

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**St Mary's CIW Aided School
School Lane
Overton
Wrexham
LL13 0ES**

School Number: 6653346

Date of Inspection: 7 July 2008

by

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St Mary's CIW Aided 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 Mary's CIW Aided School took place between 07/07/08 and 9/07/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Gareth Wyn Roberts undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received 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 Mary's Church-in-Wales Primary School is a voluntary-aided school catering for boys and girls aged three to eleven years.
2. There are 148 full-time pupils on roll, and in addition 19 nursery-age children attend either a morning or afternoon session each day. In addition to the headteacher, who was appointed in 1986 and who has no direct classroom responsibilities, the school has seven full-time class teachers who are each responsible for a class of pupils in a single year group. There are three classroom support staff, two of whom are part-time.
3. The school is situated in the small village of Overton about six miles from the county and town of Wrexham and close to the border with England. Most of the pupils and children come from the village and the surrounding area but 36% of the pupils come from outside the catchment area as parents exercise their right for their child to attend a faith school. The pupils come from various socio-economic backgrounds. Six percent of the pupils are currently entitled to free school meals and this is considerably less than the figure for the county and for Wales as a whole. The pupils come from mainly English-speaking backgrounds and learn Welsh as a second language as none of them speaks Welsh as a first language or speaks Welsh to an equivalent standard. No pupil is receiving help with English as an additional language. No children are being 'looked after' by the local authority. Two percent of the pupils come from a non-white ethnic background.
4. The school has identified 17 pupils who are on the school's SEN (special educational needs) or ALN(additional learning needs) register, though none of the pupils is on an SEN statement. Eleven pupils have been identified as being 'more able and talented'.
5. The school was previously inspected in July 2002. In July 2008 the school received a standard inspection. As a result this report gives details of the standards in six of the subjects taught in the school.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's main priorities for 2008-2009 are to:-
 - continue to prepare for the Foundation Stage and key stage 2 skills-based curriculum;
 - continue monitoring the new tracking system on pupils' progress;
 - continue to establish in action plans what impact the key area has had on standards;
 - continue to monitor staff costs annually and develop the outdoor area;
 - monitor and further develop the Food and Fitness policy;
 - create and implement a bilingualism policy; and
 - create an implementation plan to address Disability Equality.

7. The school's quantitative targets for 2008 and 2009 are as follows:

	KS1: % Level 2		KS2: % Level 4	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
English	90	78	95.6	82.7
Mathematics	90	81	100	93
Science	90	92.5	100	93
Core Subject Indicator	90	78	95.6	82.7
Attendance %	95	90	95	95

Summary

8. This is an outstanding school. Its outstanding features are reflected in the standards of achievement of its pupils and children, the excellent ethos of the school, the quality of the teaching and assessment the quality of the care, support and guidance it gives to its pupils and the outstanding quality of school management and leadership.

Table of grades awarded

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

9. The grades awarded by the inspection team coincide with the grades the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document in all key questions.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

10. The following table summarises the percentage grades awarded for the standards achieved by children and pupils in the lessons observed in the six subjects inspected in this standard inspection.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
84%	16%	0%	0%	0%

11. This means that the school achieves the target for standards set for all primary schools in Wales by 2010 in the document 'Vision into Action', namely that the quality of learning assessed by Estyn should be Grade 3 or better in 98% of classes.
12. As this was a standard inspection, the inspection team inspected standards achieved in six subjects. The tables that follow summarise the standards achieved.

Subjects and/or areas of learning for under-fives

13. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Area of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, Literacy and communication	1	1
Personal and social development	1	1
Mathematical development	1	1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	1	1
Creative development	1	1
Physical development	1	1

14. Standards in the early key skills of children under five are reported in the paragraph relating to the standards in the key skills of key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils.
15. The following table shows the standards of achievement in the five subjects at key stage 1 and key stage 2 and also the overall grade for standards in early years education.

Early Years - nursery and reception	1	
Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh second language	1	2
mathematics	1	1
geography	1	1
art	1	1
music	1	1

16. Although the definitions for the grades used and the way grades are awarded are not the same as those used during the 2002 inspection, it is possible to say that standards have improved significantly in the six areas for learning for the under fives, have stayed the same in geography and art, have improved in Welsh (second language) in both key stages and have improved in music in key stage 1. (There was no judgement of the standards in music in key stage 2 in the previous report.)
17. The inspection team also looked at standards of children under five and pupils at key stage 1 and key stage 2 in the key skills and wider key skills across all the subjects. Standards in the key skills of communication through speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy, and the wider key skills of problem solving, working with others and improving their own learning are good with outstanding features. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are good and with no important shortcomings. Generally, standards in key skills have improved since the last inspection in 2002.
18. Bilingual competence within the linguistic context of the school is good. Pupils are willing to talk Welsh within defined contexts and often do so as part of the school's daily routine.
19. When teacher assessment results at the end of Year Y2 and Y6 are compared with the results of Wales as a whole and for the county of Wrexham, then results are generally good or very good. When considering the benchmarked results of this school with schools in the same group from the point of view of pupils entitled to free school meals, results in English are consistently good as

are the statistics for those gaining the 'core subject indicator' (that is, gaining the expected level in the combination of English, mathematics and science). Results in mathematics and science are more variable and were either above or below the median for similar schools from 2005-2007. The provisional results for 2008, however, are likely to place the school in the top quartile of similar schools in all the benchmarks. Very often pupils exceed the results suggested for them by 'value-added' analyses.

20. Care needs to be taken in interpreting such data because a single pupil's performance can make a difference of 4%-6% in the results. In addition, 'value-added' analyses vary in their reliability. From 2005 to 2008 a notable feature has been a significant increase in the number of pupils gaining one level higher than the expected level at the end of both key stages.
21. Children under five, and pupils at both key stages make outstanding progress in their knowledge, understanding and new skills acquired, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
22. Pupils with ALN and pupils who are more gifted and talented also make outstanding progress. Both boys and girls usually achieve just as well as each other in class and often in external assessments.
23. There are very many strengths in children and pupils' personal, social and learning skills, especially in their creative, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These are outstanding features. Throughout the school pupils develop a good deal of independence in their work. This also is an outstanding feature.
24. Pupils' motivation, their ability to work well either as individuals or in groups and to make use of their time are outstanding. Similarly, pupils' behaviour in the classroom is outstanding and this creates a very good environment for learning.
25. The attendance level for the school during the three terms before the inspection exceeded the target for attendance set for primary schools in Wales by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). The school monitors attendance very carefully.

The quality of education and training

Grades for teaching

26. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
79%	17%	4%	0%	0%

27. The quality of teaching in 96% of lessons is good or outstanding and has good features which outweigh shortcomings in the remaining 4% of lessons.
28. The school has exceeded the target set by the WAG for primary schools by 2010 in its document 'Vision into Action', namely that the quality of teaching assessed by Estyn should be Grade 2 or better in 80% of classes.
29. This also compares very well with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) in his annual report for 2006-2007. Nationally, the quality of teaching in primary schools is good or better in 80% of lessons and the quality of teaching is outstanding in 14% of lessons.
30. Teachers present stimulating lessons and activities that successfully meet pupils' needs and engage their interest and motivation to learn.

31. The quality of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning are good with many outstanding features. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements.
32. Reports to parents give a clear picture of their children's achievements in every subject of the National Curriculum (NC).
33. The school's curriculum meets the needs of the range of pupils in the school very well. The quality of curricular planning is outstanding, especially for the 'Foundation Phase' (currently key stage 1 and early years), and meets statutory requirements.
34. The school's curriculum at key stages 1 and 2 provides balance, breadth, coherence, continuity and progression. It is equally accessible to all. It fully meets the requirements of the range and age of pupils at the school.
35. The school develops pupils' basic and key skills in language, numeracy and ICT well.
36. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well within subject lessons, by means of collective worship and by the use of communal and social activities. Very good attention is given to the elements of the framework for personal and social education (PSE) to this end. The school gives good attention to the cultural aspects of the 'Cwricwlwm Cymreig'.
37. The school succeeds well in developing the bilingual competence of all pupils (considering the nature and the context of the school).
38. The school is an active supporter of sustainable development, has an active 'eco-club', and also acts in a sustainable way.
39. Arrangements for the care, support and guidance of pupils are outstanding. All members of staff know pupils extremely well and are sensitive to their personal needs. The school enjoys the confidence of parents that it looks after their children very well.
40. Arrangements to support pupils with additional learning needs and for children who are more talented or able are also outstanding because of the early detection of their needs and the school's success in dealing with them.
41. The school has effective arrangements that contribute to the well-being of all pupils. The 'Healthy Schools' initiative is having a clear, positive impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of health-related issues.
42. Good account is taken of pupils' social, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The school treats boys and girls equally and fairly. Measures to eliminate bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour are effective. A good disability access plan has been established.

Leadership and management

43. The headteacher is a very successful leader and manager. She has extremely high expectations and leads by example. She has a very clear vision of the school's values, aims, objectives and priorities which she successfully communicates to her colleagues, governors and parents.
44. The headteacher is very ably assisted by two assistant headteachers. In addition, the subject 'focus leaders' undertake their responsibilities very well. They in turn have gained the trust and confidence of other ancillary staff. As a

consequence the school has a very clear sense of purpose helped significantly by shared values and ethos and shared methods of working.

45. The school has explicit aims and values that promote equality for all. These values are clearly reflected in the day-to-day work of the school, where children of all abilities, whatever their age, sex, ability or racial background are treated equally and given the same opportunities.
46. Realistic but ambitious targets are set as required by statute. The school development plan's (SDP) main priorities pay good attention to a number of national priorities.
47. The governors are very supportive of the school. They have a good level of knowledge about almost every aspect of the school's life. They act as critical friends to the headteacher and her colleagues. In addition, they make a good contribution to the school's strategic planning.
48. The school's processes for self-evaluation are outstanding. All staff are involved in the evaluation process as are the pupils, governors and parents. Sources of evidence used include internal and statutory assessment data and regular evaluations based on formal lesson observation and detailed analysis of pupils' work against subject standards.
49. All permanent staff are effective and are deployed in an outstanding manner.
50. The school has made very good use of its present building, including the grounds. The school has very good resources which are well used.
51. The school provides outstanding value for money because of the standards achieved in class, the outstanding teaching, the very positive ethos and efficient and effective management and leadership.
52. The school has responded in an outstanding manner to all of the 'key issues' identified in the previous report. Standards have improved significantly in key stage 1 and key stage 2 in Welsh. The provision for children under five is outstanding. The school now has a strong partnership with industry and the flexible teaching time conforms to national recommendations.

Recommendations

The school needs to maintain and build on its good standards by:

- R1. Continuing to maintain the outstanding standards and by raising standards in those subjects where standards are good;*
- R2. Continuing to develop the bilingual dimension within the school.*

** The school has already identified these recommendations for improvement either in its self-evaluation report, SDP or other documentation.*

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 1: Good with outstanding features

53. The grade awarded by the inspection team coincides with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document for this key question.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

54. The following table summarises the percentage grades awarded for the standards achieved by children and pupils in the lessons observed in all the subjects inspected in this standard inspection.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
84%	16%	0%	0%	0%

55. This means that the school achieves the target for standards set for all primary schools in Wales by 2010 in the document "Vision into Action", namely that the quality of learning assessed by Estyn should be Grade 3 or better in 98% of classes.

56. As this was a standard inspection, the inspection team inspected standards achieved in six subjects. The tables that follow summarise the standards achieved.

Subjects and/or areas of learning for under-fives

57. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Area of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, Literacy and communication	1	1
Personal and social development	1	1
Mathematical development	1	1
Knowledge and understanding of the world	1	1
Creative development	1	1
Physical development	1	1

58. Standards in the early key skills of children under five are reported in the paragraph relating to the standards in the key skills of pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2.

59. The following table shows the standards of achievement in the five subjects at key stage 1 and key stage 2.

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh (second language)	1	2
mathematics	1	1
geography	1	1
art	1	1
music	1	1

60. Although the definitions for the grades used and the way grades are awarded are not the same as those used during the 2002 inspection, it is possible to say that standards have improved significantly in the six areas for learning for the

under fives, have stayed the same in geography and art, have improved in Welsh (second language) in both key stages and have improved in music in key stage 1. (There was no judgement of the standards in music in key stage 2 in the previous report.)

61. The inspection team also looked at standards of children under five and pupils at key stage 1 and key stage 2 in the key skills and wider key skills across all the subjects. Standards in the key skills of communication through speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy, and the wider key skills of problem solving, working with others and improving their own learning are good with outstanding features. Standards in ICT are good and have no important shortcomings. Generally standards in key skills have improved since the last inspection in 2002.
62. Pupils and children communicate very well, using correct terms to express subject concepts. They express their opinions and feelings well. Their listening skills are outstanding. They listen very well to their teachers and their fellow pupils. They read books which are challenging for their age and ability very well and have a very good understanding of what they read. Standards in reading aloud are outstanding and standards in reading for research purposes, including research on the internet, are good. Children and pupils have outstanding numeracy skills, mental work being particularly strong. Information and communication technology skills in conveying information and data work are good at both key stages. Pupils work very well together in groups or in pairs and know very well how to evaluate and improve their work because they are aware of their targets.
63. Bilingual competence within the linguistic context of the school is good. Pupils are willing to talk Welsh within defined contexts and often do so as part of the school's daily routine and as part of lessons.
64. When teacher assessment results at the end of Y2 and Y6 are compared with the results of Wales as a whole and for the county of Wrexham, they are generally good or very good. When considering the benchmarked results of this school's results with those of schools in the same group from the point of view of pupils entitled to free school meals, results in English are consistently good as are the statistics for those gaining the core subject indicator. Results in mathematics and science are more variable and were either above or below the median for similar schools from 2005-2007. The provisional results for 2008, however, are likely to place the school in the top quartile of similar schools in all the benchmarks. Very often pupils exceed the results suggested for them by 'value-added' analyses.
65. Care needs to be taken in interpreting such data because a single pupil's performance can make a difference of 4%-6% in the results. In addition, 'value-added analyses' vary in their reliability. From 2005 to 2008 a notable feature has been a significant increase in the number of pupils in all three subjects gaining one level higher than the expected level at the end of both key stages.
66. Children under five, and pupils at both key stages make outstanding progress in their knowledge, understanding and new skills acquired, whatever their social, ethnic or linguistic background.

67. Pupils with ALN and pupils who are more gifted and talented also make outstanding progress.
68. Both boys and girls usually achieve just as well as each other in class and often in external assessments. They are making good progress and fulfil their potential for moving to the next stage of learning both within the school and also when transferring from the primary to the secondary sector.
69. Pupils are very aware of their levels of achievement in the subjects. They often receive targets to improve their work. Pupils also set their own targets
70. There are very many strengths in children and pupils' personal, creative and learning skills. These are outstanding features. Throughout the school pupils develop a good deal of independence in their work. This also is an outstanding feature. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have a very clear understanding of spiritual and religious values. They can distinguish between right and wrong. They interact very well with each other and with people in the community. They have a very good understanding of their own and international cultural values.
71. Pupils' motivation is outstanding as is their ability to work either as individuals or in groups and the use they make of their time. Pupils' behaviour in the classroom is outstanding and this creates a very good environment for learning. They respect each other, their teachers and visitors. They have a good understanding of equality and diversity in society. The standards they achieve in key and wider key skills and their participation in community activities prepares them well for the workplace and the community.
72. The attendance level for the school during the three terms before the inspection exceeded the target for attendance set for primary schools in Wales by the WAG. The pupils' evident enjoyment in being in school coupled with the school's careful monitoring of each child, including his or her attendance, ensures low absentee rates. Pupils come punctually to school.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

73. The grade awarded by the inspection team coincides with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document for this key question.
74. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
79%	17%	4%	0%	0%

75. These figures are well above the WAG's 2010 target for 80% of teaching to be Grade 2 or better. They are also well above the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest annual report 2006-2007 where the quality of teaching is Grade 2 or better in 80% of lessons, including 14% with outstanding features. This data reflects the outstanding quality of teaching seen by inspectors during the inspection.

76. Teaching throughout the school is consistently good with outstanding features including that in nursery and reception classes. The outstanding features include the exceptionally good use that is made of assessment and resources to maintain and improve standards. The well-focused planning, which is often notable for its incisive clarity, its detail and its overview of the continuity and progression of pupils' learning contribute exceptionally to the very good progress pupils make in achieving high standards in their work.
77. All teachers actively address the issues of gender, race and ability and promote equality of opportunity for all pupils. The quality of inclusiveness is an outstanding feature of daily interactions between teachers and their pupils. It engenders a sense of well-being, which is a powerful boost to pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Teachers work hard to maintain pupils' expectations of themselves through positive dialogue, pointing up success and not allowing them to be discouraged when they encounter difficulties.
78. The relationships forged between teachers and their pupils are outstanding. Teachers use positive behaviour strategies to very good effect. These are pivotal in maintaining the high levels of motivation pupils exhibit over sustained periods of time towards their learning tasks. Teachers are very successful in creating an ethos of enquiry in their classrooms and, within this ethos, encourage pupils to ask their own questions and seek their own answers to the challenges set. Clearly, the promotion of independent learning and problem solving is well established within the school.
79. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives, which take account of the needs of individual pupils, including those with SEN. Planning for the learning needs of children in early years is outstanding. It addresses the need for continuity of learning experiences to enable children to develop the skills upon which future learning depends. In key stages 1 and 2, teachers use opportunities at the beginning of the lesson to establish learning objectives. This focus heightens pupils' awareness of the breadth and development of their learning skills during the lesson. Most lessons end with a plenary session. At such times and in the best lessons, teachers foster a culture of evaluating whether or not objectives set at the beginning of the lesson have been achieved. This good practice enables pupils to gain a focused understanding of target setting and of evaluating progress. In their planning and in their classroom practice teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies and styles to meet the needs of all their pupils. This practice succeeds in creating lessons that are lively, interesting and well focused.
80. The planning for the development of pupils' bilingual skills is good in key stage 1 and key stage 2 but is good with outstanding features in nursery and reception. In the latter classes, Welsh permeates many activities. Children enjoy using Welsh and show pride in being able to speak a language other than English. In key stages 1 and 2 there is regular use of incidental Welsh during the day.
81. Teachers make outstanding use of a range of questioning techniques to elicit pupils' views and feelings, and to develop their communication and thinking skills. The strategies are highly successful and children throughout the school including children in early years and pupils with special educational or additional

learning needs show particularly effective speaking and listening skills. Such proficiency enables them to engage in independent learning with ease.

82. Teachers make outstanding use of resources during many lessons in order to enhance the learning experiences of pupils. The educational visits that teachers arrange serve to heighten pupils' response to learning. Visitors to the school enliven subject matter of the moment in lessons such as in history. Outdoor areas such as the forest school are used particularly effectively by early years teachers to deliver multifaceted learning experiences for children. Teachers throughout the school use a rich range of materials and equipment including interactive white boards to deliver stimulating and engaging lessons. This ensures that pupils are switched on to learning and accounts for the excellent progress they make in work across the curriculum.
83. Classroom assistants are deployed and used effectively with the class teachers. They are capable, knowledgeable and experienced. In their many dealings with pupils in key stages 1 and 2 and children in the early years, they consistently use their interpersonal skills very effectively to work alongside them and enhance their learning. Their enthusiasm makes a very significant and positive impact on pupils' attitudes towards their work.
84. Teachers have very good up-to-date subject knowledge through regular in-service training (INSET) and demonstrate such expertise in their teaching. Their knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the NC are thorough.
85. Outstanding features were identified in 79% of the lessons observed. These include:
 - very high expectations and outstanding personal relationships;
 - extremely good knowledge of pupils' capabilities;
 - very well-focused planning that ensures all pupils whatever their ability make excellent progress;
 - teachers' ability to make learning fun; and
 - very good subject knowledge used effectively to engage learners.
86. Good features were identified in 17% of lessons observed. These include:
 - good individual support for pupils including those with special educational needs and those who are 'more able and talented'; and
 - the frequent use of challenge to stimulate learning.
87. The quality, range and use of assessment to ensure pupils' progress in attaining their levels of achievement are good with outstanding features. There is an appropriate range of assessment procedures to enable teachers to assess where pupils are in their learning and what they need to do to improve.
88. A comprehensive tracking system is in place, which is particularly effective in monitoring the progress pupils make in core and foundation subjects. Teachers use the system outstandingly well to analyse data and to determine the action needed to ensure pupils, including high achievers, make good and continuing progress. Teachers are diligent in moderating standards in all subjects but particularly the core subjects. They have regular meetings with this focus in mind. Portfolios of annotated work in subjects assist this process. Through this practice all teachers gain a very good overview of the standards reached by all

pupils in their learning. In addition, the school has well-established links with other primary schools in its consortium for the purpose of moderating the assessments of pupils at the end of key stage 2.

89. Teachers are very effective in promoting pupils' self-assessment strategies. As a result, pupils in key stage 2 are able to evaluate standards in their own work and identify specific targets for improvement. Pupils in key stage 2 spoken to during the inspection had a good knowledge of their targets and could give good levels of analysis regarding the progress they are making. These targets are monitored weekly when discussions between pupils and teachers identify progress made. Pupils also give teachers feedback about their lessons. This feedback is used by teachers to modify and improve the quality of their planning.
90. Teachers ensure that pupils have a very good understanding of the purpose of assessment and that they use this knowledge well in carrying out their own evaluation processes.
91. Teachers effectively use their marking of pupils' work to provide assessment information and to give pupils feedback about how well they are doing in their work. By this means and through discussion, they enable pupils to know what they need to do to improve.
92. The reports to parents conform to statutory requirements and are of very good quality.
93. They give parents and carers useful information about their children's progress in their schoolwork and identify clearly what pupils and children know, understand and can do.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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94. The grade awarded by the inspection team coincides with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document for this key question.
95. There are many outstanding features in this school's curriculum which fully meet the requirements of the range and age of pupils.
96. The curriculum is broad, balanced and effective. It meets all the statutory requirements of the NC. It provides many rich and stimulating opportunities for learning as a result of the outstanding quality of planning made by the teachers with pupils in mind. As a result, children in the early years and pupils throughout the school including those with special educational or additional learning needs show high levels of motivation and positive attitudes towards learning. From the early days in school to the end of key stage 2, pupils clearly develop the knowledge of what it is to be a learner because of the curricular provision made by teachers and their interpretation of it.
97. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
98. The exceptional provision made for nursery and reception children provides abundant opportunities for learning, both indoors and outdoors. Such

opportunities are highly stimulating and motivating and ensure that children are actively involved in their own learning as soon as they enter school. Substantial investment has been made in the outdoor curriculum in preparation for the Foundation Phase. The school has a forest area, which is used very effectively to develop children's learning skills and to promote, amongst other things, children's curiosity in the world around them. St Mary's is a Foundation Phase Initiative school where preparations are well in hand for the successful introduction in the autumn of the new curricular requirements.

99. The school makes outstanding provision for the development of pupils' basic and key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils' problem-solving and investigative skills are well developed and very well organised and monitored.
100. The school's provision ensures that pupils are encouraged to ask their own questions and are empowered to seek answers to them in investigations across the subject areas. The school has created a strong culture of self-evaluation, which permits pupils to review the results of their work and identify avenues for refinement and improvement. Through this, pupils are beginning to understand the need for rigour in their evaluations. Pupils' thinking skills are well developed throughout the school as a result of the learning strategies promoted by teachers. Many children show and exercise the capacity for independent learning as a result.
101. The school works hard to broaden and enrich learners' experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a particularly wide variety of sporting, musical and other activities. Educational visits are numerous including residential visits to other countries. Links with the local church, theatres, museums and local businesses enrich pupils' understanding of the nature of community. Visitors come into school, to share their expertise and knowledge with pupils in lessons such as history, where a recent visitor related his experience of life in World War 2. The extensiveness and quality of this provision enhance greatly the curriculum offered by the school and are exceptional.
102. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Assemblies and acts of collective worship are very inclusive and are times when all pupils and children experience a sense of belonging. Spiritual development is very well promoted both through the learning experiences provided for pupils and also through acts of collective worship when pupils, through reflection, encounter the higher issues of life. Statutory requirements are met.
103. Provision for the development of moral and social understanding is outstanding. Pupils are taught to know right from wrong and staff at the school provide very good role models for pupils to emulate. As a result, the standards of behaviour in the school are high and pupils demonstrate high levels of self-discipline. For those directly involved, the school council and eco committee are effective in enhancing an understanding of living as part of a community and in fostering understanding in the nature of taking responsibility. Through such school institutions, most pupils gain a good understanding of the nature of democracy and the importance of individual points of view.
104. The school fully meets the requirements of the '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*' and pupils have a clear understanding that they have Welsh heritage.
105. The school makes a conscious effort to introduce bilingualism into the school curriculum, especially in the early years and key stage 1.

106. The provision made by the school for the development of pupils' cultural understanding beyond the '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*' is outstanding. In addition to the rich contribution made by the curriculum, the school has extensive links with schools based in this country and abroad. The school is linked to the Comenius project and through it pupils develop an intimate knowledge of what it means to belong to a community of nations. Such links are providing a rich basis for pupils' understanding of global citizenship and this is promoted very well.
107. Links with parents and carers are very good. Parents are kept very well informed about school activities and events through a good range of sources from regular newsletters to the attractive and informative school website. Links with the community are very strong. St Mary's School is at the heart of the community enabling pupils to benefit from a wealth of community activities. For example, the farmers' market organised and run by pupils provides rich experience for the planned development of their entrepreneurial skills.
108. The school has good links with the local consortium of schools, which disseminates good practice. The school provides work-experience places for local secondary school students. There are also good links with Glyndwr (previously NEWI) and Bangor universities from which aspiring student teachers gain experience from working in a school that demonstrates very high standards in all aspects of school life. Pupils benefit from the fresh approaches to learning brought by students on teacher training.
109. All learning experiences meet legal and course requirements. Health education is successfully provided throughout the school. The school takes excellent account of the personal and social education framework through its provision for the development of pupils' personal and social skills.
110. The school's partnership with industry is good with outstanding features. The school has taken advantage of industrial placements to enhance a teacher's professional development and to support her teaching and management skills. The school benefits materially and educationally from its links with businesses locally and further afield. Such links contribute significantly and successfully to the pupils' work-related education.
111. The school's provision for equal opportunities is outstanding. St Mary's Primary School is totally inclusive. Pupils are encouraged to take part in everything the school has to offer irrespective of their social background, ability, gender, disability and ethnicity. All are included in all appropriate school activities including residential visits and out-of-hour's clubs. Pupils themselves affirm that there is no gender inequality at the school and that those with disabilities or from different ethnic background are never disadvantaged.
112. The schools provision for pupils' understanding of sustainability is outstanding. The school acts in a sustainable way in its purchasing of school resources. All pupils including children in the early years understand implicitly the need to conserve energy, and precious resources such as water. Pupils are fully involved through its eco committee in recycling projects. Pupils and children in early years take their task of looking after the environment very seriously particularly their forest school, which pupils in key stage 2 consider to be a conservation area.

113. The school attends very well to national priorities for lifelong learning and community regeneration. In all that it offers for the benefit of pupils including those with SEN and children under five it is proactive in ensuring that learning is a positive and enjoyable experience. Pupils are encouraged to understand that learning continues after they leave school and enter the world of work. The school is very effective in fostering the understanding that life provides a rich range of experiences from which everyone actively learns whatever their age. The school's contribution to pupils' understanding of lifelong learning is outstanding.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

114. The grade awarded by the inspection team coincides with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document for this key question.
115. The care, support and guidance provided by the school are among its many outstanding features. Pupils are secure in school and very good relationships exist between themselves and all staff both teaching and non-teaching. The academic support for all pupils regardless of ability is outstanding. In discussions with pupils and the school council pupils said they were confident any concerns would be treated seriously and dealt with quickly and effectively.
116. The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. There is a parents' council open to all parents, which meets with the headteacher once a month. Any issues, concerns or suggestions to improve school life are discussed and action taken where appropriate. Parents are kept very well informed about school life with regular newsletters and class letters each half term outlining topics and diary events. There is an up-to-date website and parents have the option to have school letters and information emailed to them. Questionnaires are sent out annually and there are very detailed information boards outside the early years and key stage 1 classrooms. The school council is well organised and involves the whole school in decision-making via class councils. Members of the school council said they think they make a valued and valuable contribution to school life. The inspection team agrees with this view.
117. Induction programmes developed by the school to help pupils settle in quickly are good and well established. New pupils arriving outside the normal admission times are encouraged to visit the school before starting and are allocated a 'buddy' on arrival. They quickly settle down into the life and routines of their new school.
118. The school provides outstanding personal support and guidance for pupils. Teachers know their pupils well which enables them to monitor and progress each child according to their needs. Personal and social education is given a high priority and included in all weekly planning. Assemblies and circle time are well used to support and guide pupils. In discussions pupils were highly appreciative of the opportunities to discuss concerns during circle time. Good use is made of specialist services, including some whole-school training to support pupils with particular medical needs.
119. The school's procedures for monitoring punctuality, attendance and behaviour are outstanding. The importance of good attendance is stressed in the school

prospectus and in an annual attendance letter which goes out at the end of the summer term. Parents are informed that no absences are authorised over ten days and that no holidays will be authorised during assessment weeks which are held twice a year. High targets for attendance are set and governors review the figures each term. It is due to the school's vigilance that high percentages of attendance and punctuality are achieved throughout the year.

120. The school's provision for the healthy development, safety and well-being of all pupils is outstanding. The school has been involved in the 'healthy schools' initiative' for three years with many of the principles firmly embedded in school life. The school has recently completed a consultation with parents, pupils, the local authority, governors and the school cook in developing a school health and fitness policy and action plan. As a result of this consultation, a 'club organiser' has been appointed to implement activities to support the action plan. There are two named first-aiders and all staff have received emergency first-aid and epi-pen training. The school is involved with 'Dragon Sports' and some parents have been trained to help deliver the program. There are appropriate security arrangements in place.
121. The headteacher is the named person with responsibility for child protection and together with a senior manager is trained to the appropriate level. All other staff, including non-teaching staff, have received appropriate training. Update training is delivered annually and governors are also invited to attend. There is a child protection policy in place in line with local and all-Wales procedures. A nominated governor has responsibility for child protection and all staff, governors and volunteers are Criminal Records Bureau checked.
122. The provision the school makes for pupils with special education or additional learning needs is outstandingly successful. It fully complies with the Code of Practice. There are good procedures in place to diagnose and support the learning needs of these pupils.
123. Pupils with SEN or ALN are identified as soon as they enter school. They are monitored and if necessary included on the special needs' register.
124. The class teacher, in consultation with the very experienced SENCO writes the individual education plans (IEPs). Teachers keep IEPs records close to hand during the school day for easy reference. Well-focused and achievable targets are set and progress the pupils make towards these targets is closely monitored. Although the review of targets is set on a half-termly basis, in practice, where targets are achieved before that time new ones are drawn up. This maintains momentum and the rate at which pupils make progress.
125. Work is well differentiated for such pupils in class and they receive good support from their teachers and classroom assistants, who are well informed about their particular targets. Where necessary the SENCO targets particular pupils with specific needs for individual support from classroom assistants or works with them herself for a short period when it is required.
126. Parents are fully involved in the process of satisfying their children's special learning needs from the start. The SENCO and class teachers are pro-active in encouraging parents to work with the school in support of their children.
127. The school is well supported by a good range of outside agencies to help deal with the wide range of learning and personal difficulties some pupils at the

school experience. In practice the school's provision for such pupils is sufficient to meet the needs of pupils.

128. The very good quality of support pupils with ALN receive enhances their self-esteem, and enables them to confidently take a full part in all learning activities offered by the school.
129. Positive behaviour management is used very effectively to reinforce good behaviour throughout the school. It contributes strongly to the outstanding standards of pupils' behaviour and self-control to be found in all classes and learning groups. It ensures that all pupils can get on with their learning tasks without disruption and is an outstanding feature of the school.
130. The importance and attention given to equal opportunities are outstanding. They take into account pupils' social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. They promote gender equality, challenge stereotyping and promote good race relations in an outstanding manner.
131. All lessons and activities are available to all pupils. The school has been actively involved with other countries and cultures for many years. In addition, each year, pupils from Y5 and Y6 have the opportunity to visit France where they are able to live and mix with other children from as far away as China, Ethiopia and Taiwan. Children from other European countries are also involved. Planning in PSE, religious education and geography reflects the diversity of the society in which the pupils live. The school has acquired Fair-trade status. Displays, artefacts and multicultural resources throughout the school are of a very high standard. All appropriate statutory policies are in place and evident in the day-to-day life of the school.
132. The effective measures in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment are evident in the pupils' outstanding behaviour. Positive behaviour management is firmly embedded into school life. School rules are discussed and voted for each year by all pupils. Pupils are confident that any bullying would be dealt with immediately.
133. The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure the equal treatment of disabled pupils. In establishing the Disability Equality Scheme and action plan the school went to outstanding lengths to obtain the views of all stakeholders. Personalised questionnaires went out to pupils, both past and present, with particular medical needs. Parents and governors were also consulted. There are suitable disabled facilities and access to all parts of the school.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

134. The grade awarded by the inspection team coincides with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document for this key question.
135. The headteacher is a very successful leader and manager. She has extremely high expectations and is able to use experience gained outside the school to very good effect. She has a very clear vision of the school's values, aims, objectives and priorities which she successfully communicates to her

colleagues, governors and parents. Her contribution to the life and success of the school is outstanding.

136. The headteacher is very ably assisted by two assistant headteachers who have developed very good leadership qualities when undertaking their own whole-school responsibilities. In addition, the subject 'focus leaders' undertake their responsibilities very well. The teaching staff in turn, have gained the trust and confidence of ancillary staff. As a consequence, the school has a very clear sense of purpose, helped significantly by shared values and ethos and a detailed, common method of working.
137. The school has explicit aims and values that promote equality for all. These values are clearly reflected in the day-to-day work of the school, where children of all abilities, whatever their age, sex or racial background are treated equally and given the same opportunities.
138. Realistic but ambitious targets are set as required by statute for English, mathematics and science at both key stages. Class teachers are aware of these targets which they have helped to draw up. Each pupil has his or her own target. Pupils are aware of their own targets which are regularly revised as part of the school's assessment arrangements.
139. The SDP's main priorities pay good attention to a number of national priorities, including bilingualism, forging community and international links, practising sustainability, encouraging a healthy lifestyle for pupils and preparing for the new Foundation Phase and NC in September 2008. Very good use is made of local partners. Responsibilities are clearly defined as are success criteria. Priorities are carefully costed. The SDP is a working document to which those who have an interest in the school have had an opportunity to contribute.
140. Each member of staff has a suitable job description. Schemes to support newly or recently qualified teachers are in place and effective use is made of performance management. Staff attend relevant training which is already reflected positively in the materials and methodology used in the classroom. In addition, there are strong personal and professional support mechanisms within the school to ensure continuing professional development. The school has made suitable plans for ensuring that staff have the requisite non-contact time and this has led to very effective subject planning, in particular in key stage 1 and early years as part of the Foundation Phase, and in the monitoring of subject provision.
141. Day-to-day administration is very good and resources, including financial resources, are very well managed.
142. The governors are very supportive of the school. Many have useful expertise in relevant fields which they readily use to help the school. They also have very close links with the community and the parents. They have a good level of knowledge about almost every aspect of the school's life and monitor the provision carefully. They are able to use this information to take effective and appropriate decisions, such as those regarding staffing, resources and building requirements.
143. They act as critical friends to the headteacher and her colleagues and they make a good contribution to the school's strategic planning.

144. The governing body fulfils all the legal responsibilities placed upon it, including those emanating from educational and other legislation, and undertakes its statutory responsibilities well.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

145. The grade awarded by the inspection team coincides with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document for this key question.
146. The grades awarded by the inspection team coincide with the grades the school awarded itself in its self evaluation document for all seven key questions.
147. The school's processes for self evaluation are outstanding. Sources of evidence used include internal and statutory assessment data and regular evaluations based on formal lesson observation and detailed analysis of pupils' work against subject standards.
148. The school has a long established tradition of self-evaluation that was noted in the previous inspection report. The headteacher has ensured its effectiveness by a combination of personal support and encouragement and a formalisation and unity of procedures. Two teachers, for example, may share a responsibility or task. This ensures a collaborative ethos resulting in the staff feeling ownership of the self-evaluation process. Consequently, the headteacher and her colleagues have a very good idea of the performance of the areas for which they are responsible from formal and informal observation and from detailed knowledge of each pupil's potential based on regular evaluation. They use the knowledge well both on a day to day basis and as a strategic planning tool.
149. The school's self-evaluation report is of good quality. It is based on a detailed school audit. It is evaluative and based on direct evidence from lesson observations, assessment data and detailed analyses of pupils' work against subject standards. It follows Estyn's seven key questions, gives a grade for each question and draws up a list of priorities for action which are reflected in the SDP. It does not, however, sufficiently distinguish those features which are outstanding from those which are good.
150. The main strength of the self-evaluation document is the same as that of the school self-evaluation process as a whole, namely the collaborative process which produced it.
151. All staff are involved in the evaluation process as are the pupils, governors and parents. Arrangements to do so are formalised and well known to the participants. The school does seek out and takes good account of the views of the pupils, both informally and more formally, in the school council. In addition, parents' views are canvassed and the governing body takes an active part in self-evaluation. The school makes good use of the educational advisory service to assess provision and also to give an opinion on standards.
152. The school actively uses information from the self-evaluation process to plan for improvement. The SDP is of good quality and reflects priorities identified in the self-evaluation document. It is an effective tool. The school also sets challenging quantitative and qualitative targets and priorities.

153. The governing body and the headteacher do provide enough resources to meet the priorities and objectives. Long-term planning and savings have ensured that there are seven teachers for the seven classes. In addition, there have been substantial improvements and expansion to the buildings and a conscious improvement in resources. Tight assessment procedures and 'targeting' of pupils as a consequence of pupil and class evaluation have often improved the achievement of individual pupils and led to an improvement over the last four years in end-of-key-stage assessments.
154. The school has responded in an outstanding manner to all of the key issues identified in the previous report. Standards have improved significantly in key stage 1 and key stage 2 in Welsh. The provision for children under five is outstanding. The school now has a strong partnership with industry and the teaching time conforms to national recommendations.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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155. The grade awarded by the inspection team coincides with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation document for this key question.
156. There are many outstanding features in the way this school uses its resources.
157. The school is very well staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced full-time teachers, to meet the needs of all pupils, children in the early years and pupils with SEN or ALN. The school has committed and enthusiastic teachers who possess outstanding teaching skills. Specialised teaching across the school is particularly effective and contributes strongly to the creative ethos prevalent in the school. As a result of high quality teaching, pupils are assured of a continuity of very effective support for their learning as they progress through the school. The school is fortunate to have two very dedicated assistant headteachers who oversee many aspects of school life and support effectively the aims of the school.
158. The work force has been successfully remodelled according to statutory requirements. Very good use is made of both internal and external professional development opportunities. All teachers have the appropriate planning, preparation and assessment time and make good use of it to ensure consistency of curricular provision and assessment across the school in the subject or subjects for which they are responsible.
159. Support staff make an excellent contribution to the quality of learning, and work very effectively with teachers to plan, teach and record pupils' and children's progress.
160. The team spirit that exists at the school ensures that all pupils and children under five receive the very best academic and pastoral care. Teamwork is an outstanding strength of the school.
161. Ancillary staff make a very effective contribution to the welfare of pupils. The school secretary ensures that the day-to-day running of processes and procedures are smooth. The school caretaker and cleaning staff assure optimum cleanliness and health and safety standards for the benefit of pupils at

all times. Playground and lunchtime supervisors and kitchen staff all play a vital role within the school community.

162. The accommodation, indoor and outdoor areas, is of very good quality. The use made of it by teachers and pupils is outstanding. Displays are of high quality and celebrate very effectively the success of pupils in their work.
163. All areas within school are fully utilised to meet the needs of the wide range of strategies teachers employ to enhance learning. Teachers are innovative in the way they use the school environment. This is particularly evident in the use early years staff make of the forest school area for the learning experiences of young children. The presence of varied flora and fauna provide opportunities for children to develop a whole range of skills and to ponder over the wonders of the natural world.
164. Learning resources are of very good quality and are plentiful. They serve the needs of all areas of teaching and learning and are used very effectively. Subject managers keep a watching brief on the quality and quantity of resources through their annual audit. They maintain outstanding standards in the quality of resources to ensure quality learning experiences for pupils.
165. Governors maintain an excellent overview of the spending plans of the school through their highly committed finance committee. Governors meet with teachers on a regular basis and often attend staff, departmental and partner meetings. They are fully involved in monitoring the targets identified in the SDP and assist the headteacher in raising money for the school from a variety of sources including grants.
166. The quality of human and material resources supports the high standards pupils achieve. The school's spending decisions are closely linked to the priorities and objectives in the school development plan. The headteacher and governing body regularly review and evaluate spending decisions. The management of school finance is thereby very effective and ensures that the school gives outstanding value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Overall grade for Early Years: Grade 1 in both nursery and reception classes in all aspects of the work.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

167. Children in nursery and reception develop outstanding speaking and listening skills in every aspect of their daily activities and tasks. Children respond very well to one another. It is their speaking and listening skills that enable them to interact so effectively sharing anecdotes, thoughts and ideas.
168. Their attitudes towards books are exceptional. Children are fascinated by them and many find it difficult, at times, to tear themselves away from exploring their contents.

Good features

169. Pupils in both nursery and reception enjoy the stories that their teachers share with them often empathising with the character when, for example, they encounter similar incidents from their own experience. Children in both nursery and reception are good at asking relevant questions. They listen well to their teachers and to the contribution their peers make to lessons. They enjoy occasions such as “World Book Day” when they share books with older children in key stage 2. They use their speaking and listening skills very well in their focused activities when, for example, engaging in sand and water play.
170. During forest school expeditions children use their speaking and listening skills very well in describing the objects and creatures they find there. They use such skills very effectively to satisfy their curiosity and to share with each other and their teacher the discoveries they make.

Nursery

171. Children respond positively to all classroom language activities. They listen very well to the teacher’s presentations and all forms of oral communication within the classroom context. They are eager to hear stories and respond appropriately to questions about the text.
172. They handle books appropriately and understand that stories are sequenced with a beginning, middle and an end. Children are making good progress with their emerging writing skills. They understand that writing carries meaning. They imitate writing through mark making and many are beginning to form letters successfully.

Reception

173. Children develop good oral skills as they eagerly participate in class activities. They ask and answer a range of questions and make extended comments about their feelings and views. The majority of children has a developing understanding of letter sounds and can match objects to sounds and letters.
174. Children’s understanding of Welsh is progressing well. They respond to their teacher’s questions using Welsh words with confidence. Children in reception continue to make good progress in developing their writing skills forming their letters correctly, the more able being able to write simple stories.

Personal and social development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

175. Children in both nursery and reception display outstanding self-esteem and self-control. They play confidently in groups and interact well with adults and peers in a range of situations.
176. Their relationships are outstanding and aid the excellent progress they make in learning.

Good features

177. Children in both nursery and reception are very accommodating when sharing toys and equipment. They take turns on the computers and play equipment harmoniously. Children wait their turns patiently, safe in the knowledge that they will be able to use equipment within a short time.

178. Children have very good knowledge of safety rules when, for example, visiting their forest school. They are aware of hygiene issues and know not to put their fingers in their mouths after handling objects, plants and minibeasts. Children are developing a good understanding of what it is to take responsibility, tidying up both in the classroom and outside on their visits to their forest school.

179. Children are able to work in groups of different sizes sharing and co-operating without rancour. Children carry out their tasks with great levels of concentration and perseverance.

Nursery

180. Children settle in quickly and easily to daily routines. They establish a good measure of independence and an ability to concentrate and keep on task.

181. They are aware of the need to conform to classroom practices and to listen in order to gather information. Their growing confidence when taking part in practical activities is a notable feature of their development.

Reception

182. Children work and play effectively in pairs and groups. They work independently and understand the importance of working as a team. They relate well to visitors to their school and are eager to show their work. They show empathy for their peers and interact happily with one another when carrying out their activities in their forest school. They dress and undress themselves responsibly for physical activities. They understand the need for a daily routine and do their best to conform.

Mathematical development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

183. In both nursery and reception classes, children's ability to apply mathematical ideas in practical situations, particularly in number work, is outstanding.

184. They are making outstanding progress in their mental agility in number work.

Good features

185. Children in nursery and reception develop mathematical understanding very effectively through singing and reciting games. They enhance their expertise through the "challenges" they undertake at the beginning of the school day. They enthusiastically carry out simple mental arithmetic tasks, such as identifying numbers that come before or after an identified number. More able children extend this to finding numbers two ahead or two behind.

Nursery

186. Children in the nursery successfully match shape tiles in linear patterns. They confidently identify and name a good range of two-dimensional shapes. They are beginning to use mathematical language in their activities and choose resources for tasks appropriately.

187. Children have a good understanding of numbers up to ten. They write the correct symbols for small numbers. They play number games successfully on the computer and recite number rhymes with understanding. They sort, match, order and sequence familiar objects and recreate familiar patterns. They begin

to understand how objects can be classified as small, medium and large and how time is indicated on a clock.

Reception

188. Reception and more able children in nursery are able to count up to ten and back. More able reception children can take such counting onto twenty and beyond. Such children are developing a good knowledge of number bonds to ten.

189. Children in reception use standard and non-standard measures in a wide range of measuring activities including finding the height of towers made of construction bricks. They confidently appraise the size of objects and can define those that are longer than or shorter than within a collection. They have a good understanding of coins up to twenty pence and conduct buying and selling activities in the role-play area in, for example their "Easter Egg Shop".

190. Children's mathematical terminology in number, shape and measurement is developing well. They have a secure understanding of the properties of a good range of two and three-dimensional shapes. They can order objects and containers according to size, weight and height, using mathematical terms. They have a good understanding of position, direction and movement left and right when using a programmable toy.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

191. Children in nursery and reception develop an outstanding knowledge of the environment and environmental issues associated with their forest school.

192. Their knowledge of natural materials found in wooded areas is outstanding.

Good features

193. Children in nursery and reception show high levels of curiosity in their surroundings when carrying out tasks in their forest school. Their knowledge of the life-styles of small creatures is very good. They use their developing reasoning powers well to determine the nature of habitat boxes, and the creatures that are a feature of the wooded environment which use the boxes.

194. They advance their research skills through using books and charts to identify the minibeasts they find and magnifying glasses to identify the features of such creatures more clearly. They use their thinking skills very well to sort living from non-living things.

Nursery

195. Pupils in the nursery can name animals that live in hot places and know the conditions under which these animals manage to survive. They know how to care for plants and that they need warmth and water to grow.

196. They have a developing understanding of sustainability and know how to conserve precious resources by turning off water taps, turning the lights out when not in use and by recycling. They are beginning to recognise and name everyday materials as they encounter them during the school day. They can explain how weather affects their choice of clothes.

197. They become increasingly confident in using computers and can relate the actions they take using the mouse to happenings upon the computer screen.

Reception

198. Children in reception know that weather changes with the seasons and can indicate the effect this has upon plants and animals. They gather important knowledge about the diversity of cultures throughout the world. In their work about a Chinese festival, children gain understanding of the richness of Chinese culture through tasting food such as noodles, dressing up in Chinese dress and making Chinese dragons. They well understand the significance of Harvest and Pancake Day in our own culture. Children in Reception have an increasing knowledge of the world of work such as the duties carried out by a fireman.

Creative development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

199. Nursery and reception children's creativity in their practical activities, especially their use of a wide range of media is outstanding. Their enthusiastic application to their creative work and the use they make of their imagination are outstanding.

Good features

200. Children use their imagination very effectively in a wide range of activities such as building a make-believe home for Mr Onion, their own guardian of their forest school. They use their creativity effectively in making robots of natural materials in a clearing amongst the trees. Children in nursery and reception sing spontaneously and with enjoyment. They have a good repertoire of songs, which they sing with enthusiasm in English and Welsh. Children in nursery and reception develop their colour-mixing skills well and use them to paint water lily pictures in the style of Monet.

201. In response to the story of "The Gruffalo" children in nursery and reception make their own props to recreate their own version of the story. They use collage techniques very effectively to make character images including some delightful mouse shapes.

Nursery

202. Children can talk about the work they do in art explaining the significance of particular features in their paintings or other artwork.

Reception

203. Children respond well to the suggestions made by their teacher in dance sessions. They use their bodies well to perform different activities whilst travelling at different speeds.

Physical development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

204. Children in nursery and reception develop outstanding skills in physical development when handling a wide range of different materials in their practical activities.

205. They have an excellent understanding of the need for care for others when engaged in highly active tasks.

Good features

206. Children in nursery and reception develop their fine and gross motor skills very effectively in many activities during the school day. Making a pirate ship out of large construction kit, children are able to determine what pieces fit together and manipulate them so that they do so. Using large play equipment in the school field, children show a very good sense of balance when crossing a horizontally suspended log and reflect upon the relative merits of crossing quickly or slowly in order to maintain equilibrium. Children find different ways of moving and different ways of jumping when using the large play equipment enhancing their gross motor skills.

207. Both nursery and reception children show good control and high regard for their safety when using wheeled toys. They are able to power them along and moderate their speed when in the proximity of others.

208. Children develop their fine motor skills through a wide range of purposeful activities including making clay models of creatures they find in their visit to their forest school. They have good control when they use small equipment such as crayons and scissors.

Nursery

209. Children respond well to instructions given by their teachers in play situations such as 'stop, start, faster and slower'.

Reception

210. Children understand and respond well to suggestions their teacher makes about spatial relationships in physical activities.

Welsh second language

Key Stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.

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

Outstanding features

211. At key stage 1, pupils make very good progress in understanding and speaking a very wide range of everyday vocabulary and phrases. They listen very carefully and respond correctly and with understanding to instructions, questions and commands. They can both ask and answer simple questions, with the ablest answering at length and adding a reason for their answer. The pronunciation of the vast majority of Y1 and Y2 pupils is very good.

212. By the end of key stage 1, pupils write very well and correctly. The ablest write several sentences using various structures and a wide vocabulary.

Good features

213. Pupils in both Y1 and Y2 can express both facts such as the colours of clothes, and their opinions or reactions to such facts. Pupils in Y2 often have a wider range of vocabulary than those in Y1. The ablest, in both years, can create their own sentences by means of substituting vocabulary and structures. All pupils are making good progress in understanding and speaking familiar everyday vocabulary and phrases used in practical situations such as registration or normal daily routine.

214. At key stage 1, reading skills are good; these are often based on their oral experiences and also their work in class. Pupils in both Y1 and Y2 show good understanding of simple text using a range of printed resources.
215. At key stage 2, pupils ask and answer questions about their likes and dislikes and respond appropriately with understanding on a range of topics. As they progress into Y5 and Y6 they successfully take part in dialogue and role-play on a wider range of topics to build up knowledge and understanding of the language. Very often the pronunciation of the older girls, especially, is very good. Year 3 and Y4 pupils respond well to a range of stimuli.
216. The majority of Y5 and Y6 pupils can either create a monologue or sustain a conversation for longer periods, using a variety of structures. In addition to stating their likes and dislikes, Y5 and Y6 pupils can also give a reason to explain their opinion. The oral standards that a significant number of the Y6 pupils, especially girls, achieve are very good.
217. In Y3 and Y4, pupils have detailed understanding of texts and stories that they read. In Y5 and Y6, the majority of pupils reads and responds very well to a range of reading materials. The more able pupils read out work confidently and with expression, and convey clearly the content of materials read.
218. In Y3 and Y4, pupils can write simple narratives in Welsh based on what they have heard and read. In Y5 and Y6, pupils complete a variety of written tasks to a good standard. They plan and prepare notes from initial ideas before producing their finished work. Words in the final version are generally spelt correctly and punctuation is accurate.

Shortcomings

219. There are no significant shortcomings but on occasion a few older individuals at key stage 2 forget key words or make grammatical errors which do not impede communication.

Mathematics

Key Stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

220. Throughout key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils respond very well to mental work in mathematics. By the end of Y2, for example, and again in Y4 and Y6 pupils can explain their often sophisticated strategies clearly and use the correct mathematical terms.
221. In both key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils have an outstanding understanding of number bonds and patterns. They use all four operators confidently and accurately. Almost without exception their knowledge and application of multiplication tables are swift and accurate.
222. By the end of Y2, almost every pupil is able to handle numbers up to 100. The ablest are able to deal with thousands, hundreds, tens and units.

Good features

223. Almost all pupils by Y2 know the different value of money and can apply it successfully to their calculations and simulated buying and selling.

224. By Y2, pupils can record data, such as distance travelled, in a graph or table.
225. All key stage 1 pupils recognise two-dimensional (2D) shapes and the majority know the more common three-dimensional (3D) shapes.
226. All pupils make good progress in their measuring and weighing skills and by the end of Y2 have a good understanding of standard measurements. Pupils' estimating skills are also good.
227. By the end of key stage 2 almost all pupils understand and use mathematical language well and have a good idea of place value, fractions and decimals.
228. Pupils can name and recognise the characteristics of a range of 2D and 3D shapes. They measure area well.
229. Key stage 2 pupils can choose the standard measurements used in different contexts and can deal with problems relating to time. Estimating skills are good.
230. Pupils collate and classify data well using a tally, graphs and tables. Year 5 and Y6 pupils, especially, can explain the suitability of the commonest types of graphs.

Shortcomings

231. There are no significant shortcomings.

Geography

Key Stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

232. Key stage 1 pupils have an outstanding awareness of their local area and the wider world. By Y2, most can name and locate the seven continents on maps of the world and can identify and locate the constituent countries of the British Isles. The ablest know the difference between the UK and the British Isles.
233. Throughout key stage 2, pupils show outstanding geographical enquiry skills, collecting and analysing evidence from a wide range of sources, including the use of ICT to answer questions and draw conclusions. Year 5 pupils' initial work on the potential location of a bridge for the A55 over the river Conwy displays a very high level of conceptual understanding and willingness for both individual research and effective collaborative 'brain-storming' while discussing human, economic and environmental factors.
234. Throughout key stage 2, pupils have outstanding mapping skills and can draw different types of maps with a very high degree of accuracy. Year 4 pupils are very familiar with the conventions of Ordnance Survey maps and can accurately locate and plot changes in their local area over a period of time.

Good features

235. In both key stages pupils show a very good understanding of the individual's responsibility for the environment
236. In key stage 1, pupils understand the difference between their view of the classroom and a bird's eye view and can make a simple plan showing the location of key features in the classroom, the school and the village.
237. By the end of key stage 1, pupils can identify key physical and economic features of their local area and also of a contrasting town in South Wales. In

addition they are aware of the amenities offered by the seaside village of Borth, near Aberystwyth.

238. Key stage 2 pupils have a very good understanding of the physical and economic characteristics of the developing area of Tobago as a result of their own research.

239. In their study of a contrasting area in Wales, pupils are aware of possible conflicts of interest between industry and nature.

Shortcomings

240. There are no significant shortcomings.

Art

Key Stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

241. Throughout both key stages pupils experiment with techniques using a wide range of materials in order to determine suitability for their creative ideas. This process is exceptional and leads to pupils producing stunning pieces of work of very high quality.

242. The care with which pupils across the school approach their art work and the way in which they marshal their thinking skills and innovate, lead to work of exceptional quality.

243. Pupils make very good progress in the development of their creative skills so that the standards of their art work are well above those which might be expected by the time they reach the end of key stage 2.

244. Pupils use digital cameras and computer technology very effectively to magnify sections of natural objects and use the images to produce powerful patterns and designs.

Good features

245. Pupils in key stage 1 understand what is meant by primary and secondary colours. They have good levels of knowledge about the outcomes of mixing two primary colours together and can reflect upon the effect of varying the quantity of one colour within the mixture.

246. Using coloured tissue paper pupils experiment with overlaying techniques in order to discover hues of different qualities, they develop their line and wash pictures well and are keenly aware of the particular features of the work of Sir Kyffin Williams.

247. Pupils in key stage 1 advance their skills associated with three-dimensional work well. Large sculptures such as the figure of a giraffe demonstrate pupils' perceptive observations and the good levels of care they use in their construction.

248. In key stage 2, pupils often use their advancing art skills to enhance work in other subjects such as history. In Y4 children are able to talk about the different grades of pencil and discuss what they think would be appropriate for their work in hand. They recognise the work of Hans Holbein in his portrait of Henry the Eighth and compare it with other portraits of him done by other artists of the

time. From this accumulated knowledge, they produce very individual and effective portraits of the monarch in line and shading techniques using pencils.

249. Pupils across key stage 2 use a very impressive range of materials and techniques in their artwork. They show great expertise in making collage pictures of famous Tudor people and their 3D representation of Van Gogh's sunflowers in a vase is exquisite.
250. Pupils develop their observational skills effectively. Their observations of sweet peppers executed in line and wash drawings show considerable expertise in handling the medium.
251. Pupils show the ability to absorb the flavour of the work of famous artists very well. Their representational work in the style of the Welsh artist Peter Prendergast demonstrates this very clearly.

Shortcomings

252. There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

Key Stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

253. The quality of the composing, performing and evaluation is consistently outstanding across both key stages.
254. Pupils' appreciation of a wide range of music is exceptional.

Good features

255. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy performing vocally. They sing a range of songs in English and Welsh enthusiastically and with good diction.
256. They understand the need for good posture and breath control.
257. By key stage 2, pupils sing in unison and in two or three parts with sensitivity and in tune, modifying dynamics appropriately.
258. In both key stages, pupils develop a good awareness of musical vocabulary, for example tempo, pitch and texture, and recognise them in pieces of music. Whether singing or playing instruments, pupils respond very well to a conductor, chosen from amongst them, and sing and play as a group aware of each other's parts. They have good understanding of the importance of timing.
259. In key stage 1, pupils can hold a pulse beat accurately. They observe the performance of others closely when following their beat using different body parts. They use their thinking skills well when selecting musical instruments to use in compositions such as one depicting a rainy day. As they play their musical instruments, they create music of sensitivity and texture.
260. Pupils are able to evaluate their performance of music well. They appreciate passages that work effectively and identify areas in which their compositions might be improved.
261. Pupils in key stage 2 have a good understanding of duration and pitch and can identify them in the everyday sounds to which they listen.

262. They can name a good range of musical instruments and have a good knowledge of the sounds they make, which helps them to judge their appropriateness for compositions of different types.
263. Pupils have good levels of knowledge of the way in which musical scores are arranged. They are able to use this information to arrange their own, applying texture duration and repeats where they think fit. The quality of their evaluations of their compositions is very good and pupils can draw comparisons between the music of famous composers such as Grieg and their own arrangements of music.
264. Pupils across the school listen to a wide range of music from different times, backgrounds and genre. They appreciate being able to listen to famous orchestras in concert such as the Liverpool Philharmonic and to the professional musicians who come into the school to share their music. They enjoy listening to music made by choirs including, at International Eisteddfod time, choirs from different cultures, such as a Lithuanian youth choir which visited the school during the inspection.

Shortcomings

265. There are no significant shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

The school is extremely pleased with this outstanding report which reflects the dedication and professionalism of everyone involved in ensuring pupils are provided with an excellent education. We are particularly pleased the report recognised that :

- the school places great emphasis on developing the whole child;
- standards achieved across the school are consistently high, resulting from a strong positive ethos which promotes high achievement in both academic and personal development;
- quality of learning is exceptionally high and significantly exceeds WAG targets;
- curriculum planning is outstanding with stimulating lessons and assessment used very effectively;
- provision for pupils is inclusive and sufficiently flexible to secure equal access and opportunities for all, with support for pupils with additional learning difficulties and more talented pupils being outstanding;
- the school has outstanding relationships with parents and provides excellent information for them;
- teachers have the ability to make learning fun and use challenge to stimulate learning, therefore pupils enjoy their learning experiences and achieve excellent results.

The governing body will draw up an action plan to respond to the very few recommendations made by the inspection team and incorporate it in its programme of continuous improvement for the school.

The headteacher, staff, pupils and governors wish to thank the inspection team led by Mr. Gareth Wyn Roberts for the courtesy and professionalism with which they conducted the inspection.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	St Mary's Church in Wales Aided Primary School
School type	Voluntary aided
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	School Lane Overton Nr Wrexham
Post-code	LL13 0ES
Telephone number	01978 710370
Headteacher	Mrs Pat Clarke
Date of appointment	September 1986
Chair of governors	Mr Phil Humphreys
Registered inspector	Gareth Wyn Roberts
Dates of inspection	7-9 July 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
	9.5	19	27	20	16	15	28	23	157.5

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

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	19:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	22
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Whole school (compulsory school age)
Summer 2007	91.2	92.2	94
Autumn 2007	91.5	95.9	96
Spring 2008	82.6	93.6	96.3

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	6
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 2007			Number of pupils in Y2:					18
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	5.6	72.2	22.2	
		National	0.4	3.4	13.1	62.7	20.4	
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	72.2	27.8	
		National	0.4	3.8	13.9	54.9	26.8	
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	16.7	77.8	5.6	
		National	0.4	4.9	14.4	68.4	11.8	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	5.6	72.2	22.2	
		National	0.4	2.4	9.8	65.4	24.00	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	5.6	72.2	22.2	
		National	0.3	2.0	10.4	63.9	23.2	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	5.6	61.1	33.3	
		National	0.3	1.6	8.6	65.5	23.9	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	94.4	In Wales	80.1

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2007			Number of pupils in Y6					18			
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.6	61.1	33.3
		National	0	0	0	0.5	0.6	3.9	15.9	48.2	30.4
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	11.1	38.9	60.0
		National	0	0	0	0.5	0.5	3.2	14.4	47.5	33.4
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	11.1	22.2	66.7
		National	0	0	0	0.5	0.3	1.8	11.5	51.8	33.8

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment			
In the school	88.9	In Wales	74.2

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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three independent inspectors who were present at the school for seven inspector days. A peer assessor was also a member of the team for the three days.
- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the parents and the governing body to discuss the life and work of the school. Nine parents attended the meeting for parents.
- Forty-one questionnaires were completed by the parents and these were analysed carefully. The contents of three letters or notes and six comments added to questionnaires were noted.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff with specific responsibilities and support staff.
- The school's documentation and samples of pupils' work were inspected.
- A total of 19 lessons or part-lessons in the subjects being formally inspected and five lessons in other subjects were observed.
- Samples of the work of pupils from the full ability range in each year group were inspected.
- The inspectors listened to a sample of pupils from each year group read.
- Discussions were held with pupils (including members of the School Council) about their work and the life of the school,
- Pupils' behaviour during break times, lunchtime and at the start and end of school sessions was inspected.
- Inspectors attended worship and extra-curricular activities were observed.
- Post-inspection meetings were held with staff and the governing body.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Gareth Wyn Roberts (Registered Inspector)	Context, Summary and Recommendations Appendix Key Questions 1, 5 and 6, Subjects :Welsh second language, mathematics, geography
Mrs Justine Barlow (Lay Inspector)	Key Question 4 (support and guidance and equal opportunities), contribution to other questions.
Mr Kerry Knapper (Team Inspector)	Key Questions 2, 3, 4 (SEN and ALN) and 7 Subjects: contributions to Early Years, art, music.
Mrs Pat Clarke School's nominee	Contributed to team meetings, provided evidence from the school
Mr Gordon Hughes Peer Assessor	Inspected pupils' work, conducted lesson observations and contributed to team meetings

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, staff and pupils of St Mary's C.I.W Primary School for their co-operation during the inspection.

The contractor for this inspection was:

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