pupils have an exceptionally well-developed awareness of their strengths and what they need to do in order to improve. Pupils across the school readily acquire new knowledge and skills. They are confident to apply this knowledge in new and unfamiliar situations.
58. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 make good progress in fulfilling their potential and are well placed to move on to the next stage in their learning. The progress made by children in the Foundation Phase is outstanding.
59. Pupils of all ages are extremely well motivated; they love coming to school. They delight in the work they do out of doors, particularly in their Forest School. Key stage 1 pupils are excited by the thought of the activities in which they engage on Messy Mondays, when they work outdoors, and Freaky Fridays, when they help to plan all activities. In more formal lessons, pupils also concentrate very well and have exceptionally good attitudes to learning.
60. Pupils' behaviour and the respect they show to adults and each other is good. There are times, for example, when pupils work outdoors in Forest School activities, where behaviour is exemplary.

61. The school has high expectations; pupils know what is expected and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and, as a result, pupils show care and concern for each other.
62. In their responses at the pre-inspection meetings and in the questionnaires, parents and governors say that pupils are very happy in school and have a strong sense of caring and respect for each other. Their behaviour in the community, and particularly in the swimming club and on residential visits, is excellent. Governors say the older pupils are very good ambassadors for the school.
63. The foundations for good behaviour are laid extremely effectively in the Foundation Phase. Throughout the school, pupils are very friendly, polite and considerate. They relate extremely well to adults and are very keen to please their teachers. Pupils move sensibly in and around the school and demonstrate a high degree of maturity. There is minimal disruption when moving between areas. Behaviour in the hall at breakfast and lunchtimes is good.
64. Pupils work and play together very well and relationships with each other are good. Older pupils are sensitive to the needs of their peers and the younger ones. Play leaders support the younger children at lunchtimes; they devise appropriate games for them and ensure that everyone has someone to play with. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong.
65. At 94 per cent, attendance for the three terms prior to the inspection is above the LA and national averages. Absences are caused mainly by illness and the persistent non-attendance of a very small number of pupils. The school actively discourages family holidays in term time: these absences are treated as unauthorised and, as a result, the number of unauthorised absences has increased. However, despite the school's best efforts, holidays adversely affect the overall rate.
66. Most pupils attend school regularly but a small number arrive late at the start of the school day. There have been no exclusions for many years.
67. From a very early age pupils become independent learners. Pupils in nursery, reception and key stage 1 regularly plan and organise their own learning activities. In key stage 2, pupils take considerable responsibility for managing their time. Pupils of all ages use success criteria very confidently for judging the effectiveness of their learning.
68. Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development. Throughout the school, pupils develop very high levels of confidence in expressing their feelings and views. They also develop great respect for the differing views of others.
69. Pupils have strong moral values. Moral codes are contributed to and agreed by the pupils, and promoted during collective worship. As a result of their charity

work, pupils have an exceptionally well developed sense of responsibility towards those who are less fortunate than themselves.

70. Pupils very quickly develop an outstanding ability to make decisions, solve problems and work co-operatively. All pupils are fully involved in the life and work of the school and, particularly through the school council, are able to participate in the decision-making process. Pupils are actively involved in improving the environment of the school and in being responsible for an allotment in the local area.
71. Throughout the school, pupils develop a good understanding of equal opportunities issues. Pupils achieve good standards in developing respect for diversity and the beliefs and traditions of others through their studies in religious education and through collective worship.
72. Pupils have a good understanding of the world of work and their place in the community because they participate in a good range of projects and community events as well as visits to appropriate places. Throughout the school, pupils take a share in school life. All pupils take their roles seriously and undertake their duties conscientiously and effectively.
73. The school and Eco councils have a very high profile in the school. As a result, pupils develop corporate responsibilities and a strong sense of belonging in school and the community. They have responsibilities such as energy monitors and have been involved in devising the Travel Plan to encourage pupils to walk to school. They work closely with staff and the governing body to ensure the school acts in a sustainable way. They also work closely with the Friends' Association in organising school and parish events.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

74. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
75. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
26%	58%	16%	0%	0%

76. These figures are above the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest annual report 2006-2007, where the quality of teaching was grade 2 or better in 80 per cent of lessons, including 14 per cent of lessons where the quality of teaching had outstanding features. The proportion of lessons in the school where teaching has outstanding features exceeds that found nationally.

77. Where the quality of teaching was judged to be grade 1, the outstanding features include:
- the use of two learning objectives with pupils allowed to choose the focus of their learning;
  - lessons where the learning objective is presented as a problem supported by very interesting and challenging activities;
  - exceptionally good questioning techniques which incorporate ambitious use of subject specific language;
  - very skilful planning incorporating ideas which stimulate enthusiasm; and
  - outstanding use of the end of lesson summary (plenary) session where all pupils evaluate the work of others.
78. Good features in lessons include:
- learning objectives shared with pupils at the start of lessons, so that they clearly understand the focus of their learning;
  - good use of time limits to ensure an appropriate pace of learning;
  - good variety in the range of teaching techniques used, including the use of 'talking partners';
  - effective questioning to check understanding, with good feedback to pupils to extend their learning;
  - good classroom management, with well-established routines;
  - effective use of praise that ensures pupils remain motivated and focused; and
  - the development of pupils' thinking skills through appropriate challenges.
79. In lessons where shortcomings were observed, these included occasions when introductions were over-long; considerable time was spent on discussing how to work in groups which detracted from the focus of the lesson; an over-emphasis on pupils' self and peer assessment disrupted the flow of the lesson; and lack of pace in group work sessions.
80. There are good working relationships in all classrooms. Teachers ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect, irrespective of race, gender or disability. They display a strong commitment to the raising of standards within the school and have high expectations of their pupils, which in turn, have a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes to their work. In all classes, teachers maintain high standards of behaviour and stress the importance of self-discipline. They take every opportunity to promote equality of opportunity and to challenge stereotypical images.
81. All teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and incorporate within their teaching many strategies linked to recent initiatives and their professional development. The principles and practice of the Foundation Phase are well established and teachers in key stage 2 have made good adjustments to their practice in response to changes to the National Curriculum.
82. The planning of lessons is detailed in all classes and includes a high level of attention to the match of work to pupils' abilities within learning opportunities. Lessons are set in well-structured sequences and the use of topic work across the school effectively supports links between subjects. The development of pupils' key skills is effectively incorporated into daily lesson plans. In all classes opportunities to develop pupils' independent learning skills are fully exploited.

83. Teaching assistants are appropriately involved in the planning of lessons and consequently have a clear understanding of their roles. They provide very effective help and guidance for individuals and groups of pupils in all areas of the curriculum. They show good initiative and sensitivity in their dealings with pupils.
84. The school successfully meets the language needs of EAL pupils. All teachers show a good awareness of these pupils' needs and plan carefully to ensure that they are able to have full access to all learning opportunities.
85. Although many adults are good role models in their frequent use of incidental Welsh, they do not consistently provide opportunities for the pupils to respond orally to the use of Welsh. This adversely affects the standards achieved by the pupils.
86. Planning to meet pupils' individual needs, and to monitor and review their progress, is good. Lesson evaluations and assessments are used consistently to inform and adjust planning for future lessons.
87. The school's arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' attainment and progress are good and meet all statutory requirements.
88. Assessment in the Foundation Phase is very effective. Following baseline assessment, challenging targets are set to enable children to develop skills across the seven areas of learning. Consistent and detailed monitoring of children's progress towards these targets ensures that assessment procedures give direction to the teaching and learning in the classroom. Those children who may need support for additional learning needs are identified at an early stage. Re-testing at the end of the reception year gives the school a clear understanding of how children are achieving.
89. Key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils' work in the core subjects is regularly assessed and levelled according to National Curriculum indicators. Standardised tests in mathematics and English are administered annually from year 1 to year 6 to monitor pupils' progress. This information is used systematically to inform teachers' planning and to clarify what kind of support may be needed for individual pupils. Additional testing is used effectively in year 5 to predict pupils' levels of work in the teacher assessments at the end of the key stage and to identify those pupils who are underachieving.
90. Pupils' work across the school is marked regularly and comments are effectively linked to learning objectives. Positive and constructive comments are made on pupils' work to encourage effort, and to indicate whether targets have been met. In the best examples they also explain in detail how specific aspects may be improved. Comments in the form of questions to encourage pupils to think are particularly effective.
91. The active involvement of pupils in defining their own success criteria, statements that tell pupils how well they have done, is very well established in classroom routines across the school and is an outstanding feature. Assessment methods, such as 'two stars and a wish', 'thumbs up' and 'tickled pink and growing green,' are understood and used very effectively by the pupils to judge work and to say how well they think they have performed.

92. Pupils' record of achievement folders are used well to compile a collection of work chosen by the pupils every half term and individual assessment information. These are available for scrutiny by their parents at any time and are presented to pupils when they leave the school.
93. Annotated work in the core subjects, compiled in conjunction with other local schools, is used appropriately to ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' work accurately reflect the levels detailed in the National Curriculum. Class folders of good work are kept as useful exemplars for teachers and pupils.
94. Annual reports to parents conform to statutory requirements. They provide detailed information on areas of learning or National Curriculum subjects and indicate the next steps for pupils' learning. Opportunities are provided for parents to discuss their children's progress each term.

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

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

95. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
96. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under fives is appropriate to their needs and children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.
97. There are many good features to the learning experiences that the school provides for its pupils overall. In the Foundation Phase and key stage 1, there are several outstanding features in curricular provision.
98. The school has been innovative in developing a stimulating curriculum for the under-fives and key stage 1 based on outdoor learning and the Foundation Phase philosophy. Children under five delight in their stimulating range of carefully planned indoor and outdoor learning experiences that develop their basic and key skills very effectively and make learning fun. Key stage 2 pupils also benefit from the school's gradual phasing in of more frequent opportunities to work in the Forest School and gardens.
99. The broad and balanced curriculum for the rest of the school fully meets legal requirements. Appropriate subject policies and schemes of work, including the effective integration of key skills, are in place. Policies are in place to address drugs awareness, sex education and personal and social education.
100. The school works hard to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to the needs of its pupils. The curriculum is effective in addressing the needs of a large number of pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties who particularly benefit from experiential outdoor learning.
101. The school develops the basic and key skills of pupils well because these are planned for systematically. Well-organised and implemented support is provided for pupils that underachieve in literacy and numeracy.

102. The way in which the school promotes learners personal development is good with outstanding features. The school caters for pupils' personal development exceptionally well through the values it promotes on a daily basis as a faith school and a caring community. It also does this through more formal arrangements in its recently revised Personal and Social Education (PSE) programme. Adults are outstanding role models of good manners and thoughtfulness.
103. Pupils develop a strong sense of spirituality particularly when they work out-of-doors and reflect on the beauty of the natural environment and their place in it; they see themselves as stewards of the natural world.
104. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is developed very well through their work in religious education and their study of other countries and continents, such as St Lucia and in Africa. They learn to appreciate art and music from different countries and times.
105. Opportunities to broaden and enrich pupils' learning are also good with outstanding features. The school organises many visits that enrich pupils' learning experiences. Year 6 pupils take part in outdoor pursuits and develop team building and problem solving skills through residential visits to Hay on Wye and Llangrannog. They benefit from visits to the wider community, such as a residential holiday in Belgium.
106. The school also provides a wealth of extra curricular opportunities in sport, music and other activities, lunchtime and after school clubs. In connection with these activities the school has received Children's University School status. This provision contributes very effectively to pupils' personal development.
107. The school welcomes a wide variety of different visitors from the local community and beyond. This enables pupils to develop their social skills, as well as their knowledge and understanding. The school has good working relationships with the community police service, school nurse, local theatre and music groups who support the programme of personal and social education very effectively.
108. There are good quality links with other providers of education, including local colleges. The school provides purposeful work experience placements for pupils from a number of local high schools as well as students working on diplomas.
109. Links with the high school to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6 are good. A high level of extra support is provided for year 6 pupils moving to secondary education. The school employs a teacher from the high school for one day per week to help pupils form relationships with their new teachers before they leave.
110. The school has very close links with parents. This is beneficial for pupils' and helps meet their learning needs. The support of parents for new initiatives, such as 'Messy Monday' and 'Freaky Friday' has been very positive. Parents

say they are pleased that their children are consulted about the curriculum and decide on some of their own activities. They agree that children have fun but are stretched academically at the same time.

111. Parents feel they receive sufficient information from the school. There is a suitable home school agreement and parents are keen to support the school by signing it.
112. A swimming club has been run by the parents each weekend for a number of years. The club is well attended by pupils of all ages and successfully develops and extends pupils' skills.
113. The school has a good partnership with industry. The school has a well written industry links policy. The headteacher is the nominated person responsible for developing and maintaining industry links and there are strong links with the Education Business Partnership (EBP).
114. A planned programme of educational visits and visitors from the community helps enhance the pupils' awareness of the world of work both past and present and raises their aspirations. One teacher has benefited from an industrial placement at the National Botanical Gardens and the majority of teachers have attended courses there. This has enhanced their professional development and supported the development of teaching and management skills. As a result, many of the features of the extensive outdoor environment are based on those in the gardens.
115. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 visit places of employment, such as supermarkets and environmental centres, as well as theatres and museums. They work with professionals such as a local artist, architect and structural engineer as well as theatre groups, dancers and musicians. For example, during the inspection older key stage 2 pupils worked with the British Gas Generation Green Team. They successfully constructed and tested a water powered car. The school benefits materially from its links in terms of manpower and resources, for example, the highlight of the year for full attendees is the journey in the limousine on Presentation Day.
116. Pupils develop a basic understanding of the unique culture of Wales through their work in geography when studying the local area, in some of their musical activities and through links with local community activities, such as Welsh Folk dancing and the Urdd camp. Overall, there are insufficient planned activities to develop fully pupils' awareness of the heritage and culture of Wales, *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*.
117. Many pupils do not live locally but the school has been highly proactive in forging links with the surrounding community in the interests of harmony and consideration. The school is quick to support disadvantaged families through health and other initiatives. It provides a free breakfast club and helps parents with transport difficulties. There are strong links with the parish community through joint fund-raising, pastoral work, the youth club and reciprocal sharing of facilities.

118. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship issues. They develop their very good understanding of global issues through their charity work, and through the curriculum and the travels of Barnaby Bear. Pupils have recently begun writing to children living in Zanzibar. They take part in a wide range of local, national and international initiatives and programmes, such as CAFOD, Fair Trade, Plastic Bottle Greenhouse and Yellow Pages. Pupils have made presentations to staff and governors and given them training in sustainable issues.
119. The school has achieved phase 3 of the healthy schools awards and the Eco School's Green Flag. Pupils ensure that the school, as an organisation, acts as sustainably as possible. They take responsibility for reducing the waste of energy and materials, meeting regularly to assess progress. Evaluations are critical, minutes are detailed and action plans are regularly reviewed. The school has a Travel Plan and separates waste, recycles and composts. Push taps have been fitted to wash basins and lights are turned off when not needed.
120. Opportunities for pupils to develop the skills required to support their economic understanding have good features that outweigh shortcomings. All pupils have the opportunity to take responsibilities as *Helpwr Heddiw*. They all help to raise money for good causes. Fundraising activities encourage pupils to reflect on current affairs and the needs of other people in the wider community. Some initiatives are generated by the pupils. They are successful in competitions, such as 'Caerphilly in Bloom' through their work on the school allotment.
121. Role play activities are used effectively to develop children's entrepreneurial skills in the Foundation Phase and very recently for pupils in Year 3. The school is aware of the need to develop entrepreneurial opportunities for pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 further.
122. The school attends very well to national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. Adult learning projects, such as the computer club run by a parent, are very well supported and valued by parents and other family members. Many volunteers gain access to further training. They gain qualifications and jobs in this and surrounding schools. Almost all the ancillary staff in school are former volunteers. As a result, pupils see adults as lifelong learners.

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

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

123. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
124. Pupils are cared for, guided and supported very well in a happy and nurturing environment. The school is an exceptionally inclusive community. The strong Christian ethos of the school ensures that every pupil is a valued member of the school community.

125. The importance of respect and tolerance is a strong principle of school life shared by all the members of the community. Support staff play a very proactive role in ensuring that pupils are cared for and supported well. Very effective use is made of a wide range of support services. These are outstanding features in the school.
126. The school has exceptionally effective systems in place to take account of parents' views. General questionnaires are sent out every three years to parents, but their opinions are frequently sought on specific aspects of school life, such as reward systems and school uniform. The school's 'open door' policy ensures that parents can talk to staff about any concerns they may have. Information about curriculum and homework are sent to parents every term, and links with parents are strengthened through specific occasions and activities, such as 'mission week'. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting said that their children are happy in school and any concerns which have been raised are dealt with immediately and very effectively.
127. Pupils have every opportunity to express their views on a range of aspects of school life, particularly through pupil questionnaires and the work of the school council. The school council is effective and comprises of democratically elected members from each class. The council meets regularly and other pupils are aware that they can bring matters to the attention of their elected members.
128. Elected members of the council are eager to represent their peers, and to have a forum in which to discuss issues that have arisen, or ways in which the school can be improved. Members of the school and Eco councils have formulated a development plan for this academic year.
129. The school's induction arrangements are good with outstanding features.
130. Induction arrangements for the early years are carefully planned and implemented. The weekly 'Link Up' group sessions and flexible intake for both nursery and reception children are very valuable initiatives. As a result, children quickly become familiar with the staff and school. There is a seamless transition between home and school. Children are exceptionally well supported, for example, reception children eat alone in the hall and benefit from the full attention of their teachers and support staff in a calm, family atmosphere.
131. There are induction meetings for nursery and reception parents supported by governors and the parish priest. Parents receive copies of the Foundation Phase handbook and all other important documents that inform them of school procedures and processes. Parents value the genuine open door policy and particularly the early meeting at the end of the first half term.
132. Transition activities are used very effectively when pupils move between classes and from key stage 1 to key stage 2. Pupils enjoy a transition morning at the end of the summer term when they visit their new classrooms and meet their new teachers. In the final term in year 2, teachers from year 3 visit pupils in their classroom once each week over a six-week period. Very effective

procedures, including a buddy system, are in place to support the many pupils who join the school at a later stage. All pupils quickly learn the routines and settle very well into school life.

133. Transition arrangements for pupils moving to the high school are outstanding. The schools are involved in a comprehensive transition plan. A transition worker spends one day a week in the school for two terms and remains in the receiving high school during the autumn term. This arrangement provides extremely valuable support for the pupils during their time in both schools.
134. Year 6 pupils benefit from the transition week when they attend the high school and follow their new timetable. As a result, they meet their class group and are introduced to the routines and expectations of their new school. The 'Simply Click' programme is an excellent initiative which provides Year 6 pupils with e-mail facilities between the two schools. Pupils in the high school answer frequently asked questions that help allay any fears and concerns pupils may have.
135. The school has a comprehensive PSE programme to raise pupils' awareness of themselves and of others. 'Circle time' class discussions and home groups are held regularly to give pupils the opportunity to discuss personal and social issues. The Pupils' Attitudes to School Survey (PASS) initiative identifies individuals who may suffer from low self-esteem and would benefit from individual support. Planned PSE activities are an integral part of the curriculum, and the use of the 'talking partner' strategy develops pupils' social skills very well.
136. Sex education is provided for year 6 pupils by the school nurse, and the police education liaison service contributes to pupils' education about road safety, anti-bullying measures and substance misuse. The school's involvement in the 'Rainbow' initiative ensures that pupils who suffer any form of bereavement are counselled and supported appropriately.
137. There are very effective policies and procedures in place to monitor pupils' attendance, punctuality and performance.
138. Pupils who have responsibilities as trained play leaders organise games at lunchtimes and ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to be included in activities. Trained midday supervisors support groups, particularly lower key stage 2 pupils. As a result, pupils learn the rules of new games and gain new skills.
139. Teachers apply policies for positive behaviour management consistently. All adults in the school are very good role models and as a result there is an atmosphere of mutual respect in the school.
140. The school has been very successful in changing the attitudes of pupils who have previously experienced difficulties in other schools. In discussion at the pre-inspection meeting, parents and carers said that they are very grateful for the school's work and support for their children.
141. Pupils' attendance and punctuality is extremely carefully monitored. The school sets appropriate targets and works very closely with the Community Focused

Schools Cluster Worker as part of the Attendance Project to support families and address concerns before they become major issues. This is an outstanding feature. The school discourages holidays in term time and treats these absences as unauthorised. Pupils with good attendance are rewarded monthly and they are keen to be in the best class each month.

142. Pupils' behaviour is very closely monitored and, when required, action is taken to support pupils who may experience difficulties. Incentives such as the 'Thinking Tree', 'Learning Wall' and 'Pupils of the Week' encourage pupils to behave well and are extremely effective. This is evident in the good standards of pupils' behaviour.
143. Pupils respond very well to the school's reward systems. Their achievements are celebrated in weekly assemblies. Pupils with full and improved attendance, excellent behaviour, as well as achievements in many other aspects of school life, are rewarded on Presentation Day. Many of the trophies and prizes presented on this occasion are donated by parents in recognition of their appreciation of the school's work.
144. In discussion, pupils say that bullying is not a problem and they know what to do should it occur. Incidents and outcomes of anti social behaviour are recorded and carefully monitored.
145. The school has clear and well-documented procedures that contribute to the safety, health and well-being of the pupils in its care. The school has a proactive approach to healthy living, which is shared by staff, pupils and parents. It has fully accredited status as a 'Healthy School', and healthy eating is addressed in lessons and incidentally.
146. All adults in the school are well aware of the needs of individual pupils and know what to do in the event of an emergency. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy. Risk assessments are carried out regularly for all activities inside the school building, in the outdoors learning areas and on outside visits. Fire drills are held every term and fire equipment is checked annually. Twelve staff hold current first aid certificates and training is updated regularly.
147. There is an appropriate policy and sound procedures for child protection. Two members of staff are the nominated officers and there is a nominated link governor. Teachers, support and ancillary staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.
148. The provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features. All statutory requirements are met. The school provides very effective support which meets the needs of pupils who require additional help including disabled pupils, the very able and EAL pupils.
149. All staff are exceptionally knowledgeable concerning pupils' additional needs and work closely with the headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator. They use their knowledge very effectively, particularly to identify pupils' additional needs at a very early stage. This is an outstanding feature.

150. All pupils with SEN have very good quality individual education plans, which support their learning very effectively. Pupils are fully involved in drawing up their targets and in reviewing them on a regular basis. The school makes good arrangements to involve parents in the setting and reviewing of targets.
151. The level and scope of additional support provided for pupils is outstanding. A wide range of programmes is used very successfully when pupils are withdrawn to work in small groups on their basic skills. Exceptional care is taken to ensure that withdrawing pupils from their classes does not limit their progress in other areas of the curriculum. Through the school's outstandingly inclusive nature, all pupils with additional learning needs are fully integrated into the life of the school.
152. There is significant and very effective support for those pupils who have behavioural difficulties. The agreed systems for behaviour management are used consistently by all staff. Individual behaviour plans are agreed with pupils and provide clearly focused targets that support pupils in learning to manage their own behaviour. Outstanding use is made of the 'PASS' programme to support staff in identifying areas where pupils have low self-esteem, with carefully considered action taken based on their findings. For example, the school has an allotment within the local community which a group of pupils visits weekly during the spring and summer, successfully producing a wide range of fruit and vegetables, which they distribute within the school and the local community.
153. The quality of provision for equal opportunities is good with no important shortcomings.
154. The school recognises the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and acts appropriately and effectively on the information. Breakfast club provides a free breakfast for all learners, and the school subsidises the cost of school trips and activities for those pupils who may face hardship. EAL pupils have additional support when needed. More able and talented pupils have been identified and are well supported by activities well matched to their needs within all classes.
155. The school treats boys and girls equally and actively discourages stereotyping through the teaching and by the example shown by all staff. The extensive range of clubs is open to both boys and girls. Pupils questioned confirmed there is no gender discrimination within the school.
156. The school has well-planned and documented procedures for dealing with race equality. Although the school population has limited numbers of pupils from ethnic minorities, it does much to successfully promote racial tolerance through its links with overseas schools. It also encourages the sensitive discussion of situations that are in the wider world, which receive widespread media attention. This is undertaken in assemblies and during personal and social education lessons.
157. There are appropriate policies and procedures for the prevention of, and dealing with, incidents of bullying and harassment. Pupils participate in anti-bullying

workshops with theatre groups and are involved in devising the school rules. Pupils express confidence in the school's systems.

158. There is a suitable disability inclusion policy and action plan in place. The school's accessibility plan is clear and informative, with measures in place to ensure no one is disadvantaged because of their disability.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

159. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
160. All staff are fully aware of the clear aims, objectives and policies of the school. They are much involved in promoting and sustaining improvements. The aims of the school successfully promote equality of opportunity and respect for all.
161. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a purposeful sense of direction for the school. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. All staff, both teaching and support staff, work together as an exceptionally close team.
162. All subject leaders are enthusiastic and, although many are relatively new to their current roles, they are beginning to provide strong leadership in the areas for which they are responsible. They manage their responsibilities well in relation to the time and opportunities made available. However, the work they undertake is insufficiently focused on improving standards and quality.
163. The extent of the school's involvement in national priorities is an outstanding feature. The school has achieved an extensive number of awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark on two occasions, Investor in People on three occasions, the Eco School Green Flag Award, Sportsmarc Cymru and three Healthy School Awards. A breakfast club within the school is very well established.
164. Although continuing to teach the National Curriculum in key stage 1, the school has very successfully embraced the philosophy and practices of the Foundation Phase for pupils from three to seven years. The way in which the school has developed opportunities for outdoor learning is outstanding. Pupils throughout the school regularly spend time in the well-developed school grounds. Senior managers have presented information to headteachers from across South Wales on their approach to the 'Assessment for Learning' initiative and the school's outdoor provision.
165. The school works closely with other providers of education and has particularly well developed links with the high school to which pupils transfer at the end of

key stage 2. The school grounds are used extensively as a training resource and exemplar for other schools. One of the teachers took a sabbatical following his industrial placement in the National Botanical Gardens and used his skills to train and develop staff in local schools. This is an outstanding feature.

166. The process of setting targets for improvement is well-embedded in the school and is successfully underpinned by the very detailed pupil progress tracking system established by senior managers. All class teachers review, and if necessary revise, pupils' individual targets prior to them moving on to the next class. Targets are therefore based securely on a sound knowledge of pupils' strengths and capabilities. The progress of all pupils is carefully tracked and used to set realistic targets for whole school improvement.
167. Procedures for the performance management of teaching staff are well established. Support staff receive very good guidance, support and training. All support staff meet annually with senior managers to review their performances and set targets for improvement. Training needs are identified through these meetings and through discussion throughout the year. The effectiveness of support staff is underpinned by very detailed job descriptions, exceptionally clear guidance as to their roles and responsibilities and very effective training.
168. All staff, both teaching and support staff, are involved in on-going training and are well supported by the management of the school. Strong links are evident between staff training and a number of initiatives, which work very well within the school.
169. The school has responded fully to the requirements of workforce remodelling and for reducing teachers' workload.
170. The governing body is supportive of the school and is provided with good quality information about the school's performance and activities by the headteacher. Governors meet regularly and are well aware of their roles and responsibilities.
171. Their role in helping to set the strategic direction of the school is good. They monitor the effectiveness of the school's provision through the information provided by the headteacher and through their visits to the school. Many governors visit school regularly, spending time in classrooms particularly to inform themselves about progress in implementing recent initiatives. The Chair of the Governing Body provides very good support for the school and particularly for the headteacher. The governing body fulfils all its legal and statutory requirements.

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

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

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

173. The senior management team are well informed about the areas for which they are responsible. Much work is done on evaluating performance data from national and other reliable assessments to identify strengths and areas for improvement, as well as to recognise trends over time. The headteacher and deputy headteacher use data from baseline tests effectively to assess the progress and improvement that individual pupils make year-on-year as they move through the school.
174. The school employs a devolved management style that encourages subject leaders to take responsibility for evaluating the subjects for which they are responsible. Subject leaders work hard to develop curricular provision in their subject areas. For example, they are effectively evaluating progress in implementing new curriculum orders and use a range of methods to inform themselves about teaching and learning in their subjects. Their evaluations and annual reviews are later prioritised and used by the senior management team to inform action planning for school improvement. A number of these reviews focus too heavily on provision and do not inform the senior leadership of the school sufficiently well about the standards pupils achieve and their progress.
175. The school ensures that all members of staff and governors are fully involved in the self-evaluation process. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths, particularly in relation to its outstanding care for vulnerable pupils.
176. The account taken of the views of all its stakeholders, particularly parents and pupils, is extremely effective. The school seeks the views of pupils through questionnaires, through specific questioning and through the school council. Teachers regularly measure pupils' progress in core subjects and predict future achievements. They encourage pupils to take part in the process so that their views and aspirations are also considered. The views of the community are voiced through the governing body. All the information obtained is carefully analysed and discussed.
177. The procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement are good. The school's self-evaluation document is detailed and clearly set out. The strengths and areas for improvement across the life of the school are well expressed; judgements are clear, honest and evidence based. The inspection team agree with the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report for all of the seven key questions.
178. There are effective links between the school's self-evaluation process, the School's Strategic Business Plan (SSBP), the School Development Plan (SDP), performance management and the school's budgeting procedures. The SSBP is very concise and detailed. Responsibilities for implementation are identified, budgetary implications carefully considered and resources earmarked to support these developments.
179. The school is extremely active and successful in addressing the areas it has identified for development and critical in reviewing its progress annually. The actions based on planning for improvement have had a positive effect and have

led to measurable improvement. This is particularly evident in the very high standards achieved by children in the Foundation Phase.

180. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in the autumn term 2002. It has been successful in addressing the key issues from that inspection. Standards in geography in key stage 2 have risen; the school has ensured that a suitable amount of time has been allocated to geography, music and ICT; the prospectus and Governors' Annual Report to Parents now comply with statutory requirements; and there are now formal induction programmes for teachers newly appointed to the school and those who are newly qualified.

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

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

181. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.
182. There is a good ratio of teachers to pupils, and staff are suitably qualified to teach every aspect of the curriculum. They develop their professional knowledge well, and keep up-to-date with current developments, for example, changes required to implement the Foundation Phase and the revised National Curriculum. This commitment to continuous professional development is in line with the school's priorities in its strategic business plan and the objectives of the performance management cycle. Resources allocated for workforce remodelling and for the implementation of the Foundation Phase are used appropriately.
183. Support staff make a substantial contribution to pupils' learning. They lead small group activities, as well as key literacy and numeracy initiatives. They are particularly effective in supporting the high standards in the Foundation Phase. All support staff benefit from in-service training initiated by the school and have access to appropriate courses provided by outside agencies.
184. The school secretaries and those who support pupils at lunchtime have a very positive influence on the smooth running of the school day. The caretakers and cleaners ensure that the school provides a clean and tidy environment.
185. Learning resources are of good quality, and are organised well in central storage areas which are accessible to staff and pupils. Detailed and costed bids for additional resources are welcomed from all curriculum co-ordinators. All curriculum areas are well resourced, and the investment in interactive whiteboards has contributed well to the use of IT in teaching and learning.
186. The resources for outdoor learning are an outstanding feature of the school's provision. They include two forest school areas, a pond, a meadow, a sensory garden, an outside classroom and raised garden beds for every classroom. This outside resource enhances and enriches the learning of pupils throughout the school, but has made a particular impact on the quality of provision for the Foundation Phase children.

187. The inside accommodation of the school provides teaching areas for all but four of the classes, which are housed in temporary accommodation on the school yard. The inside accommodation of the school provides limited learning space for the number of pupils on roll, but the school works hard to ensure that this does not impact unduly on pupils' learning opportunities. The school has an attractive library, an IT suite, and a large hall which is well used for collective worship, music, physical education and after-school activities. Displays of pupils' work in classrooms, corridors and other whole school learning spaces make the environment bright and attractive.
188. Staff are deployed economically and effectively so that best use is made of their time and expertise. Teachers are released regularly from their classes for planning, preparation and assessment time, with effective cover provided by a full-time teacher who teaches specific subjects across most year groups. The school has made good use of the resources provided for workforce remodelling.
189. The school budget is managed well by the headteacher, supported by the LA finance officer and school secretaries. They succeed in attracting additional sources of funding from local grants and General Teaching Council for Wales initiatives. The parents' association works hard in its fund-raising activities and money raised is carefully used to provide additional resources for the school. The finance committee of the governing body monitors spending regularly and effectively. Resource decisions are clearly linked to priorities detailed in the SSBP.
190. The school provides good value for money.

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

### **Foundation Phase**

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

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

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

##### **Outstanding features**

192. Nursery and reception children's personal and social development is outstanding. Nearly all children are exceptionally confident and sociable with adults and other children, often from a below average starting point. Children of both age groups learn great respect for the rights of others; they willingly share toys, equipment and their teachers' time.
193. Children display a very well developed sense of responsibility from an early age. All children correctly identify their own name card when arriving at school and place them on the wall. Each day they take turns to gather these together

and, with adult support, call out the names and count members of their group to help practitioners register the class.

### **Good features**

194. All children under five demonstrate a well developed awareness of safety issues when they work in the 'forest school'. All reception children have a good understanding of health issues and explain the danger of transferring germs from their hands, stating why they must wash after digging the garden and before eating.
195. Many reception children confidently discuss photographs that help them recognise similarities and differences between cultures. Most successfully compare wedding traditions in Britain with those found in different parts of Africa, India and Japan.

## **Language, literacy and communication**

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

#### **Outstanding features**

196. The speaking and listening skills of children under five are outstanding. Most children speak very clearly and confidently to both adults and other children. Nearly all listen carefully to and follow instructions; they successfully retain information when listening to their talking partner; and during plenary sessions children confidently evaluate their own work and that of their friends, using agreed success criteria.
197. Many reception children use detailed sentences and sustain conversations very well. They frequently give detailed explanations of their ideas.
198. Nearly all children under five are enthusiastic emergent writers. They develop very effective early writing skills. Children of all ages identify, make and draw letter shapes accurately using a wide range of materials and writing implements. Many reception children clearly and thoughtfully explain the principles and purpose of list writing. Many successfully write a comprehensive 'to do' list for the toys' impending wedding.

#### **Good features**

199. All children under five develop very good attitudes to reading. They visit the library regularly and handle books with great care, turning the pages of their storybooks appropriately and discussing the pictures.
200. Many reception children recognise the difference between factual books and stories. Most confidently run their fingers along the lines of text and many identify letters and simple words. More able children in reception are beginning to read simple texts accurately.

## **Mathematical development**

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

#### **Outstanding features**

201. Children under five develop an outstanding awareness of number relative to their ages and abilities. Most nursery children correctly identify and order number symbols to ten and count accurately to five.
202. Nearly all reception children count accurately to twenty and backwards to zero using a number line. They correctly recognise number symbols beyond ten. Most children correctly state which number comes before or after a given number. They write number symbols correctly and confidently, and they accurately instruct their teacher how to write a number sentence such as  $3+4=7$ . Nearly all children develop increasing control over the shape and position of number symbols.
203. Most reception children use IT software very confidently to develop their numeracy skills. They accurately count the correct number of squares and skilfully move figures to the correct position. Many children accurately give complex instructions to control a programmable toy and successfully overcome problems when they make a mistake.

#### **Good features**

204. All nursery and reception children successfully engage in a wide range of activities when they accurately match, sort, order and count. They understand that mathematics is an integral part of everyday life. Many reception children recognise a selection of three-dimensional shapes, including correctly naming a cuboid and a cylinder.
205. Most nursery and reception children sensibly estimate which of the containers will hold more when they play in the water tray or sand tray. They correctly identify different shaped containers which hold the same amount.
206. Children of both age groups demonstrate a good understanding of the use of money when they play in the shop.

## **Welsh Language Development**

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

#### **Good features**

207. Most children in the nursery are very new to speaking Welsh but they quickly gain confidence and accurately use simple words. They confidently sing songs and rhymes in Welsh; and correctly count to ten.
208. All children in reception competently answer the register in Welsh and many use a complete sentence when stating whether they have sandwiches or dinner.

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

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

#### **Outstanding features**

209. All children in the Foundation Phase are developing an outstanding awareness of the natural world by working in the outdoor environment. All children understand how to care for plants and animals.
210. All children have an exceptional awareness of the part that tradition plays in the lives of people when they study the theme of weddings.
211. Many children in nursery and reception use the digital camera, programmable toys and computers frequently and, as a result, their understanding of technology and control of the equipment is outstanding.

#### **Good features**

212. Children of both age groups have a very good awareness of the need for a healthy diet. They know that fruit and vegetables are important in order to maintain good health. They all know that we need food in order to live.

## **Physical development**

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

#### **Outstanding features**

213. The physical development of children in nursery and reception is outstanding. All children use scissors, art and writing materials confidently; they handle small objects such as beads and sequins exceptionally well for their age. Most children use adult tools for cutting with confidence and skill. When using a knife to cut fruit, for example, they are very aware of health and safety issues without being over-cautious or timid.
214. All children in nursery and reception demonstrate very good control of their bodies when taking part in adventurous and challenging play activities in the outdoor area. They climb obstacles and scramble over rough ground with confidence and ease.
215. Many reception children correctly name and demonstrate a broad range of body shapes and jumps at the start of their physical education lessons. Most children alternate their feet correctly when skipping; they bunny hop and frog jump skilfully. Nearly all make effective use of space when experimenting with different movements. Children demonstrate outstanding control and precision in their movements when travelling along and jumping off benches. All children evaluate their work with maturity and good subject knowledge.

#### **Good features**

216. All nursery children very quickly learn to dress and undress themselves for their outdoor play and for physical education, only asking for help when they need it. Nearly all move confidently in response to a signal and stop with good control.

217. During lessons, many reception children confidently and safely move and position large equipment with minimal adult assistance. All children very quickly develop skill in gathering and manipulating natural materials to use in their play and in using a range of garden tools and equipment.

### **Creative development**

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

##### **Outstanding features**

218. All children in nursery and reception use role-play very effectively to help them make sense of the world. With adult help, they plan and organise a wedding for their toys down to the smallest detail.
219. Many reception children have an exceptional knowledge of timing and beat. Their diction and control of pitch and rhythm when singing is outstanding. Many play simple musical instruments skilfully, stopping and starting with very good control.

##### **Good features**

220. All nursery and reception children listen with interest to music. Most express their likes and dislikes confidently. Many creatively explore a range of instruments, listening carefully to the sounds they make and choosing the most suitable sound for their accompaniment.
221. All children in nursery and reception become confident in mixing colours for their art work. They successfully develop their creative ideas when they choose their own designs for their finished products in art and craft. Nearly all use an art package on the computer very successfully to recreate their ideas. All children learn to successfully construct simple mechanisms using split pins.

<b>English</b>
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#### **Key stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

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

##### **Outstanding features**

222. Nearly all pupils display outstanding speaking skills across the school. In key stage 1, pupils report back from small group activities to the full class and most succeed in giving a detailed summary of their learning.
223. All key stage 1 pupils write confidently for a range of purposes. Most demonstrate outstanding skills when recording an account of a day in the holidays, writing instructions for making custard, composing an acrostic poem and making notes on a sensory journey around school.

##### **Good features**

224. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils develop good listening skills. Nearly all listen attentively to their teachers, to their peers in class and during other formal situations such as assemblies. In key stage 1 all pupils listen well to stories and

to teachers' presentations. Most pupils in key stage 2 sustain concentration well in class presentations and during collaborative group work.

225. Most pupils in year 1 read well and confidently in group situations. They understand that stories have settings and they begin to use the terminology of books such as 'blurb', 'dedication' and 'author' correctly. Many pupils correctly identify the adjectives used in 'Handa's Surprise' to describe different fruit very well, and can re-tell the story in detail through role-play.
226. Most older pupils in key stage 1 develop an increasing range of strategies in their individual reading to enable them to recognise unfamiliar words, such as sounding out letters and looking for clues from the context and the pictures. Many can re-tell the story and predict a plausible ending. All children name the characters and say why one is their favourite.
227. Most pupils in key stage 2 read fluently and confidently using a good level of expression. They successfully recount the plot and characters, and predict how the story might end. All pupils can discuss different kinds of books well, and say which they like best. More able pupils describe their favourite author, and discuss other books they have read by the same author.
228. All year 1 pupils know that a sentence requires a capital letter and a full stop. They succeed in writing sentences about the fruit they have tasted, using a colour and another adjective to describe them. Most children develop their spelling skills well.
229. All older pupils in key stage 1 write a postcard to Kabo, using persuasive writing and descriptions of important features in the school to encourage him to visit. Nearly all pupils pay close attention to good punctuation and spelling; handwriting and presentation skills are very good.
230. All lower key stage 2 pupils complete simple comprehension exercises, and write a good description of a character from a story. All pupils show good sequencing skills in creating a cartoon strip story. Most write clear, concise instructions on how to make a milk shake.
231. Nearly all older pupils in key stage 2 have a good understanding of the purpose and style of a 'fractured' narrative. Many use this style well to write in the first person and present tense, describing the immediacy of events in a shipwreck, and demonstrate a good understanding of how similes and metaphors enhance the effect of the writing.
232. All pupils in year 5 and year 6 demonstrate their ability to write for a wide range of purposes and for a wide range of audiences, including a diary, letters, newspaper articles, stories, poems and an autobiographical account.
233. Across key stage 2, all pupils show good progression in developing their spelling and punctuation skills.

### **Shortcomings**

234. There are no important shortcomings.

## Design 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

235. All pupils in years 1 and 2 successfully disassemble the component parts of a breakfast cereal. Nearly all pupils correctly classify and divide these into different fruits, cereal, nuts and other ingredients. They make informed choices about the health benefits of the different ingredients.
236. All pupils regularly canvass the views of adults and other children. Most pupils use the information effectively to inform the planning of their design work. They successfully design and make their own cereal for a chosen adult, taking careful account of their views and tastes. Many creatively design their own boxes for their cereal. They use IT effectively to recreate their ideas for their boxes and help them develop their understanding of the use of packaging.
237. All year 2 pupils understand that some materials are more suitable than others for packaging. They successfully make nets of their boxes; and competently assemble and secure them. Most evaluate their final product very competently by questioning adults involved in the testing about their opinion of what worked well.
238. All pupils in year 3 enthusiastically investigate the different ways in which books and cards featuring moving parts are made. Many pupils clearly explain that the purpose of their work is preparation for making their own Christmas cards with pop-up or turning figures. Most successfully construct simple mechanisms from paper and card. They use the knowledge they gain from this effectively to help them in their forthcoming design work.
239. Nearly all pupils use basic tools skilfully to measure, draw lines and cut accurately. They carefully and purposefully practise developing their skills. Many pupils competently use computer software to help them add measurements to their design work. They capably and confidently record their evaluative work using a digital camera and an audio recording device.
240. All pupils in year 5 work purposefully on a short focused task within a limited timescale and with limited resources, successfully constructing a basic musical instrument using only three items. All pupils quickly learn to adapt and modify their original ideas and realise that sometimes they need to make compromises in order to achieve success.
241. All older pupils in key stage 2 thoughtfully examine a range of musical instruments in preparation for designing and making their own. They study the component parts and make carefully considered observations and suggestions as to how they are made, what materials might have been used and the reasons behind this. All pupils consider carefully the characteristics and properties of different materials.

242. During their project on constructing shelters, older pupils in key stage 2 effectively carry out research into different types of shelters, noting the use of different materials for different purposes and environments. All pupils carefully plan and draw their initial designs and make adjustments to these as they work. They competently use computer-aided design programs to help them refine their ideas. Nearly all skilfully construct small-scale shelters using a range of materials. They rigorously test these for strength, water resistance and their ability to withstand high winds.
243. All pupils in years 5 and 6 successfully use programmable or other computer control systems to control events. They effectively develop their skills in writing their own computer programs for traffic lights or other signals.

### **Shortcomings**

244. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Geography**

**Key stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

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

### **Outstanding features**

245. Younger pupils in key stage 1 show outstanding progress in developing their mapping skills. All pupils draw detailed plans of the school yard, creating their own symbols and an appropriate symbol key. Many pupils have a very good understanding of an aerial view.
246. As a result of their work based on the travels of Barnaby Bear, all pupils in year 2 show an outstanding awareness of life in other countries and different localities. Many discuss knowledgeably life in Africa covering the weather, buildings, lifestyles and physical features. They show an exceptionally well-developed awareness of their own locality when they draw comparisons between life in Wales and life in other countries.

### **Good features**

247. All pupils across key stages 1 and 2 develop their mapping skills well. Older pupils in key stage 2 have a good understanding of co-ordinates and successfully interpret information obtained through a range of maps.
248. All younger pupils in key stage 2 accurately locate a number of holiday destinations on a map of the world. Nearly all have a good understanding of how the designs of buildings are influenced by the weather. Most pupils show a good understanding of how the weather influences people's choice of clothes, sports and leisure activities.
249. Nearly all older pupils in key stage 2 successfully use a range of secondary sources, such as photographs, to correctly identify a range of physical features in different localities. As a result of their studies linked to a proposed building development within the locality, many pupils have a clear understanding of the implications of such a development on the environment.

250. As a result of their on-going work under the heading of 'What's in the news?', all pupils in key stage 2 have a good awareness of environmental issues, such as food miles, fair trade, renewable and non-renewable energy sources and sustainability. Many pupils are confident to express their own opinions about places, environments and geographical issues, understanding that other people may have a different view.
251. All pupils in key stages 1 and 2 make good use of their IT skills to support their work in geography. They quickly and accurately use the Internet to research areas of the world which they are studying.

### **Shortcomings**

252. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Music</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**

253. In both key stages, most pupils show a good knowledge of a wide range of musical terms.
254. Nearly all pupils in both key stages understand the three elements of music, and are confident in composing a simple sound sequence, performing and evaluating their work well.
255. All key stage 1 pupils respond to African music imaginatively and choose from a range of media, including paint and pastels, to draw the animal they imagine.
256. All pupils in year 1 choose from a wide variety of untuned percussion instruments to represent the sounds of different animals in the story of Handa's surprise. Many pupils write a score for their composition using their own symbols and perform the sound story following a conductor.
257. All year 2 pupils show good performing skills in using conventional untuned percussion, improvised instruments and body percussion to perform a sound story of Kabo's diary. They choose which instruments will represent the sounds of birds and aeroplanes in their compositions, and follow the narration of the story by an individual pupil. Most successfully evaluate their performances using the success criteria they have set for themselves.
258. Nearly all younger pupils in key stage 2 show a good understanding of tempo and dynamics when clapping rhythmic patterns to a collection of songs. Most can call and answer clapping patterns, and perform clapping and skipping rhymes well.
259. All pupils in year 4 listen carefully to 'The Snow Queen' and demonstrate their knowledge of the difference between musical terms in their own composition of a setting for a character.

260. All older pupils in key stage 2 respond to the stimulus of the story of 'The Tempest' and to two contrasting pieces of music about storms to make their own composition about a storm. They create their musical composition using improvised symbols, and carefully select a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments to perform the sound story. Nearly all follow the directions of a conductor well, and successfully evaluate their own performances and that of other groups.
261. All year 5 pupils learn to sing a sea shanty with good voice control. They can sing in unison, and use the chorus to sing different sections. The accompanying percussion on drums, castanets and claves keeps the steady beat very well.
262. All older pupils in key stage 2 show good evaluative skills when listening to four different versions of 'Greensleeves' and identify correctly specific aspects of the composition. A few pupils identify the different musical styles of the versions, such as 'jazz', 'techno' and 'folk'.
263. Pupils' learning in music is enriched across the school by frequent opportunities to perform in seasonal celebrations in the school, church and community. The skills of those pupils who receive lessons on the violin and recorder make a good contribution to all pupils' understanding of music.

### **Shortcomings**

264. There are no important shortcomings.

## **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**

265. All pupils in key stages 1 and 2 know the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise. Many key stage 2 pupils correctly identify the changes that take place in the body during warm up exercises.
266. All key stage 1 pupils demonstrate good body control when they move in a range of ways including skipping, hopping and walking in different directions. They make good use of space and have an appropriate awareness of others.
267. In their dance lessons, older pupils in key stage 1 achieve good standards when they explore movements using the basic actions of travelling, jumping, timing, gesture and stillness. Many pupils accurately describe the elements that make a good dance and correctly identify these elements when watching video clips. During their dance sequences, all pupils perform imaginative jumps with good control and most hold a balance well when standing on one leg.
268. Younger key stage 2 pupils work co-operatively to create a game using appropriate equipment as obstacles. All pupils demonstrate good control as they move quickly between the obstacles. They accurately aim at a target using

good throwing skills. All pupils evaluate the games they have created sensibly and make relevant suggestions for improving them.

269. When devising a group dance to depict a storm, all older key stage 2 pupils select good starting positions. Nearly all pupils devise imaginative individual dance sequences, which they effectively incorporate into a group dance. All pupils focus well on refining their dance movements as part of the group.
270. Many older pupils in key stage 2 participate in extra curricular activities to develop their sporting skills. During these activities pupils demonstrate very good control of their movements when jogging, moving sideways, and forwards and backwards. All pupils control a ball well, particularly when catching, aiming or throwing from a distance. They work well with other pupils as part of a team.
271. Many older pupils in key stage 2 plan daily physical activities for the younger pupils each lunchtime. They devise imaginative games and provide support by demonstrating their well-developed skills, for example in skipping, to the younger pupils.
272. Pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make good use of IT to record aspects of their lessons on digital cameras. They use their pictures well to support them in evaluating the effectiveness of their performances.

### **Shortcomings**

273. There are no important shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection

The headteacher, staff and governors are delighted that the inspection team recognised that St. Helen's is a good school, which provides outstanding care, support and guidance for its pupils. Also that the inspection team agree with the school's self-evaluation in all of the seven key questions and that the school has made good progress since the last inspection.

We are also pleased that the team acknowledged that:

- pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make good progress in fulfilling their potential and are well placed to move on to the next stage in their learning.
- progress made by children in the Foundation Phase is outstanding.
- pupils across the school are exceptionally confident and competent speakers, relative to their age and ability.
- throughout the school, pupils' problem-solving and creative skills are outstanding.
- standards in the key skill of ICT are good across the school.
- pupils are extremely well motivated and have exceptionally good attitudes to learning.
- all pupils have an exceptionally well developed awareness of their strengths and what they need to do in order to improve.
- pupils' behaviour and the respect they show to adults is good.
- pupils make outstanding progress in their personal, moral, social and wider development.
- there are very good working relationships in all classrooms.
- the strong Christian ethos of the school ensures that every pupil is a valued member of the school community.
- pupils have an outstanding awareness of sustainable development and global development.
- the school is an exceptionally inclusive community.
- provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with outstanding features.
- all staff, both teaching and support staff, work together as an exceptionally close team.
- the extent of the school's involvement in national priorities is an outstanding feature.
- the way in which the school has developed opportunities for outdoor learning is outstanding.
- overall, the school provides good value for money.

The headteacher, staff and governors will address all the recommendations of the inspection report. A copy of the school's action plan in response to these recommendations will be sent to all parents and the progress on the plan will be communicated to parents through the governors' annual report to parents. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the team for their openness, hard work and professionalism which have made this inspection a positive learning experience for all of us and has confirmed the secure self evaluation systems we already have in place.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	St Helens Catholic Primary School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11 years
Address of school	Clos Guto Lansbury Park Caerphilly
Postcode	CF83 1QH
Telephone number	029 2085 2532

Headteacher	Mr T. F Crosse
Date of appointment	1 <sup>st</sup> September 1999
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr M Western
Registered inspector	Mrs Linda Jane Williams
Dates of inspection	24 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> November 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	25	43	34	45	35	50	42	33	307

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	14	0	14

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Summer 2008	91	92	94
Spring 2008	94	92	94
Autumn 2007	95	92	94

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	15
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results

#### End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:		28		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	21	57	21
		National	0	3	14	63	20
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	21	54	25
		National	0	4	15	55	26
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	7	18	71	4
		National	0	5	16	67	11
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	17	54	29
		National	0	2	11	64	23
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	15	64	21
		National	0	2	11	65	22
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	14	54	32
		National	0	1	9	66	24

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

In the school	79	In Wales	80
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D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements  
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

### National Curriculum Assessment Results

#### End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y6		63						
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	2	27	52	19
		National	0	0	0	0	1	4	16	50	29
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	40	29
		National	0	0	0	0	1	3	15	50	30
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	65	19
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	14	52	32

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

by teacher assessment	
In the school	63
In Wales	74

D Pupils who are exempted 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**

Four inspectors spent a total of 12 inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- 38 lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship; and
- extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents;
- senior managers, teachers and support staff; and
- pupil groups, including the school council and Eco council.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 124 responses to parents' questionnaires;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work, over all year groups.

The inspection team also:

- held discussions with pupils about their work; and
- observed pupils' behaviour throughout the day.

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs Linda Jane Williams Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key Questions 1, 2 and 5 Geography Physical Education
Mrs Jan Marsden Team Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1 Key Questions 3 and 6 Foundation Phase Design and technology
Mrs Rhiannon Harris Team Inspector	Key Question Key Questions 4 and 7 English Music
Mrs Caterina Lewis Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3 and 4
Mr T. F. Crosse Headteacher / Nominee	Contributions to all questions by providing information
Mrs Susan Roache Peer Assessor	Contributions to all key questions

#### **Contractor:**

Lincolnshire Inspection Team  
37 Park Drive  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire  
DN32 0EG

#### ***Acknowledgement***

*The Registered Inspector and team wish to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy before and during the inspection.*