

INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF
SCHOOL INSPECTIONS ACT, 1996

ST. MARY'S CHURCH-IN-WALES
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Park Street
Ruabon
Wrexham, LL14 6LE

School Number: 665/3341

Date of Inspection: 14th – 17th October, 2003

MRS. EIRWEN GRIFFITHS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR: WO50/17562

20th November, 2003

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: T/99/03P

© Crown Copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part except for either commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date are stated.

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the School Inspections Act, 1996, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others.

CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year-groups from the start of compulsory schooling to the age of eighteen is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local education authorities and to emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "reception" is applied to the year-group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of five during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year-group of pupils who attain the age of six during the academic year and so on to Y13 — the year-group who attain the age of eighteen during the academic year.

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; Key Stage 2 of Y3 to Y6; Key Stage 3 of Y7 to Y9; Key Stage 4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The following five-point grading scale is used to represent the main judgments in the report:

1. **Very good** : many good features, some of them outstanding
2. **Good** : good features and no major shortcomings
3. **Satisfactory** : good features outweigh shortcomings
4. **Unsatisfactory** : some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas
5. **Poor** : many shortcomings.

CONTENTS

1.	CONTEXT	page
	The School and its Priorities	1
2.	MAIN FINDINGS	
	The Main Findings of the Report	2
3.	EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	
3.1	Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning	6
3.2	Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum	7
4.	ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL	
4.1	Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development	8
4.2	Behaviour and Attitudes	8
4.3	Attendance	9
5.	QUALITY OF EDUCATION	
5.1	Teaching	10
5.2	Assessment, Recording and Reporting	11
5.3	Curriculum	11
5.4	Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare	12
5.5	Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs	13
5.6	Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions	14
5.7	Partnership with Industry	15
6.	MANAGEMENT	
6.1.	Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement	15
6.2.	Leadership and Efficiency	16
6.3	Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources	17

7.	SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING	page
	Standards Achieved by Pupils:	
	Provision for Children under Five	18
	English	22
	Mathematics	24
	Science	25
	Welsh (as a second language)	26
	Design and Technology	27
	Information Technology	28
	History	29
	Geography	30
	Art	31
	Music	32
	Physical Education	33
8.	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	
8.1	Progress since the last Inspection	34
8.2	Key Issues for Action	36
	APPENDICES	
A	Basic Information about the School	37
B	School Data and Indicators	38
C	Results of National Curriculum Assessments, 2002	39
D	The Evidence Base of the Inspection	41
E	Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team	42

1. CONTEXT

The School and its Priorities

St. Mary's Primary School is a Church-in-Wales voluntary aided primary school situated in Ruabon, some five miles to the south-west of Wrexham. The local education authority is Wrexham County Borough Council.

Currently, the school has a total roll of 194 pupils aged three to eleven years, including twenty-five nursery children who attend on a mornings-only basis. Numbers have declined slightly over the past three years.

According to the headteacher's assessment, roughly a quarter of the area served by the school can be described as economically disadvantaged whilst the remainder is neither disadvantaged nor economically prosperous. Free school meals are received by some 11% of pupils.

The annual intake covers the full ability range. Twenty-one pupils are considered to have some form of special educational need, including one who is the subject of a formal statement.

English is the sole or predominant home language in almost all cases. No child comes from a Welsh-speaking home. A small number come from ethnic-minority families.

The school has drawn up a short "mission statement" summarising its overall aims and priorities:

All children are entitled to a well-balanced education with equal opportunities for all, carried out in a safe and caring environment.

Our pupils will be encouraged to develop as whole individuals.

We will encourage them to develop intellectually, spiritually, morally, emotionally and physically, so preparing them for the many and varied opportunities, responsibilities and experiences life has to offer.

This will be done in partnership with parents and the local and wider community.

Our children are the citizens of the future.

No changes have been made to the type or age-range of the school in recent years. The present headteacher has been in post since April, 2001, and was previously deputy headteacher of the school.

The school was last inspected during the summer term, 1997.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The Main Findings of the Report

This is a warm, welcoming, caring school which reflects the Christian principles on which it is founded.

Educational Standards Achieved by Pupils

- * During the inspection, standards of educational achievement were satisfactory or better in approximately 95% of the lessons seen, including 56% where they were good and 5% where there were very good. Standards were unsatisfactory in some 5% of lessons.
- * Very good provision is made for children under five years of age. Standards achieved in the six areas of learning are currently the following:

Area of Learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Good	Good
Personal and Social Development	Very Good	Very Good
Mathematical Development	Good	Good
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Good	Good
Physical Development	Good	Very Good
Creative Development	Good	Good

- * Standards achieved by pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 are shown below:

Subject	KS1	KS2
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Good	Good
Welsh (as a second language)	Very Good	Good
Design and Technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information Technology	Good	Unsatisfactory
History	Satisfactory	Good
Geography	Good	Unsatisfactory
Art	No judgment	Satisfactory
Music	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Physical Education	Good	Satisfactory

- * No judgment can be given about standards in art at Key Stage 1, as most pupils undertake no work in the subject during the first half of the term. Time is allocated instead to activities in design and technology.
- * National Curriculum assessment conducted by teachers last summer showed that, at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected norm of Level 2 or above was considerably above the national average for Wales in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. The percentage achieving the higher grade of

Level 3 was also well above the national average in mathematics, science and reading and slightly above the average in writing. The percentage moderately dipped below the average for Level 3 in speaking and listening.

- * Altogether, the percentage of pupils achieving at least Level 2 in mathematics, science and English was well above the average both for the area and for Wales as a whole.
- * At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results indicated that the percentage achieving the expected norm of Level 4 or above considerably exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. The percentage achieving Level 5 was also well above the average in English and science, and slightly above the average in mathematics.
- * The overall percentage achieving at least Level 4 in mathematics, science and English was considerably above the average both for Wrexham and Wales as a whole.
- * In applying their key skills across the curriculum, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in writing and good standards in speaking, listening, reading and number. Standards are unsatisfactory overall in information and communications technology.
- * Children under five years of age make good progress in applying their key skills in all six areas of learning.

Ethos of the School

- * Good provision overall is made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Values taught in assemblies are reflected in the daily life of the school. Pupils display attitudes of kindness and tolerance, and co-operate amicably with each other during work and play. Staff and visitors are treated with friendliness, courtesy and respect.
- * Behaviour and attitudes are very good throughout the school. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and respond accordingly both in the classroom and playground. They move around the school in an orderly, disciplined manner and behave impeccably during assemblies. No form of bullying or other inappropriate conduct was observed at any time during the inspection.
- * Good rates are achieved for attendance and punctuality.

Quality of Education

- * During the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in approximately 94% of the lessons observed, including 49% where it was good and 6% where it was very good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in some 6% of lessons.
- * The quality of teaching at nursery and reception level is consistently good or better, with teachers and nursery nurses collaborating effectively together. Children receive a wide range of experiences which successfully promote the desirable outcomes for learning.

- * At Key Stages 1 and 2, some very good teaching was observed in Welsh and physical education. The teaching and use of the Welsh language is a particularly strong feature of the school.
- * Where teaching is good or better, lessons are characterised by clear instructions, high expectations, challenging tasks, and ample opportunities for evaluation and improvement. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers fail to keep to the aims of lessons and to ensure that work is properly supported by a suitable range of resources. Too little thought is given to planning visits so that pupils might gain first-hand experiences and acquire greater understanding in particular areas of study.
- * Arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' work are satisfactory overall. Teachers at nursery and reception level keep an individual profile book for each child, in which achievement and progress in the six areas of learning are regularly recorded. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the school has a clear policy on assessment which is implemented effectively in English, mathematics and science. No arrangements, however, are yet in place to monitor and assess progress in other areas of the curriculum.
- * Annual reports to parents specify the standards attained by pupils but do not always show how further improvements could be made.
- * Overall, the school provides pupils with a broad, balanced curriculum which complies with statutory requirements. Good provision is made for pupils at Key Stage 1 and very good provision for children under five years of age. Provision at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, although there are weaknesses in some areas, particularly geography and information technology.
- * All pupils have full access to all parts of the curriculum irrespective of ability, gender or any other consideration. Good arrangements are made for pupils' personal and social development, including health and sex education.
- * Good provision overall is made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils. The school provides a safe, happy, secure environment in which pupils are well supported and cared for.
- * Appropriate procedures are in place for identifying the special educational needs of pupils. Individual educational plans have been drawn up for each pupil, although classwork is not always suitably matched to individual needs and abilities. Progress is satisfactory overall.
- * A good partnership has been established with parents, the community, and other schools and institutions. Links with industry, although generally satisfactory, have not yet been developed to their full potential.

Management

- * In the main, satisfactory procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own

work and to plan for improvement, although further strengthening is still required in some areas. The school development plan sets broad objectives, but contains too many priorities and is generally lacking in detail.

- * Leadership and efficiency are broadly satisfactory, apart from aspects relating to the curriculum and monitoring of work. The headteacher provides calm, caring leadership and has maintained a positive, well-disciplined, welcoming atmosphere since his appointment to the post. Management of the curriculum, however, is currently unsatisfactory.
- * Staff have worked successfully as a team to improve planning and update policies and schemes of work. Regular school-based in-service training sessions provide a suitable forum for discussion.
- * Effective support is provided by the recently-appointed senior teacher who is a very good classroom practitioner and an excellent example for colleagues.
- * Teachers have recently been given revised curriculum responsibilities but the distribution is uneven and, in some cases, ill-suited to the subject knowledge and expertise of the individuals concerned. Curriculum co-ordination is generally underdeveloped.
- * A rigorous, structured approach has not yet been adopted to monitoring, with the result that standards and practices across the school vary considerably. Little evidence is available to show that management has established an effective system for directly observing work in the classroom and drawn up a timetable for regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- * In the main, the governors discharge their statutory duties satisfactorily, although there is scope for becoming more deeply involved in planning and for ensuring that curriculum responsibilities and resources are monitored and evaluated more effectively. Good support has been provided by the vice-chairman, who has served as acting chairman over the past twelve months.
- * Financial management is satisfactory overall, although insufficient attention is given to evaluating the use and effectiveness of resources.
- * Due attention has been given to administrative procedures. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
- * Satisfactory provision has been made in terms of staffing, accommodation and learning resources, although deficiencies in accommodation adversely affect the learning environment in some parts of the school. Conditions in the nursery and Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms are cramped and impede pupils' learning. Work at Key Stage 1 is hindered by interruptions in the working area and hall which are both used as thoroughfares. No kitchen facilities are available in the nursery for the preparation of snacks and drinks.
- * The school buildings are properly cleaned and kept reasonably well maintained. Adequate facilities have been provided for sport and play.

- * Learning resources are satisfactory in most subjects, although pupils would benefit from modern globes in geography, more group-reading books in English, and more appropriate, up-to-date computers in information and communications technology. No recent review has been made of resources throughout the curriculum.

Progress since the Last Inspection

- * Progress in dealing with the key issues identified during the last inspection has been broadly satisfactory overall, although more effective action still needs to be taken in a number of areas.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

During the inspection, standards of educational achievement were satisfactory or better in approximately 95% of the lessons seen, including 56% where they were good and 5% where there were very good. Standards were unsatisfactory in some 5% of lessons.

- * Nursery children achieve good standards in language, literacy and communication skills; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development; and very good standards in personal and social development.
- * At reception stage, standards are good in language, literacy and communication skills; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and creative development; and very good in personal and social development; and physical development.
- * At Key Stage 1, standards are satisfactory overall in design and technology, history and music; good in English, mathematics, science, information technology, geography, and physical education; and very good in Welsh.
- * No judgment can be given about standards in art at Key Stage 1, as most pupils undertake no work in the subject during the first half of the term. Time is allocated instead to activities in design and technology.
- * Standards at Key Stage 2 are satisfactory overall in mathematics, design and technology, art, music and physical education, and good in English, science, Welsh and history. In information technology and geography, standards of achievement at this level are currently unsatisfactory.
- * National Curriculum assessment conducted by teachers last summer showed that, at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected norm of Level 2 or above was considerably above the national average for Wales in speaking and listening,

reading, writing, mathematics and science. The percentage achieving the higher grade of Level 3 was also well above the national average in mathematics, science and reading, and slightly above the average in writing. The percentage moderately dipped below the average for Level 3 in speaking and listening.

- * Altogether, the percentage of pupils achieving at least Level 2 in mathematics, science and English was well above the average both for the area and for Wales as a whole.
- * At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results indicated that the percentage achieving the expected norm of Level 4 or above considerably exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. The percentage achieving Level 5 was also well above the average in English and science, and slightly above the average in mathematics.
- * The overall percentage achieving at least Level 4 in mathematics, science and English was considerably above the average both for Wrexham and Wales as a whole.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

Standards achieved by pupils in applying key skills across the curriculum are good in speaking, listening, reading and number, satisfactory in writing, and unsatisfactory overall in information and communications technology.

- * Children under five years of age make good progress in applying their key skills in all six areas of learning.
- * At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other during discussion times and show good understanding of instructions.
- * Speaking skills are well applied in all areas of the curriculum, with pupils confidently asking and answering questions, often in extended sentences. Good use is made of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- * Effective use of reading skills helps to promote learning across the curriculum, although opportunities are not always taken to use books, CD-ROMs and the Internet for research on a group and individual basis.
- * Writing skills are satisfactorily applied in most subjects, although work is sometimes restricted to short responses such as inserting words into worksheets. Self-expression is limited by mechanical copying in some instances.
- * Satisfactory use is made of number skills to construct graphs and tables in science, to work out co-ordinates and bearings in geography, and to measure accurately in design and technology. Opportunities, however, are relatively limited.
- * Use is sometimes made of information and communications technology to reinforce number and literacy skills and to support work in art and Welsh. Skills, however, are not

regularly applied to extend learning across the curriculum.

4. ETHOS OF SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Good provision overall is made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

- * Arrangements for daily worship comply with statutory requirements. The meaning and reverence of the occasion are significantly enhanced by the good behaviour and attentiveness of pupils.
- * Values taught in assemblies are reflected in the daily life of the school. Pupils display attitudes of kindness and tolerance, and co-operate amicably with each other during work and play. Staff and visitors are treated with friendliness, courtesy and respect.
- * Nursery children settle well into the school and participate in a range of well-planned activities which help them to develop good social skills. Reception children are similarly well integrated with older pupils.
- * Relationships are good at all levels. A happy, friendly atmosphere pervades the school.
- * All classes have a *helpwr heddiw* who carries out simple classroom tasks. Older pupils react well when given minor duties and show developing responsibility and initiative.
- * Extracurricular activities and visits to places of interest provide good opportunities for social interaction. Full advantage, however, is not always taken of such occasions to build up pupils' knowledge and experiences, particularly in areas such as geographical studies.
- * Good progress is being made in developing a Welsh ethos throughout the school. Appropriate attention is generally paid to the heritage and culture of Wales.
- * Opportunities are provided for developing awareness of other customs and cultures, although this aspect is not yet sufficiently prominent in the life and work of the school.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

Behaviour and attitudes are very good throughout the school.

- * The headteacher and staff have drawn up a clear code of conduct which covers all aspects of the life of the school.

- * Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and respond accordingly both in the classroom and playground. They move around the school in an orderly, disciplined manner and behave impeccably during assemblies.
- * Relationships with teachers are good in all classes. Pupils are polite and attentive, and generally responsive in lessons. Strong emphasis is placed on discussion and listening carefully to each other's views and ideas.
- * Consistent use is made of praise, rewards and encouragement to promote good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
- * Considerable courtesy is extended to visitors who are treated with noticeable warmth and friendliness. Pupils speak confidently to adults and are eager to discuss and explain their work.
- * Behaviour during lunch times and other recreational periods is very good. No form of bullying or other inappropriate conduct was observed at any time during the inspection. Play is mainly harmonious, although relatively boisterous on occasions. Staff deal effectively with any minor incidents that occur. Appropriate support is received from parents.
- * Pupils' high standards of behaviour and keen interest in learning make a major contribution to standards of achievement and the quality of life within the school.

4.3 Attendance

Good rates are achieved for attendance and punctuality.

- * Attendance in most classes is consistently above 95%. Unauthorised absence is minimal.
- * The method of recording attendance and absence complies with the requirements of Circular 3/99 of the National Assembly for Wales.
- * Registers are kept in classrooms during the day in accordance with the school's security arrangements.
- * Good co-operation is received from parents, who inform the school as soon as possible of reasons for absence.
- * Attendance details are recorded manually. Insufficient arrangements are in place to collate the information and to use it to identify trends.
- * Appropriate procedures are in place for dealing with long periods of absence and helping pupils when they return to school.
- * The education welfare officer is available for visits if required.

- * Registration for pupils based in the demountable classroom takes place in a corridor of the main building, thus losing the opportunity for older children to begin the school day within an appropriate working ethos and setting.
- * The school's present policy on attendance is out of date and makes no reference to the National Assembly's current requirements in respect of monitoring procedures.
- * Pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and at the commencement of lessons. Punctuality enables full use to be made of teaching time, with a positive effect on the quality of learning in all classes.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in approximately 94% of the lessons observed, including 49% where it was good and 6% where it was very good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in some 6% of lessons.

- * Relationships between teachers and pupils are good throughout the school. A calm, orderly environment greatly aids concentration and the quality of learning.
- * Appropriate guidelines for teachers provide a sound basis for long- and medium-term planning. Weekly planning is generally well presented and includes a range of suitable strategies and methods.
- * The quality of teaching at nursery and reception level is consistently good or better, with teachers and nursery nurses collaborating effectively together. Children receive a wide range of experiences which successfully promote the desirable outcomes for learning.
- * At Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers display appropriate knowledge of the subjects they teach and are aware of the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- * Time is generally well used, with a suitable balance between exposition, discussion and practical activities.
- * Strong emphasis on questioning, with ample time for responses, encourages pupils to develop their speaking skills and cognition.
- * Valuable support is provided by classroom assistants and voluntary helpers.
- * Work is generally well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, although there is scope for more precise differentiation in language work for pupils with special educational needs.
- * Very good teaching was observed in Welsh and physical education. The teaching and use of the Welsh language is a particularly strong feature of the school.

- * Where teaching is good or better, lessons are characterised by clear instructions, high expectations, challenging tasks, and ample opportunities for evaluation and improvement.
- * Where teaching is unsatisfactory, teachers fail to keep to the aims of lessons and to ensure that work is properly supported by a suitable range of resources. Too little thought is given to planning visits so that pupils might gain first-hand experiences and acquire greater understanding in particular areas of study.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Arrangements for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' work are satisfactory overall.

- * A baseline assessment is made of children's prior attainments on entry to the school. Good use is made of the information to plan relevant experiences and identify special educational needs.
- * Teachers at nursery and reception level keep an individual profile book for each child, in which achievement and progress in the six areas of learning are regularly recorded.
- * At Key Stages 1 and 2, the school has a clear policy on assessment which is implemented effectively in English, mathematics and science. No arrangements, however, are yet in place to monitor and assess progress in other areas of the curriculum.
- * Teachers at Key Stages 1 and 2 maintain a record-of-achievement file for each pupil containing samples of annotated work in English, mathematics and science. The files provide a useful record of progress for teachers, pupils and parents.
- * No portfolios are kept of work in different subjects, with standards assessed against the various levels of the National Curriculum. Teachers, as a result, have no suitable benchmarks against which to judge the achievements of pupils.
- * Staff analyse the results of school-based and national tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in English, mathematics and science.
- * Good arrangements are made for assessing pupils with special educational needs.
- * Marking is generally positive but seldom suggests ways of making improvements to work.
- * No system is currently in place to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. Pupils are not given individual targets for improvement.
- * Parents are formally invited to meetings during the autumn and summer terms to discuss their children's achievements and progress. Meetings are also arranged at other times if there is any problem or point of concern.

- * Annual reports to parents specify the standards attained by pupils but do not always show how further improvements could be made.

5.3 Curriculum

Overall, the school provides pupils with a broad, balanced curriculum which complies with statutory requirements. Good provision is made for pupils at Key Stage 1 and very good provision for children under five years of age. Provision at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, although there are weaknesses in some areas.

- * Nursery and reception children receive a rich variety of interesting, challenging experiences in the six areas of learning.
- * Transition to the National Curriculum is managed smoothly and effectively in reception, partly as a result of the detailed match of work to the needs and abilities of children, and partly because of the very good leadership provided by the early-years co-ordinator.
- * At Key Stages 1 and 2, clear policies and schemes of work have been drawn up for all subjects, although some have only recently been updated and have not yet had a full effect on some areas of the curriculum.
- * Due attention is given to the Welsh dimension in subjects such as art, music, history and geography.
- * Lessons, in the main, are well planned and generally have clear learning objectives.
- * All pupils have full access to all parts of the curriculum irrespective of ability, gender or any other consideration.
- * Planning for the development of key skills is not always sufficiently detailed.
- * Good arrangements are made for pupils' personal and social development, including health and sex education.
- * Homework is well used to develop pupils' skills in different subjects, including reading and number work.
- * Satisfactory use is made of visits to enhance pupils' knowledge and experiences, although there is room for further development in this area, particularly in geography.
- * Good provision is made for extracurricular activities, including sports and a "Crusader" club.
- * At Key Stage 2, the delivery of some subjects lacks appropriate continuity and depth, particularly in geography and information technology.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

Good provision overall is made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils. The school provides a safe, happy, secure environment in which pupils are well supported and cared for.

- * Staff have a sound knowledge of pupils and are generally well attuned to their needs. They work hard to ensure that they receive proper support and encouragement, and quickly provide help or guidance whenever required.
- * Good arrangements are in place to ensure that the induction of nursery children is well planned and sensitively handled.
- * Strong emphasis is placed on social inclusion, although boys and girls are sometimes segregated on occasions such as the formation of lines.
- * Close liaison takes place with the school nurse on health and personal matters. The class teacher provides sex education for pupils in Years 5 and 6, after giving prior notice to parents of the contents of lessons.
- * Due attention is given to the local education authority's policy on child protection, although the school currently has no policy of its own specifying responsibilities, contact points and training arrangements.
- * Regular monitoring is undertaken of personal development, with matters being discussed with pupils and parents where necessary. Insufficient attention, however, is given to the formal maintenance of records.
- * Satisfactory procedures are in place to monitor academic attainment and progress.
- * The school has a health and safety policy which has been approved by the governors. Few details, however, are provided about corrective action following safety checks or the assessment of risks relating to buildings and grounds, subject areas, and out-of-school activities and visits.
- * Security of the building was maintained to a very high standard during the period of the inspection.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Satisfactory provision overall is made for pupils with special educational needs.

- * Appropriate procedures are in place for identifying the special educational needs of pupils.
- * The headteacher acts as the special-educational-needs co-ordinator and conscientiously carries out the duties of the post. Documentation is well structured and clearly presented.

- * Individual educational plans are matched to the needs of each pupil and provide appropriate guidance in literacy work.
- * Progress is reviewed at regular intervals, although it is not sufficiently well noted in the period between.
- * Pupils receive additional help in withdrawal groups as well as extra support from a part-time special-needs teacher. Close liaison takes place with pupils' class teachers.
- * Withdrawal sessions are of a suitable duration and pursue targets set out in individual educational plans.
- * Evidence from hearing pupils read indicates that some would benefit from a strengthening of phonic skills, both during group work and tasks within the classroom.
- * Class work is not always suitably matched to pupils' needs and abilities. No differentiation, for example, takes place in spelling, with the whole class being given the same list to learn.
- * Of the twenty-one pupils with special educational needs, one is the subject of a formal statement. At the time of the inspection, the annual review of the statement had not taken place, although a date has now been determined.
- * Parents are informed of progress and are advised of the ways in which they can help their children.
- * Suitable support is received from external services and agencies.
- * Overall, satisfactory progress is made.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

A good partnership has been established with parents, the community, and other schools and institutions.

- * Responses to the questionnaire and comments at the pre-inspection meeting indicate that parents are pleased with the school and find the staff friendly and approachable. Particular appreciation was expressed of the "open-door" policy whereby parents have ready access to the headteacher and staff whenever discussion is needed.
- * Very good information is generally provided for parents. The headteacher sends out regular newsletters which keep parents well informed of events and clearly set out the aims and objectives of the school. Many parents, however, would welcome more information about matters such as homework and the curriculum.
- * The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents both comply with statutory requirements.

- * Good support is received from a number of parents who provide regular help in the classroom.
- * An active parent-teacher-friends association organises events such as fashion shows and beetle drives to raise funds for the school. Monies have been used to support pupils with special educational needs and to purchase extra materials and equipment, such as work surfaces for the information-technology suite.
- * Pupils are encouraged to participate in community projects and to develop personal awareness of environmental issues. Work in the classroom clearly shows the benefits of such links.
- * Very good liaison takes place with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer. A well-planned scheme, based on bridging units in English, mathematics and science, ensures that a smooth transition is made.
- * Partnership arrangements have been formed with the North-East Wales Institute and are constantly reviewed to ensure that best practice is achieved. Effective liaison takes place between link co-ordinators on both sides, with benefits to the school in terms of support and student placements.
- * Good links have also been forged with Ruabon Comprehensive School, which regularly sends students to the school for work experience, and Yale College, which uses the school in relation to child-care training courses.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Partnership with industry is satisfactory overall, although not yet developed to its full potential.

- * Pupils have visited a local brick works to observe the manufacturing process from start to finish.
- * Links with a major bank have provided an opportunity for pupils to gain experience of handling and counting money, with beneficial effects on their literacy and number skills.
- * The school prospectus is sponsored by a number of local firms and businesses.
- * Work in the classroom shows growing economic and industrial awareness.
- * The school is currently drawing up guidelines for industrial placements for teachers.
- * No policy document has yet been prepared or strategy presented to the governing body for further strengthening the school's partnership with industry.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

Procedures to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvement are generally satisfactory, although there are some areas which still require further strengthening.

- * Teachers have been involved in the school's process of self-evaluation as, to a lesser extent, has been the governing body. No contribution, however, has yet been sought from parents and pupils.
- * The introduction of a "self-review summary sheet" is helping teachers to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to seek continuous improvement in standards of teaching.
- * Analyses made of pupils' results in National Curriculum standard assessment tests help to identify developments required in planning the curriculum.
- * The school development plan sets broad objectives, but contains too many priorities and is generally lacking in detail. Insufficient clarity is provided about aspects such as management and direction.
- * Self-evaluation is impeded by the lack of appropriate portfolios of work to act as benchmarks for the assessment of standards.
- * The role of the subject co-ordinators is currently underdeveloped.
- * No steps have yet been taken to establish an appropriate system for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in the classroom, although the school recognises the importance of doing so.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

Leadership and efficiency are broadly satisfactory, apart from aspects relating to the curriculum and monitoring of work.

- * The headteacher provides calm, caring leadership and has maintained a positive, well-disciplined, welcoming atmosphere since his appointment to the post. Management of the curriculum, however, is currently unsatisfactory.
- * Due attention has been paid to establishing an appropriate set of aims and values, which are clearly reflected in the daily life and work of the school.
- * Relationships are good in all classes, with staff and pupils working harmoniously together.
- * Staff have worked successfully as a team to improve planning and update policies and schemes of work. Regular school-based in-service training sessions provide a suitable

forum for discussion.

- * Effective support is provided by the recently-appointed senior teacher who is a very good classroom practitioner and an excellent example for colleagues.
- * Teachers have recently been given revised curriculum responsibilities but the distribution is uneven and, in some cases, ill-suited to the subject knowledge and expertise of the individuals concerned. Curriculum co-ordination is generally underdeveloped.
- * A rigorous, structured approach has not yet been adopted to monitoring, with the result that standards and practices across the school vary considerably. Little evidence is available to show that management has established an effective system for directly observing work in the classroom and drawn up a timetable for regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- * In the main, the governors discharge their statutory duties satisfactorily, although there is scope for becoming more deeply involved in planning and for ensuring that curriculum responsibilities and resources are monitored and evaluated more effectively. Good support has been provided by the vice-chairman, who has served as acting chairman over the past twelve months.
- * Financial management is satisfactory overall, although insufficient attention is given to evaluating the use and effectiveness of resources.
- * Due attention has been given to administrative procedures. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

Overall, satisfactory provision has been made in terms of staffing, accommodation and learning resources, although deficiencies in accommodation adversely affect the learning environment in some parts of the school.

- * Teachers are appropriately qualified and adequate in number, although some are overloaded with responsibilities for too many areas of the curriculum. All work hard and co-operate as a team for the benefit of pupils.
- * Clear job descriptions have been drawn up for all members of staff. Suitable arrangements are in place for the induction and support of new teachers.
- * School-based in-service training sessions have been well used by staff for drawing up policies and schemes of work.
- * Good support is received from the non-teaching staff.
- * Conditions in the nursery and Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms are cramped and impede pupils' learning. Work at Key Stage 1 is hindered by interruptions in the working area

and hall, which are both used as thoroughfares. No kitchen facilities are available in the nursery for the preparation of snacks and drinks.

- * The school buildings are properly cleaned and kept reasonably well maintained. Adequate facilities have been provided for sport and play.
- * Learning resources are satisfactory in most subjects, although pupils would benefit from modern globes in geography, more group-reading books in English, and more appropriate, up-to-date computers in information and communications technology.
- * No recent review has been made of resources throughout the curriculum.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards Achieved by Pupils

Provision for Children under Five

Very good provision is made for children under five years of age. Standards of achievement are good or better in all six areas of learning. Careful planning, organisation and liaison between staff have led to a warm, happy, secure environment for pupils.

i. Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

Good standards are achieved in the development of language, literacy and communication skills, at both nursery and reception level.

Good Features

- * Nursery children are making good progress in the development of language skills. Most are confident speakers and readily talk to visitors about the tasks they undertake.
- * Speech is encouraged by regular role play in the home corner, with activities such as washing, ironing and the preparation of meals.
- * All children of this age listen attentively, and sing action songs and rhymes confidently and clearly.
- * Children at this level enjoy stories from "Big Books" and are beginning to see the book area as a source of pleasure.
- * Ample opportunities are provided each day for mark-making and the development of hand-eye co-ordination. Good progress is being made in this area.
- * A sound introduction is given to the learning of Welsh.

- * At reception level, strong emphasis is placed upon the further development of literacy skills. Ample opportunities are provided for discussions in groups of various sizes, with children listening attentively and showing eagerness to ask and respond to questions. Most children at this level speak clearly and have an appropriate vocabulary for their age.
- * Reading skills in reception are developing well, with most children recognising major characters in the scheme. Those who are able to read simple books do so with confidence and enjoyment.
- * Good progress is made at this level in the early stages of writing. Most children hold implements properly and are learning to form letters correctly. All are encouraged to write their names whenever possible.
- * Very good progress is made in absorbing Welsh words and phrases.

Shortcomings

- * Nursery accommodation is somewhat cramped and does not permit comfortable seating arrangements during sessions with "Big Books".
- * No room is available in the nursery to allow children to benefit from division into two groups during literacy sessions.
- * Restricted space also impedes activities during morning sessions when reception and nursery children are both in attendance.

ii. Personal and Social Development

Personal and social development is very good at both nursery and reception stage.

Good Features

- * Nursery children share resources and co-operate well with each other, despite the very restricted space.
- * Children at this level concentrate well for their age.
- * Good advantage is taken of snack times to enhance social skills. Food is often made by the children themselves, including items such as apple crumbles.
- * Reception children collaborate effectively, and are kind and considerate to each other. They readily take turns and willingly share toys and equipment, working harmoniously together in spite of the limited space. All treat their environment with due care and respect.
- * Discussions on matters such as how to behave to each other and to treat people and places have had a considerable effect on attitudes and behaviour. Standards in this area

are very good at all times.

- * Confidence is a major feature of work and play in all areas of the curriculum.

Shortcomings

- * No shortcomings were observed in this area of learning.

iii. Mathematical Development

Standards in mathematical development are good at both nursery and reception level.

Good Features

- * Nursery children undertake a range of simple counting, matching and measuring activities and make good progress in acquiring early mathematical skills.
- * Good use is made of sand and water play to develop awareness of weight and capacity.
- * Counting rhymes help to reinforce early counting skills.
- * Further progress is made at reception stage, with well-organised sessions and close planning between the teacher and nursery nurse ensuring that children receive a suitable variety of experiences.
- * Most children at this level can count to ten or beyond, sort objects into sets, complete patterns, and undertake simple addition correctly. Good progress is also made in the writing of numerals.
- * Many children can recognise basic shapes and their properties and are beginning to use simple coins, showing knowledge of their values.

Shortcomings

- * Sufficient adult support is not always provided in capacity work at nursery level to ensure that children achieve maximum progress and development.
- * On occasions, reception children become confused when undertaking tasks, mainly because insufficient visual material is readily available to support the recording of work.

iv. Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Good progress is made in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world at both nursery and reception level.

Good Features

- * Nursery children are given a suitable variety of experiences to develop their knowledge of nature and to help them to understand the world around them. Most talk eagerly about their families and pets.
- * Cooking is a regular feature of the programme, with children learning to measure, mix and observe changes.
- * Reception children learn about growth and change through studying the seasons, the community and the area in which they live.
- * Very good foundations are laid for the future development of geographical skills, with children tracing routes to school and learning about landmarks in the area.

Shortcomings

- * Computers are not always used to maximum effect to reinforce and extend learning in this area.

v. Physical Development

Standards in physical development are good at nursery level and very good at reception stage.

Good Features

- * Nursery children are given a well-planned programme of interesting outdoor activities and can pedal, follow routes, and push and pull large toys in different directions. They listen attentively to adults and make good efforts to follow instructions.
- * Work with small apparatus is helping to produce a growing awareness of body movements and actions.
- * Fine motor skills are developing well.
- * Reception children listen carefully to instructions, move competently in different directions, and confidently travel along large apparatus using various part of their bodies. Good use is made of space in the hall.
- * Work at this level is well organised and provides appropriate challenges for children.
- * Good opportunities are provided for children to collaborate successfully with each other.
- * Very good progress is made in this area.

Shortcomings

- * Activities which can be undertaken by nursery children are limited by the shape and size of the outside area. No large apparatus is currently available for practising and developing climbing and balancing skills.

vi. Creative Development

Good standards are achieved in creative development by both nursery and reception children.

Good Features

- * Nursery children use an appropriate variety of art techniques and show growing competence in mixing paints and cutting, sticking and pasting.
- * Children at this level make bold use of paint and are happy to talk about their pictures.
- * Reception children are given numerous opportunities to express their thoughts and ideas through a variety of media, including paint, collage and clay.
- * Good progress is made at this level in areas such as colouring, with children making bold use of paint and portraying the various colours of nature such as the changing appearance of leaves in autumn.
- * Drawing and painting work support the development of early handwriting skills.
- * Scissor skills are developing satisfactorily.
- * During the inspection, children explored the properties of dough and clay, and produced some good examples of sculpture.
- * The learning environment is bright and cheerful, and celebrates the achievements of children.
- * Children enjoy music and participate enthusiastically in ring games and the singing of well-known songs.

Shortcomings

- * During the inspection, there were few opportunities to see children making models based on their own imagination and ideas.

English

Overall, standards of achievement in English are good at both key stages, although the quality of writing varies considerably at Key Stage 2.

i. Speaking and Listening

Good standards are achieved in speaking at both key stages, and very good standards in listening.

Good Features

- * The majority of pupils are confident and articulate in their speech, and clearly express their thoughts, ideas and opinions.
- * Pupils at Key Stage 1 readily answer questions about their work and speak willingly to visitors. Good advantage is taken of group work to provide regular opportunities for discussion.
- * Older pupils display a good range of vocabulary in describing and explaining their work.
- * At both key stages, pupils listen intently to their teachers and respond positively to instructions. Concentration does not waver, even in lessons of excessive duration.

Shortcomings

- * No significant shortcomings were observed in this aspect of the subject.

ii. Reading

Standards in reading are good at both key stages.

Good Features

- * Firm foundations are laid in reading at Key Stage 1. Most pupils at this level read with confidence and understanding.
- * By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read a wide variety of literature, including poetry, and can explain why they prefer particular books and authors. Good knowledge is shown of plots and characters in stories.
- * Studies of class novels in each age-group help to promote a keen interest in books and considerable enthusiasm for reading.
- * Progress is enhanced by a high level of parental involvement. Pupils are encouraged to take their books home to share with their parents.
- * Word lists are a regular feature of homework.

Shortcomings

- * Too few opportunities are provided for group reading in the early part of Key Stage 2, when many pupils change from a graded reading scheme to a library system. Evidence indicates that pupils at this level need more practice in reading aloud to increase skills in fluency and expression.
- * A few pupils with special educational needs have too little phonic knowledge to be confident about tackling new words.

iii. Writing

Standards in writing are good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2.

Good Features

- * Pupils at Key Stage 1 write for a variety of purposes and occasions, and make good use of simple punctuation. Regular opportunities are provided for imaginative writing.
- * Work at Key Stage 1 is neatly presented, with well-formed letters and regular practice to ensure constant improvement.
- * Weekly spelling tests help pupils to recognise patterns and to use words in their appropriate context.
- * At Key Stage 1, small, simple words are spelt correctly, whilst older pupils can generally spell more difficult words.
- * Most pupils make a successful transition from pencils to pens at the start of Key Stage 2.
- * At Key Stage 2, most pupils are given a variety of opportunities to develop skills in extended writing, much of which is satisfactory or better in quality. Due attention is paid to the importance of editing and redrafting.

Shortcomings

- * Spelling tasks are not sufficiently differentiated and matched to ability at Key Stage 2, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
- * Work at Key Stage 2 varies in neatness and presentation. Insufficient emphasis is placed in some classes on regular opportunities for practice.
- * Not all pupils at Key Stage 2 are given sufficient practice in extended writing. Standards vary considerably in this aspect of work.

Mathematics

Standards of achievement in mathematics are good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall at Key

Stage 2.

Good Features

- * Pupils at Key Stage 1 quickly become familiar with number symbols and start to recognise sequences and patterns. They confidently undertake simple addition and subtraction, and show growing knowledge of number bonds. Skills in the use and application of number are developing well.
- * By the end of Year 2, pupils can add and subtract briskly, and count to a hundred in ones, twos, fives and tens.
- * Pupils at this level recognise the value of coins, and are able to buy items and calculate change from ten or twenty pence.
- * Most can identify and name a good range of two- and three-dimensional shapes and are developing a good understanding of their properties.
- * Good knowledge is being acquired of time, symmetry and standard units of measure.
- * Sound understanding is shown of the use of simple graphs for displaying and interpreting data.
- * At Key Stage 2, pupils develop a progressive understanding of place value to 1,000, or beyond, and are confident in the computation of number.
- * They are able to carry out mathematical investigations, tackle problems and apply their knowledge. Good standards are often reached in this aspect of work.
- * Pupils at this level collect data based on class questioning or investigations in different subjects, and draw and analyse a variety of graphs with growing confidence and understanding.
- * They accurately perform tasks related to shape and measurement, and show good understanding of angles, co-ordinates and symmetry.
- * By the end of Year 6, pupils understand the connection between fractions, decimals and percentages, and can deal competently with money problems.

Shortcomings

- * Pupils' knowledge and use of mental strategies are underdeveloped at Key Stage 2. Recall of number bonds and multiplication facts is often slow and uncertain.

Science

Standards of achievement in science are good at both key stages.

Good Features

- * At Key Stage 1, pupils can talk about the life cycle of a plant, recognise and name its different parts, understand their various functions, and describe what is needed for healthy growth.
- * Observational skills are developing well.
- * Pupils at this level can sort a range of materials by their properties, and identify similarities and differences. They understand how some are suitable for a particular purpose, whilst others are not, such as items required in building a house.
- * Most are able to recognise and name the major parts of the body and talk about their functions. Good understanding is being acquired of the importance of exercise and healthy eating.
- * Pupils are developing appropriate enquiry skills and have a good understanding of the basic principles of fair testing and predicting.
- * Good knowledge is shown of sources of light and sound, and of forces such as pushing and pulling.
- * Investigative skills are further developed at Key Stage 2. Pupils at this level predict, observe, measure and carefully record their findings, and appreciate the importance of fair testing when evaluating evidence. Experiments are carried out with care, enthusiasm and enjoyment.
- * Older pupils make confident use of technical terms and employ reasoned argument when discussing predictions and outcomes. They can clearly explain the connection between the sun, earth and moon, and discuss how the position of the sun affects shadows and creates day and night.
- * Good understanding is shown of forces, electricity and magnetism. Pupils are able to relate their work to everyday situations and appreciate how science affects the quality of life.
- * By the end of Year 6, pupils recognise the different properties of solids, liquids and gases, and can suggest ways in which solids can be separated from liquids.

Shortcomings

- * No significant shortcomings were observed in the subject.

Welsh

Standards of achievement in Welsh are very good at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2.

Good Features

- * Children are introduced to Welsh as soon as they enter the school and gain clear enjoyment from the subject. They understand a variety of classroom instructions, commands and questions, and reply making good use of set phrases. Classroom displays and labels, coupled with teachers' enthusiasm, add significantly to the quality of learning. Good foundations are laid for the development of further skills in the subject.
- * At Key Stage 1, pupils can perform simple action songs, count to twenty, name colours, comment on how they feel, describe the weather and ask for various items, generally with very good pronunciation.
- * They can name parts of the body, and read simple phrases and sentences from books produced by their teachers. They are also able to hold short telephone conversations with each other, confidently using phrases they have previously learnt.
- * At Key Stage 2, younger pupils can make short statements about themselves and express their likes and dislikes. They can also describe the weather, both at the time and on the previous day. Some are able to extend their sentences by using simple conjunctions.
- * Older pupils can confidently tell the time, give the date, and make up questions and answers about their favourite things.
- * They respond appropriately and politely to simple questions and create short dialogues using phrases they have already absorbed.
- * Pupils complete a succession of written tasks correctly and read with due confidence for their age.
- * All pupils sing a range of Welsh hymns and songs, and regularly recite the Lord's Prayer in the language.

Shortcomings

- * No significant shortcomings were observed.

Design and Technology

Standards of achievement in design and technology are satisfactory overall at both key stages.

Good Features

- * Pupils throughout the school discuss and explore different designs, identify the equipment and materials they will need for their products, evaluate the finished article and constantly look for ways of improvement.
- * Good use is made of construction kits at Key Stage 1. Pupils at this level cut, shape,

stick, glue, fold and twist various items, making effective use of a range of materials and components.

- * Due care and patience are shown in selecting materials and decorating finished items.
- * When designing and making a fruit salad, pupils show good awareness of the need for hygiene and safe working practices.
- * At Key Stage 2, pupils are acquiring an increasing understanding of designing and making for a purpose, as shown in slippers and money-containers.
- * They appreciate the need to strengthen products and have made effective use of such techniques when, for example, making a Tudor house as part of a history project.
- * Good research is undertaken in areas such as baking bread and making slippers. Effective use is made of information before the commencement of work. Pupils have also looked at different forms of packaging before designing and creating their own.
- * Pin cushions in the form of animals demonstrate good skills in cutting and sewing. Calendars produced by older pupils show individuality and imagination.

Shortcomings

- * Work in the subject lacks sufficient depth, challenge and progression. Pupils' skills are not developed to their full potential.
- * Excessive intervention by adults sometimes stifles pupils' initiative and impedes individual creativity and expression.

Information Technology

Standards of achievement in information technology are good at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory overall at Key Stage 2.

Good Features

- * Pupils at Key Stage 1 are developing effective keyboard skills and make confident use of the mouse to drag items across the screen.
- * They are familiar with the interactive whiteboard and are able to use options such as colours and shapes.
- * Good use is made of text-handling skills to compose statements about work on display.
- * Colourful drawings of "germs" show effective skills in using an art programme and good powers of imagination. Skills are well used to enhance the presentation of work such as

writing about Remembrance Day.

- * Pupils in Year 2 can give pre-set instructions to a programmable toy and control distance and direction.
- * At Key Stage 2, pupils know how to change fonts and enhance their work with colour and pictures.
- * Pupils at this level are beginning to make use of spreadsheets, entering data under appropriate headings and choosing suitable graphs for presentation.
- * Most pupils know how to create different databases for recording information about their favourite pets, colours and football teams, and can confidently answer questions about interpretation.
- * Use is made of CD-ROMs to acquire information for topic work.
- * Older pupils have had some experience of using the Internet for research into topics such as the local church.

Shortcomings

- * The school has too few suitable computers to enable pupils to have regular and appropriate experiences in all aspects of the subject.
- * Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to use computers for drafting and editing their work. Word-processing skills at Key Stage 2 are underdeveloped largely as a result of insufficient hands-on experiences.
- * Progress at Key Stage 2 is often limited by a lack of clear, consistent systems for monitoring progress and achievements.

History

Standards of achievement in history are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2.

Good Features

- * Recall of previous work is good at both key stages.
- * All pupils show considerable interest in the subject, both during lessons and discussions of topics.
- * At Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a satisfactory sense of chronology and show appropriate awareness of similarities and differences between the present and past.

- * Pupils at this level display a developing sense of personal chronology and are generally able to talk sensibly about events and changes in their families.
- * Effective use is made of displays and stories of famous people to develop understanding of life in previous centuries.
- * Due attention is paid to Wales, with pupils confidently discussing characters and events in the history of the country.
- * At Key Stage 2, pupils generally show good knowledge of the periods they are studying, and are developing a sound notion of the principles of cause and effect.
- * From Year 3 onwards, good use is made of books, artefacts and the Internet to develop skills in research.
- * Younger pupils at this level are learning to structure their work and use a variety of texts and other sources. Older pupils are able to pursue topics and conduct research for themselves.
- * Most pupils at Key Stage 2 display an appropriate sense of chronology and are able to place characters and events in their historical context.
- * Pupils in Year 6 make good use of artefacts in their studies of the Second World War, handling objects with care and expressing their thoughts with enthusiasm.
- * Cross-curricular links are made with other subjects such as art and English.
- * Considerable benefits are received from visits to places of historical interest such as Tŷ Mawr and Chirk Castle, where pupils gain useful first-hand experiences of history.
- * Work throughout the school is recorded in a suitable variety of forms. Regular opportunities are provided for developing skills in writing.

Shortcomings

- * Work at Key Stage 1 is insufficiently broad in scope. Pupils at this level have too few opportunities to explore topics such as life in their grandparents' time and to make comparisons by handling artefacts relating to schools and homes.
- * Full advantage is not taken of the rich history and culture of the area. Visits to places of interest tend to be limited in range at both key stages.

Geography

Standards of achievement in geography are good at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory overall at Key Stage 2.

Good Features

- * Pupils at Key Stage 1 can identify major landmarks in the locality and express what they like and dislike about the area.
- * Sound work is undertaken on the environment immediately surrounding the school. Pupils know their addresses and can describe their journeys to and from home.
- * Steady progress is made in the development of map-making skills, commencing with simple plans and moving on to the use and interpretation of symbols.
- * Older pupils at this level recognise a map of Great Britain and are becoming acquainted with the wider world through "Barnaby's Travels".
- * Good links are made with history, particularly in studies of local buildings and changes to the landscape.
- * Mapping skills are further developed at Key Stage 2, with pupils proceeding to grid work and identifying features on aerial photographs of the area. Links with mathematics help to support work with co-ordinates.
- * By the end of the key stage, pupils use six-figure grid references with confidence and display sound knowledge of symbols and contours.
- * Due attention is paid to environmental issues, with pupils realising the effects of air and water pollution.

Shortcomings

- * Shortcomings mainly relate to Key Stage 2.
- * Not all lessons in the subject have clear aims and objectives. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the development of appropriate knowledge and skills.
- * Older pupils display insecure knowledge of places outside Great Britain and of the physical features of different parts of the world. Some have difficulties in identifying parts of the United Kingdom, including areas in Wales.
- * All available evidence indicates that too little emphasis is placed on accuracy, depth and precision in the recording of work, much of which consists predominantly of worksheets.
- * Insufficient monitoring takes place to ensure the proper development of skills in the subject.
- * Pupils do not make visits to contrasting areas they are studying, although the areas concerned are relatively close. Too little knowledge, as a result, is shown of basic similarities and differences.
- * Resources, in some cases, are of poor quality.

- * During one lesson observed, no use was made of relevant resource material to support work in the subject.

Art

No judgment can be given about standards in art at Key Stage 1, as most pupils undertake no work in the subject during the first half of the term. Time is allocated instead to activities in design and technology.

Standards at Key Stage 2 are satisfactory overall.

Good Features

- * Examination of planning documents, coupled with observation of the work undertaken by the small number of Year-1 pupils in the joint class with reception children, indicates that pupils at this level participate in a suitable range of activities.
- * Regular opportunities are provided for pupils throughout the school to work with different techniques and materials.
- * Pupils at Key Stage 2 show good concentration when performing the tasks they are given.
- * In the early part of Key Stage 2, good links with history, particularly in work on the Celts, have helped to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- * Pupils in the middle of the key stage are encouraged to exercise their imagination and express their own thoughts and feelings. Bold use is made of colour in pictures of dreams.
- * Observational skills are developing well at the top of the school. Portrait work captures mood and expressions effectively.

Shortcomings

- * The practice of alternating art every six weeks with design and technology does not give sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their skills and record their thoughts and ideas on a regular basis, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- * No records are kept to indicate the development of pupils' skills in the subject, with the result that continuity and progression are not always adequate. Evidence indicates that progression is inconsistent, for example, throughout Key Stage 2.
- * Older pupils have limited knowledge of the work of famous artists, although attractive prints and pictures are displayed throughout the school.

Music

Standards in music are satisfactory overall at both key stages.

Good Features

- * The scheme of work covers all aspects of the subject. Activities observed during the inspection included composing, performing and appraising music.
- * Pupils throughout the school sing very tunefully, with clarity of diction and, in the main, accurate pitch.
- * Listening skills are well developed in all classes. Pupils pay careful attention to music and appreciate a range of classical pieces, some of which are played prior to the start of assemblies. Some of the oldest pupils can recognise and name the composers of the music.
- * Pupils throughout the school react well to questions and enjoy discussions about music. They recognise a variety of sounds, both natural and man-made, create simple sound pictures using different parts of their bodies, and respond appropriately to soft and loud, and fast and slow pieces.
- * In the early part of Key Stage 2, most pupils display a good sense of rhythm and are sensitive to changes in mood and tempo.
- * Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils collaborate well with each other and show enthusiasm for the subject. They record their work in graphic notation and, by the end of Year 6, perform items such as Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" combining voices and instruments successfully.
- * Seventeen pupils benefit from specialist tuition by visiting teachers. Instruments studied include the flute, cello, trumpet and violin.

Shortcomings

- * Insufficient use is made of percussion instruments to enable pupils to experiment with music and develop their practical skills. During the lessons observed, too few pupils had opportunities to handle instruments. Those who did were overdirected by the teacher and insufficiently challenged in their work.
- * Full benefit has not yet been gained from the newly-introduced scheme of work, mainly because of a lack of effective support, monitoring and trial arrangements. Too heavy an emphasis is currently placed on listening and appraising at the expense of composing and performing. Worksheets are generally overused in lessons.
- * Opportunities to study music from other countries are still at a relatively early stage of development.

- * Welsh hymns are not a regular feature of assemblies.

Physical Education

Standards of achievement in physical education are good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2.

Good Features

- * Pupils at both key stages work hard and make determined efforts to improve their performance. They listen carefully during lessons and respond promptly to their teachers' instructions. They move and use apparatus sensibly and safely, and dress appropriately for physical exercise. They are aware of the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise, and appreciate that exercise has beneficial effects on their bodies.
- * At Key Stage 1, pupils are developing good control of body movement. They can travel confidently in various ways and directions, and show good awareness and use of space.
- * Balance and control on apparatus are developing well.
- * At Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate good ball-handling skills when practising basketball movements. They make good use of both hands, move and dribble confidently, and make brisk changes in pace and direction.
- * Passing and receiving abilities are also good, and demonstrate developing hand-eye co-ordination.
- * Pupils at this level show a good team spirit and co-operate well in groups and pairs.
- * The school participates in local sporting activities, with a reasonable degree of success.
- * A wide range of extracurricular activities provides further opportunities for the development of skills.

Shortcomings

- * Skills in gymnastics are underdeveloped at Key Stage 2.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the Last Inspection

Progress in dealing with the key issues identified during the last inspection has been broadly satisfactory overall, although more effective action still needs to be taken in a number of areas.

- * The last inspection report, published on 8th July, 1997, identified seven key areas for action. The school was advised that it needed to:
- i. improve the quality of whole-school development planning and identify more specific targets for educational achievement;
 - ii. implement improved procedures for pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that all the recommendations of the Code of Practice are met in full;
 - iii. rectify existing shortcomings in the quality of learning resources in order to enrich the quality of pupils' experiences and further raise educational standards;
 - iv. establish a structured system for the professional development and appraisal of staff;
 - v. further develop the management expertise of the senior management team and the role of the curriculum co-ordinators;
 - vi. ensure that policy implementation and curriculum provision are adequately monitored;
 - vii. enhance learning opportunities for pupils by providing a wider range of extra-curricular activities and establishing more productive links with industry.
- * Progress since that time has been the following.

Key Issue 1

Whilst some action has been taken to improve the quality of the school development plan and to identify more specific targets for educational achievement, too little attention has been given to ways of achieving objectives and regularly monitoring and evaluating progress. The present school development plan is generally light on detail.

Key Issue 2

Satisfactory measures have been taken to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs and to take due account of the recommendations of the latest Code of Practice. Further action, however, still needs to be taken to ensure that work is properly differentiated and matched to needs and abilities in all cases.

Key Issue 3

In general, satisfactory progress has been made in rectifying shortcomings in the quality of learning resources, although there are still deficiencies in some areas of the

curriculum, particularly information technology and geography. No recent review has been taken of the overall needs of the school.

Key Issue 4

Steps have been taken to promote the professional development of staff through in-service training.

Key Issue 5

No plans have yet been made for further developing the management expertise of the senior management team.

The role of the subject co-ordinators is still underdeveloped.

Key Issue 6

This key issue has not yet been satisfactorily addressed. Policy implementation and curriculum provision are still not adequately monitored.

Key Issue 7

The school now provides a wider range of extracurricular activities for pupils.

A satisfactory partnership is being established with industry, although there is still scope for further development.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The school now needs to:

- * raise standards in geography and information technology at Key Stage 2;
- * apply a more rigorous approach to leadership and management, particularly in relation to monitoring standards of teaching and learning;
- * accelerate the development of the role of curriculum co-ordinators and revise the allocation of responsibilities to provide a more appropriate and equitable distribution of subjects;
- * conduct a detailed review of learning resources and make improvements in information technology and other subjects where necessary;
- * disseminate existing good practice more effectively and seek to make further improvements in standards;

- * address the other shortcomings identified in the report.

The present school development plan touches on some of these issues but does not specifically identify ways and means of making improvements.

The inspection team would like to express their warm appreciation of the co-operation, assistance and welcome they received from the headteacher, staff, governors, parents and pupils of the school.

APPENDIX A

Basic Information about the School

Name of School	St. Mary's Church-in-Wales Aided Primary School
School Type	Voluntary
Age-Range of Pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of School	Park Street Ruabon Wrexham
Post Code	LL14 6LE
Telephone Number	01978 820979

Headteacher	Mr. Richard Berwyn Thomas
Date of Appointment	April, 2001
Chairman of Governors	Rev. M. Harrison
Registered Inspector	Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths
Dates of Inspection	14th – 17th October, 2003

APPENDIX B

School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of Pupils in Each Year Group</i>									
Year Group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of Pupils	12.5	23	21	19	27	28	24	27	181.5

<i>Total Number of Teachers</i>			
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time Equivalent (fte)
Number of Teachers	6	3	7.33

<i>Staffing Information</i>	
Pupil : Teacher (fte) Ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24.7 : 1
Pupil : Adult Ratio in Nursery Class	12.5 : 1
Average Class Size (excluding nursery)	28.2
Teacher (fte) : Class Ratio	1.13 : 1

<i>Percentage Attendance for Three Complete Terms Prior to the Inspection</i>					
	N	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School (excluding nursery)
Term 1	88.5	93.2	93.5	93.5	93.4
Term 2	84.6	95.1	96.6	95.8	95.8
Term 3	80.7	96.6	93.5	93.7	94.6

Number of Pupils Excluded during Twelve Months prior to Inspection	0
--	---

APPENDIX C

Results of National Curriculum Assessments

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results: 2003			Number of Pupils in Y2 23					
Percentage of Pupils at Each Level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4	74	22	0
		National	0	4	13	63	20	0
ENGLISH: Speaking and Listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4	78	17	0
		National	0	2	11	64	22	0
English: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4	61	35	0
		National	0	4	14	54	28	0
ENGLISH: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	4	83	13	0
		National	0	5	13	71	10	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	61	39	0
		National	0	2	9	61	26	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	74	26	0
		National	0	2	10	68	20	0

Percentage of Pupils Attaining at least Level 2 in Mathematics, Science and English (or Welsh as a First Language) according to Teacher Assessment			
In the School:	96%	In Wales:	80.4%

- D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
 A Pupils who were absent from the tests/tasks
 W Pupils who are working towards Level 1

National figures relate to 2002, as results for 2003 are not yet available.

The majority of seven-year-old pupils are expected to attain Level 2.

National Curriculum Assessment KS 2 Results: 2003								Number of Pupils in Y6 31					
Percentage of Pupils at Each Level													
			D	A	N	B	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	42	58	0
		National	0	0	0		0	1	6	17	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	0	3	0	0			0	0	36	61	
		National	0	2	1	1			5	12	41	38	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	0	3	65	32	0
		National	0	0	0		0	1	4	19	47	28	0
	Test/Task	School	0	0	0	0			0	6	62	32	
		National	0	5	1	1			4	19	43	30	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	55	45	0
		National	0	0	0		0	0	2	13	50	33	0
	Test/Task	School	0	3	0	0			0	0	52	45	
		National	0	2	0	0			1	10	47	38	

Percentage of Pupils Attaining at least Level 4 in Mathematics, Science and English (or Welsh as a First Language)			
By Teacher Assessment		By Test	
In the School:	97%	In the School:	90%
In Wales:	69.6%	In Wales:	68.1%

- D Pupils who have been disapplied under statutory arrangements from part or all of the National Curriculum
- A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
- N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence.
- B Pupils who have not been entered for tests because they are working outside the levels of the tests
- W Pupils who are working towards Level 1 but have not yet achieved the standards needed for Level 1

National figures relate to 2002, as results for 2003 are not yet available.

The majority of eleven-year-old pupils are expected to attain Level 4.

APPENDIX D

The Evidence Base of Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors over a period of 3½ days.

- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governing body.
- Thirteen parents attended a meeting with two members of the inspection team.
- Forty-nine questionnaires were returned, analysed and summarised.
- All documentation submitted by the school was analysed and discussed, including the school development plan, policy and curriculum documents and teachers' planning files.
- Pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school and during the midday and other breaks.
- At various times during the day, inspectors took the opportunity to talk to pupils and to discuss their work.
- Forty-three lessons or part-lessons were observed.
- Pupils were heard reading and were examined in their knowledge and understanding of English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- A wide range of pupils' written and other work was examined in each class.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' work with class teachers and examined assessment records.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher, curriculum co-ordinators and other staff.
- The work of pupils with special educational needs was examined.
- Minutes of meetings and documents relating to the financial management of the school were discussed.
- Budget figures were examined and discussed with the headteacher.
- Attendance and pupil records were inspected.
- Inspectors attended acts of collective worship.

APPENDIX E

Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Team Member	Subject Responsibilities	Aspect Responsibilities
Mrs. E. Griffiths	Areas of Learning for Children under Five English History Geography Art Music	The School and its Priorities Main Findings Standards of Achievement in Subjects and Areas of Learning Standards of Achievement in Key Skills across the Curriculum Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Teaching Special Educational Needs Leadership & Efficiency Progress since the Last Inspection Key Issues for Action
Mr. M. D. Jones	Welsh (as a second language) Mathematics Science Design and Technology Information Technology Physical Education	Main Findings Standards of Achievement in Key Skills across the Curriculum Assessment, Recording and Reporting Curriculum Support and Guidance Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources Key Issues for Action
Mr. S. Roberts		Main Findings Behaviour and Attitudes Attendance Support and Guidance Partnership with Parents, the Community, Schools and Other Institutions Partnership with Industry Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources Key Issues for Action