

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Taliesin Junior School
King George Street
Shotton
Flintshire
CH5 1HP**

School Number: 6642083

Date of Inspection: 18 May 2009

by

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Taliesin Junior 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 Taliesin Junior School took place between 18/05/09 and 20/05/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Merfyn Lloyd Jones 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

Contents	Page
Context	1
Summary	2
Recommendations	7
Standards	8
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	8
The quality of education and training	10
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	10
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	11
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	13
Leadership and management	17
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	17
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	18
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	19
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	21
Welsh second language	21
Mathematics	22
Design and technology	23
Geography	24
Music	25
Religious education	26
School's response to the inspection	
Appendices	
1 Basic information about the school	
2 School data and indicators	
3 National Curriculum assessments results	
4 Evidence base of the inspection	
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Taliesin Junior School is situated in the small industrial town of Shotton quite close to the border with Cheshire. It lies in the area administered by Flintshire County Council.
2. The school has a mixed catchment area with a few pupils from private housing but many from an area of the town described as being socially deprived. Many pupils who attend the school live within a 'communities first' area and as a result the school has obtained RAISE funding which is targeted grant money to raise standards with socio-economically deprived pupils. Nearly all the pupils have English as their first language and are of white ethnicity. Seventeen per cent of the pupils claim free school meals entitlement.
3. The school caters for pupils between the ages of seven and eleven years of age who live mainly in the immediate neighbourhood. At the time of the inspection there were 133 full-time pupils on roll which is 50 fewer than at the time of the last inspection. The majority of the pupils transfer at the age of seven from Shotton infant school.
4. Pupils represent the full ability range but in general there is low attainment on entry. Thirteen pupils have a statement of special educational needs and another thirty eight pupils are either on school action or school action plus for extra support. The pupils are arranged into six mixed aged classes. There are five mainstream classes and one resourced centre. The resourced centre provides education for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties. Pupils attend the centre from within and from other schools. Admission to the centre is determined by the local authority (LA). Four pupils receive support teaching in English as an additional language.
5. The school was last inspected in June 2003. The current head teacher has been in post since September 2002.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's main priorities and targets for 2009-10 include:
 - developing writing skills across the school;
 - improving the end of key stage assessment results;
 - improving standards in boys literacy;
 - improving pupils' skills in using and applying mathematics.

Summary

7. Taliesin Junior School is a very happy, caring and inclusive community. The quality of care, guidance and support for all pupils is a particular strength of the school. The head teacher and staff know the pupils well and they have established a very good relationship based on respect and regular, purposeful use of encouragement and praise.
8. The inspection team's judgements differ from those of the school's in 5 out of the 7 key questions. The inspection team awarded one grade lower grade for key questions 2, 5, 6 and 7 and a higher grade for key question 4.

Table of grades awarded

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

9. Overall, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, the majority of pupils throughout the school make good progress towards reaching their potential.
10. National Curriculum end of key stage results for the past three years for English, mathematics and science have been in the bottom 25 per cent but there was a slight improvement in 2008 in science. In total, 26 per cent of the pupils assessed were on the special educational needs (SEN) register. However, national curriculum assessments indicate level 5 outcomes compare favourably with all schools, particularly in science.
11. With the exception of 2007 when the boys did better, girls performed significantly better in each core subject but the gap was narrower in 2008.
12. The standards achieved in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	61%	32%	0%	0%

13. The above percentages are below the average percentages for the whole of Wales, as published in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI's) Annual Report

for 2007-08, with the standards of achievement being good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 84 per cent of lessons, and outstanding (grade 1) in 12 per cent of lessons.

14. Pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subjects	Key Stage 2
Welsh Second Language	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 3
Design and Technology	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 3
Music	Grade 2
Religious Education	Grade 2

15. All pupils show good listening skills but speaking skills is less well developed. Generally pupils' reading skills progress well across the age range. Writing across the curriculum is good. Handwriting and presentation skills are of a very high standard throughout the school.
16. Many pupils do not use information and communications technology (ICT) and numeracy skills consistently across the range of subjects to promote learning. Pupils' creative skills develop well throughout the school particularly in music, art and design technology. Their problem solving skills however are less well developed. Pupils' capacity to work with greater independence and their understanding of what they need to do in order to improve their work is underdeveloped. They have yet to take responsibility for their own learning.
17. Pupils' bilingual competence is progressing well. Many pupils are becoming more confident in the use of incidental Welsh around the school but many have yet to develop the knowledge and confidence to sustain a simple conversation.
18. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They display very good attitudes towards their work and all pupils show enthusiasm during lessons. Their behaviour is very good; they are friendly and helpful to each other, courteous to all staff and welcoming to visitors.
19. Average attendance over the three terms prior to the inspection was 92.8 per cent. This figure is below, local, national and Welsh Assembly Government targets.
20. Pupils' awareness of issues related to equal opportunities and the differences between people in society is an outstanding feature at the school. They show respect and understanding for the individual needs of other pupils.
21. Through a number of carefully planned initiatives, particularly the school 'Community Week', pupils are developing a very good understanding about the world of work and their place within the community.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	69%	24%	0	0

23. These percentages are slightly below the average percentages for the whole of Wales, as reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's Annual Report for 2007-08, with the quality of teaching being good or better (grade 1 and grade 2) in 83 per cent of lessons, and outstanding (grade 1) in 16 per cent of lessons.
24. Where the teaching is good, lessons are well planned and have clear learning objectives that are clearly understood by all pupils. Lessons are well paced with all pupils actively involved in their learning. Good questioning skills are used to assess pupils' understanding and regular opportunities for pupils to express opinions. Interventions are appropriate and the effective involvement of classroom assistants in the learning process has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
25. Shortcomings in lessons mainly centred on long introduction and over-direction by teachers and insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.
26. The quality of assessment, recording and reporting procedures meet statutory requirements. For those pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language, assessment policies and practice are very good. Good use is made of internal and external assessment procedures to measure progress. Teachers' assessment records provide clear evidence of the progress pupils make.
27. Very few pupils are aware of their improvement targets and what they need to do in order to improve their work. They do not have a clear understanding of the purpose of assessment.
28. The curriculum is responding well to learners' needs. It is providing equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. However, as pupils move through the school, the curriculum in some subject does not build sufficiently on existing knowledge, skills and understanding particularly in Welsh as a second language and geography.
29. There are outstanding learning opportunities for those pupils with SEN and those who use English as an additional language. For those pupils who are educated within the resource base, the curriculum provision is outstanding.
30. Opportunities for learning outside the classroom are very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good across the school.

31. Partnerships with parents, other schools, colleges and initial teacher training institutions are good. Partnerships with the community are outstanding.
32. The quality of care, guidance and support for all pupils is outstanding. All arrangements for pastoral care are exceptionally well structured.
33. The school's provision for the healthy development, safety and well being of all pupils is good.

Leadership and management

34. The head teacher has a clear and purposeful vision for the school and is very committed to this. The school shows a strong commitment to developing the expertise of all members of staff.
35. The governors are well informed of the progress the school is making towards achieving its academic and developmental targets, however, they have yet to develop the necessary knowledge and understanding about issues that affect performance. The governing body fully complies with all its legal responsibilities.
36. A positive culture of self-evaluation with an emphasis on improvement is firmly embedded in the school. The self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection is a thorough document that clearly identifies the school's main strengths and areas for development. However, subject co-ordinators tends to describe practice and provision rather than make clear judgements on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and on the standards that are achieved.
37. The school has targeted successfully most of the issues identified in the last inspection report and good progress has been made. However, addressing the shortcomings in mathematics and geography is yet to be realised.
38. The school has a sufficient number of well qualified and experienced teachers and they all have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There is a good balance of subject expertise which is utilised fully to support different areas of the curriculum. Teachers recognise the need to improve their knowledge and understanding of Welsh in order to improve standards, and are making good progress in this respect. A good team spirit is evident.
39. Overall, there are good levels of resources for most subjects but there are shortcomings in geography, ICT and Welsh.
40. The school building is welcoming, secure and well maintained and more than adequate for the number of pupils on roll. It is bright and colourful, and provides a stimulating environment to support teaching and learning at the school. Displays are of a very good quality and are changed regularly to reflect on-going work. Good use is made of the spacious outdoor area which is used purposefully for learning, for play and for gardening.

41. Finances are well managed and resources are matched to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan and are regularly reviewed. The Governing Body Finance Committee meets regularly, reviews expenditure and maintains a modest contingency. The last audit resulted in a very positive report. The school gives value for money.

Recommendations

42. In order to improve the school in the areas inspected, the staff and governing body need to:
- R1 raise standards by addressing the shortcomings identified in teaching and learning and in mathematics, geography and Welsh as a second language; *
 - R2 ensure good standards particularly in the key skills of numeracy and information and communications technology; *
 - R3 improve pupils' bilingual competence;
 - R4 develop the awareness of pupils of what they need to do in order to improve their work and provide more opportunities for them to take responsibility for their own learning;
 - R5 further develop the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators to have a sharper focus on how pupils achieve;
 - R6 improve the level of resources to support teaching and learning particularly in Welsh as a second language, geography and ICT.

* raising standards in mathematics and numeracy is in the current school's improvement plan

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 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

43. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
44. In the 2008, end of key stage 2 teacher assessments, 57.9 per cent of pupils achieved the core subject indicator at level 4 or higher in English, mathematics and science compared with the national average of 75.5 per cent. These results when compared with schools with the same number of pupils entitled to free school meals, places the school in the bottom 25 per cent for English and mathematics and in the bottom 50 per cent for science. If pupils from the resourced centre are excluded from these figures the percentages are slightly better but still below the LA and national average. In total, 26 per cent of all the pupils assessed were on the SEN register. However, national curriculum assessments indicate level 5 outcomes compare favourably with all schools, particularly in science.
45. Results for the past three years, for English, mathematics and science have been in the bottom 25 per cent in comparison with similar schools. With the exception of 2007 when the boys did better, girls performed significantly better in each core subject but the gap was narrower in 2008.
46. Overall, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, the majority of pupils throughout the school make good progress towards reaching their potential. All pupils with SEN, those 'looked after' by the LA, those who receive support in the use of English as an additional language and those who attend the resource centre succeed regardless of their ability, gender or social background and make good progress.
47. The standards achieved in the lessons inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	61%	32%	0%	0%

48. The above percentages are below the average percentages for the whole of Wales, as published in HMCI's Annual Report for 2007-08, with the standards of achievement being good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 84 per cent of lessons, and outstanding (grade 1) in 12 per cent of lessons.

49. **Pupils' standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:**

Subjects	Key Stage 2
Welsh Second Language	Grade 3
Mathematics	Grade 3
Design and Technology	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 3
Music	Grade 2
Religious Education	Grade 2

50. All pupils show good listening skills but speaking skills is less well developed. Generally pupils' reading skills progress well across the age range. Most have a very positive attitude to reading and read with appropriate fluency and expression. Writing across the curriculum is good. Handwriting and presentation skills are of a very high standard throughout the school.
51. Many pupils do not use ICT and numeracy skills consistently across the range of subjects to promote learning. Pupils' creative skills develop well throughout the school particularly in music, art and design technology. Their problem solving skills however are less well developed. Pupils' capacity to work with greater independence and their understanding of what they are doing is underdeveloped and they have yet to take responsibility for their own learning.
52. Pupils' bilingual competence is progressing well. Many pupils are becoming more confident in the use of incidental Welsh around the school but many have yet to develop the knowledge and confidence to sustain a simple conversation.
53. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They display very good attitudes towards their work and all pupils show enthusiasm during lessons. Their behaviour is very good; they are friendly and helpful to each other, courteous to all staff and welcoming to visitors. They enter and move around the school in a quiet, orderly and purposeful manner settling into their classrooms quickly and work well together. This contributes positively and constructively to the quality of life in the school. There have been no exclusions in the last twelve months.
54. Average attendance over the three terms prior to the inspection was 92.8 per cent. This figure is below, local, national and Welsh Assembly Government targets. Nearly all pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.
55. Pupils' awareness of issues related to equal opportunities and the differences between people in society is an outstanding feature at the school. They show respect and understanding for the individual needs of other pupils. They recognise, understand and respect diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within society very well.
56. Through a number of carefully planned initiatives, particularly the school 'Community Week', pupils are developing an excellent understanding about the world of work and their place within the community.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

57. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report. The school awarded itself a grade 2 for this question. The team judged that there are shortcomings in teaching and in the way pupils are involved in planning their own progress.

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	69%	24%	0	0

59. These percentages are slightly below the average percentages for the whole of Wales, as reported by HMCI's Annual Report for 2007-08, with the quality of teaching being good or better (grade 1 and grade 2) in 83 per cent of lessons, and outstanding (grade 1) in 16 per cent of lessons.

60. Teachers have established very good relationships with pupils based on mutual respect and regular and appropriate use of encouragement and praise. All children are valued and treated equally. Teachers have created an atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning.

61. Where the teaching is good, lessons are well planned and have precise learning objectives that are clearly understood by all pupils. Lessons are well paced with all pupils actively involved in their learning. Good questioning skills are used to assess pupils' understanding and regular opportunities for pupils to express opinions. Interventions are appropriate and the effective involvement of learning support assistants in the learning process has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

62. Shortcomings in lessons mainly centred on long introduction and over-direction by teachers and insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.

63. Generally teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the subject they teach and are aware of recent developments. However, not all teachers are as secure when it comes to teaching Welsh as a second language. The school recognises the need to update teachers' skills in this subject.

64. Teachers successfully promote bilingual skills through continuous encouragement and support. The majority of pupils across the school are beginning to make good progress in their use of Welsh.

65. The good quality of assessment, recording and reporting procedures meet statutory requirements. Procedures for assessing the core subjects are well established but the school recognises the need to be more systematic in the way the non-core subjects are assessed. Good use is made of end of key stage 1 teacher assessment to track and monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school. Good use is made of internal and external assessment procedures to measure progress. Teachers' assessment records provide clear evidence of the progress pupils make.
66. Very few pupils are aware of their improvement targets and what they need to do in order to improve their work. They do not have a clear understanding of the purpose of assessment.
67. The school has a clear marking policy which is consistently applied by all teachers. Marking is undertaken regularly, often with supportive comments. In the best examples, constructive comments are offered explaining how pupils' work can be improved.
68. For those pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language using assessment policies and practice are very good.
69. The school ensures that pupils' annual progress reports are clear, informative and useful. They fulfil statutory requirements. Appropriate opportunities are provided throughout the year for parents to offer observations and discuss their children's progress with teachers. During the pre-inspection meeting, parents voiced their appreciation of the school's 'open door' policy.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

70. The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
71. The curriculum is responding well to learners' needs. It is providing equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. It meets statutory requirements, including the legal requirements for religious education and collective worships for all pupils. Sex education is provided in accordance with school and county policies. However, as pupils move through the school, the curriculum does not build sufficiently in some subjects on existing knowledge, skills and understanding particularly in Welsh as a second language and geography.
72. There are outstanding learning opportunities for those pupils with SEN and those who use English as an additional language.

73. For those pupils who are educated within the Resource Base, the curriculum provision is outstanding. This is recognised by all interested parties, including local primary, secondary and special schools.
74. Good progress is being made in revising policy documents and implementing the changes to the curriculum and assessment arrangements in line with national developments.
75. Planning for the development of basic and key skills is good. Monitoring of the delivery of key skills across the curriculum is in its early stages and arrangements to promote pupils' independent learning skills are underdeveloped.
76. Opportunities for learning outside the classroom are very good. The very good range of activities is enriching and broadens learners' experiences during the school day and beyond. There are very good sporting, musical and cultural opportunities which are successfully developing pupils' knowledge and skills. Very high quality residential visits take place, providing pupils with valuable experiences for wider learning, as well as increasing their social and physical competencies. These enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and increase their appreciation of their local, national and international heritage.
77. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good across the school. Pupils' excellent manners and good behaviour towards each other, all staff and visitors is testimony to the high priority the school places on pupils' need for self-respect; respect for others; responsibility and reliability.
78. Partnerships with parents, other schools, colleges and initial teacher training institutions are good. Partnerships with the community are outstanding. A Community Week is held every two years and the school goes 'off timetable' during this time. This is a long established event where very strong links to many local businesses have been effectively developed. It also provides pupils with outstanding work related education.
79. Parents are encouraged to help in school and there is an active Friends of Taliesin. Regular newsletters and information regarding topics to be covered are sent out each term. The school regularly receives students from Chester College and Glyndwr University on teacher training. There are also good work experience placements from local high schools.
80. There are good arrangements in place to promote pupils bilingual skills and the school is reflecting the language and culture of Wales very well in its programme of work. Staff regularly use Welsh instructions and questions. This provision has not yet had sufficient time to fully impact on standards.
81. The school has a very inclusive ethos. All pupils are included in every aspect of school life. All staff conscientiously and consistently promote equality of

access and opportunity and racial harmony; there are no barriers to learning for any pupil.

82. Sustainable development is well established with the school recently achieving Green Flag status in the Eco Schools initiative. They are also working towards achieving Fairtrade status and Fairtrade products are promoted throughout the school. A child from Zimbabwe is being successfully sponsored by the school which further supports pupils' understanding and awareness of wider global citizenship. Local councillors and the local Member of the European Parliament have spoken to pupils about their roles, giving them a greater awareness of local citizenship.
83. There are few opportunities to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills such as raising funds, buying, selling and marketing. This provision across the school is inconsistent in terms of the pupils taking full responsibility for these activities.
84. The school plays an active role in laying the foundations for life long learning. National priorities such as Healthy Schools, Eco Schools, and Appetite for Life, Breakfast Club, Basic Skills and the Quality Mark are an established part of school life. There is an effective transition plan to prepare pupils for high school.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
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85. The findings of the inspection team do not match the judgement made by the school (Grade 2) in its self-evaluation report. As a result of the wide range of outstanding features demonstrating how well pupils are cared for, guided and supported, the school has been awarded grade 1.
86. The quality of care, guidance and support for all pupils is outstanding. This is strength of the school. All arrangements for pastoral care are exceptionally well structured. Ysgol Taliesin is a very happy school and staff are excellent role models.
87. There are excellent links with representatives from the LA inclusion services, the educational psychologist, community health and social workers and other support agencies. The school plans and manages provision for pupils with additional and more complex needs from support services to an outstanding degree.
88. Overall, relationships between staff, parents and members of the local community are very positive and constructive. The school works very closely with parents. They are encouraged to be actively involved in school life and express their views freely to staff and at pre-inspection meetings. They know, in the main, that their views will be respected and acted upon. The School Council, which involves pupils from all main stream classes at the school,

- discusses school matters sensibly and in a democratic way. Its influence on some aspect of the school's life is beginning to be evident.
89. There is outstanding individual support and guidance for all pupils through very structured personal, social and health education programmes. These are very carefully planned. Learners say that they feel very valued and supported. Their well being is a very high priority in the school and specialist services are very effectively used for those who require additional support.
 90. There are good, established induction programmes when pupils transfer from the infant school and when year 6 pupils transfer to the high school. Transition links with the main feeder high school start in year five with a two day creative arts visit. In year six there is an increase in visiting activities and pupils have opportunities throughout the year to mix with the pupils from other feeder primaries during these sessions. A joint summer fair and the infant school's use of the field for sports day are among the established events which ensure a smooth transition to year three.
 91. The monitoring of attendance, punctuality, behaviour and performance is good. Realistic targets for attendance are set each year by the head teacher and the governing body. Last years targets were exceeded. There are fortnightly meetings with the Inclusion Welfare Officer when all attendance's which fall below 80 per cent are discussed and appropriate action taken. Attendance is given a high profile in the school prospectus with detailed figures given for every class over the school year. Holidays in term time are discouraged and none over ten days are authorised. Behaviour is monitored effectively and the additional needs co-ordinator makes sure training is given to all staff to ensure a consistent whole school approach when dealing with any issues.
 92. The school's provision for the healthy development, safety and well being of all pupils is good and meets current requirements for pupil safety. The school has been involved in the Healthy Schools initiative for three years and many of the principles are firmly established in school life. Pupils have a choice of healthy meals and snacks, mostly Fair-trade, at break time. A healthy breakfast club has been available to pupils for a number of years. Nearly all extra curricular activities are held outside during the summer term. Appropriate security measures are in place.
 93. The head teacher is the named person with responsibility for Child Protection and together with the named governor has been trained to the appropriate level. All other staff have received training and are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse. There is a Child Protection school policy in line with local and all Wales procedures.
 94. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs including those with SEN and those who use English as an additional language is outstanding.

95. Pupils' individual needs are assessed through an extremely wide range of procedures, including observation, discussion and relevant testing. There are relevant specialist screening and intervention programmes carried out with individual pupils and small groups by very experienced and trained staff.
96. Additional support for pupils with additional learning needs and those who use English as an additional language is very well managed and flexible. Individual plans for learning and behaviour, sensory and physical needs are written collaboratively and involve parents and pupils at all stages. The quality of the individual support for all pupils with additional learning needs is extremely specific and effective.
97. There is highly consistent and positive behaviour management in place for those pupils who require additional support and guidance. As a result, no pupils are excluded from any activity. The school fully includes pupils, whatever their difficulties and there is an aura of harmony and co-operation between staff and learners. Pupils say that they feel very safe and valued.

Resourced Base Provision

98. Provision in the LA Resource Base within the school is outstanding.
99. This class caters for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and more complex needs. It enjoys a deserved high reputation and is recognised and visited regularly by staff from other schools and external agencies and considered as a highly effective centre of excellence. All pupils benefit from stimulating, motivating and challenging activities. Lessons are very well structured to meet the wide range of individual needs. Relationships in the class between pupils and staff are outstanding. These learners exude confidence and competence. Their feelings of self worth are tangible when they work in other classes, take part in all school activities and go out beyond the school. There are enriched opportunities for resourced pupils which include taking part in performances in the local theatre with members of the nearby special school and leading in whole school assemblies. All pupils are motivated to think and work as independent members of the school and local community. Resource staff are highly motivated and experienced and their expertise extends across the school.
100. An atmosphere of complete racial harmony pervades the school and arrangements for the treatment of disabled learners are fully in place. An appropriate disability access plan is operating that complies with Welsh Assembly guidance.
101. The school's provision for inclusion and equal opportunities for all pupils are outstanding. There is a member of staff with specific responsibility for raising multicultural awareness. Feasts and festivals from other religions are also studied and celebrated. The long established relationship with the local Special School involves year six pupils acting as 'buddies' to their pupils. They are taught some basic sign language to assist pupils in playground games. Once a week a few pupils from both schools are involved in a 'Drop

Everything and Read' (DEAR) scheme. Every year the two schools enter the Flintshire Dance Festival together. The special relationship between the schools helps to create an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance and the opportunity to access mainstream school in a flexible approach.

102. The school makes great efforts to secure equal treatment for disabled learners. Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure they are included in all activities. Disability access to the site is good and there are appropriate facilities for the disabled. There is a Disability Equality Scheme and action plan which was drawn up in accordance with the laid down guidelines.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

103. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report. The school awarded itself a grade 2 for this question. The team judged that there are shortcomings in the way the leadership does not sufficiently focus on standards of achievement in some subjects and aspects of learning.
104. The head teacher has a clear and purposeful vision for the school and is very committed to this. The school's mission statement states, 'that all individuals are of equal value and have a right to be treated with respect' and has been formulated by the school council and agreed and adopted by the staff and governing body. It is clearly understood and successfully reflected in day to day life of the school. Consequently all members of staff have a sense of belonging to a team. This has resulted in creating an environment that fosters respect, support and care for all.
105. The school shows a strong commitment to developing the expertise of all members of staff. They have good opportunities to further their professional qualifications and a number have completed a subject leadership course successfully. Appropriate and relevant training is provided for learning support assistants and many have gained enhanced qualifications. The continuing professional development needs of all members of staff are carefully linked to priorities identified in the school development plan. A co-ordinator for staff development works closely with the head teacher to ensure that training is relevant and is reflected in practice.
106. Curricular responsibilities are allocated to each member of staff and these are affirmed through relevant job descriptions. Although members of staff undertake these management responsibilities conscientiously, insufficient attention is given to evaluating standards of achievement.
107. The target setting process is systematic and begins as soon as pupils transfer from the infant school. Good use is made of records that are passed on to determine the most relevant programme of work for pupils. The statutory targets set for English, mathematics and science based on the analysis of the previous year's results, trends, rate of progress and information about each cohort are realistic and challenging and match the abilities of many pupils. They are questioned, challenged and finally confirmed with the Local Authority link adviser.
108. The school takes good account of national and local priorities, for example the implementation of national changes for teaching, learning and assessment.

109. The governors are well informed of the progress the school is making towards achieving its academic and developmental targets. At meetings they are given every opportunity to question, discuss and challenge decisions, before coming to agreement and setting priorities.
110. Their role as a 'critical friend' is well established; however, they have yet to develop the necessary knowledge and understanding about issues that affect performance and to hold the school to account for standards. They have a good oversight of the budget and supervise expenditure well. The governing body fully complies with all its legal responsibilities.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

111. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report. The school awarded itself a grade 2 for this question. The team judged that there are shortcomings in the way curriculum leaders evaluate and plan for improvement.
112. A positive culture of self-evaluation with an emphasis on improvement is firmly embedded in the school. The team ethos established ensures that all the stakeholders are involved and committed to improving standards.
113. The self-evaluation report prepared for the inspection is a thorough document that clearly identifies the school's main strengths and areas for development. However, it tends to describe practice and provision rather than make clear judgements on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and on the standards that are achieved.
114. The inspection team's judgements differ from those of the school's in 5 out of the 7 key questions. The inspection team awarded one grade lower grade for key questions 2, 5, 6 and 7 and a higher grade for key question 4.
115. Staff, parents, governors and pupils have all contributed to the report. The school council meets regularly and is invited to express their views, ideas and suggestions on various aspects of school life. These are considered seriously by the head teacher. Parents' views are sought through questionnaires and discussions at formal meetings and are analysed and acted upon where appropriate.
116. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure that all subject areas are monitored regularly and consistently. In the core subjects, there is very good awareness of performance in county and national contexts. Core subjects are monitored on an annual basis which ensures that subject leaders have a good overview of their subject but subsequent actions are not always clear in terms of what needs to be done to raise standards.

117. Priorities for development in the school improvement plan are a result of a careful analysis of the self-evaluation findings. Targets have an appropriate timescale, costing and indicator of success. However, these priorities are not clearly linked to individual pupils' targets and the resources required to support learning and to improve standards are not always adequate.
118. The school has targeted successfully most of the issues identified in the last inspection report and good progress has been made. However, addressing the shortcomings in mathematics and geography is yet to be realised.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

119. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report. The school awarded itself a grade 2 for this question. The team judged that there are shortcomings in the adequacy of resources for a few subjects and in the way pupils' access them is managed.
120. The school has a sufficient number of qualified and well-experienced teachers and they all have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There is a good balance of subject expertise which is utilised fully to support different areas of the curriculum. Specialist staff for music and for English as an additional language are deployed effectively. Learning support assistants work well with the teachers in supporting pupils with their learning. Teachers recognise the need to improve their knowledge and understanding of Welsh in order to improve standards, and are making good progress in this respect.
121. Teachers attend relevant training courses regularly to update their knowledge and there are also in-house staff development initiatives which provide a useful forum for sharing good practice. Learning support assistants attend appropriate training and find this beneficial.
122. Arrangements are in place to provide all members of staff with the required preparation, planning and assessment time and very good use is made of this. Resources allocated for workload reduction and workforce remodelling are used to good effect.
123. The school secretary makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school and carries out her responsibilities efficiently and effectively. Ancillary staff, including the caretaker, mid-day supervisors and cleaners, are also valued for their positive contribution to the school.
124. Overall, there are good levels of resources for most subjects but there are shortcomings in geography, ICT and Welsh. These shortcomings directly affect the standards pupils achieve. In the large library room, books are in a good condition and are maintained in a well organised manner. At present, only two classes are equipped with interactive white boards which means that all classes except the Resource Centre have to be timetabled for their use.

125. The school building is welcoming, secure and well maintained and more than adequate for the number of pupils on roll. It is bright and colourful, and provides a stimulating environment to support teaching and learning at the school. Teachers and pupils throughout the school make good use of display areas to celebrate achievements. Displays are of a very good quality and are changed regularly to reflect on-going work. Pupils show great pride in them. The school hall provides appropriate accommodation for whole-school collective worship and physical education lessons. It also serves as a suitable dining area for pupils who bring a packed lunch to school. There is a rolling programme in place to replace old furniture and to decorate the building. Recent alterations to doorways and to ramps mean that all areas of the school is now accessible for the disabled.
126. Good use is made of the spacious outdoor area which is used purposefully for learning, play and gardening. The school has a large playing field which is fully utilised weather permitting. Areas of the grounds are currently being developed to provide more appropriate leisure areas for sitting, reading and relaxing.
127. Finances are well managed and resources are matched to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan and are regularly reviewed. The governing body finance committee meets regularly, reviews expenditure and maintains a modest contingency fund. The last audit resulted in a very positive report. The school gives value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Welsh Second Language

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good Features

128. Across the key stage, the majority of pupils listen attentively to teachers, respond enthusiastically to questions and work well with each other. They sing a range of songs enthusiastically, which helps to consolidate the language patterns learnt.
129. In lower key stage 2, there is a reasonable understanding of basic incidental Welsh by the majority of pupils and they respond appropriately to questions. They use simple phrases and sentences correctly when greeting each other. They extend the range of language patterns with the aid of flashcards to include asking questions to their partners.
130. The majority of pupils read and understand a story which is read to them, they read familiar words fairly accurately when presented in the form of flash cards and in classroom displays.
131. Pupils' writing skills are developing appropriately through tasks that include labelling, matching exercises and simple sentences based on a given pattern. Simple words are spelt correctly and punctuation is generally accurate.
132. In upper key stage 2, the majority of pupils extend their use of vocabulary when participating in simple dialogues. The more able pupils ask and answer questions with increasing confidence when they talk about their feelings and personal details. The pronunciation and intonation of a few is developing well.
133. A few pupils are beginning to choose books from the Welsh library to read and are beginning to have the necessary understanding to talk about the content. A few read confidently and with appropriate expression.
134. The majority are beginning to write simple sentences independently in response to a variety of stimuli. The work is generally punctuated appropriately and correctly.

Shortcomings

135. A good number of pupils particularly in upper key stage 2 lack confidence when speaking and offer only brief responses.
136. Limited progression is evident in pupils' reading and writing skills by the end of key stage 2.

Mathematics

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

137. Almost all pupils in lower key stage 2 are making good progress in their understanding of number. The majority order numbers to 100 correctly and count in sets of tens and hundreds. Many know and understand that the position of a digit signifies its value. They halve and double numbers confidently.
138. The majority of pupils in lower key stage 2 successfully use appropriate mental strategies to answer mathematical questions in class. Most pupils are developing a clear understanding of the use of co-ordinates to locate positions. They then progress successfully to using squares on a grid when calculating the areas of their hand sizes.
139. The majority of younger pupils in key stage 2 can measure area using non standard units. Many use appropriate mathematical language well. A few are beginning to reason, explore and investigate independently. They clearly describe their strategies accurately with the rest of the class.
140. Most older key stage 2 pupils use calculators well to extract data when solving problems. They achieve well when working out averages. They understand about range, mean and mode and a few pupils explain these terms well to the rest of the class.
141. Many pupils correctly read and plot points in the first quadrant of a co-ordinates grid well. A few pupils present their findings to the class very clearly and concisely. They answer mathematical questions with confidence. The majority of pupils demonstrate good mathematical applications. They occasionally use ICT effectively to extend their mathematical practice.
142. A few pupils show good achievement in organising number data in rank order when drawing tally charts and graphs. Many successfully extract data from a census chart to complete their charts.
143. Throughout the key stage, all pupils record their work meticulously. Throughout the key stage, pupils are proud of their achievements in mathematics.
144. Pupils with SEN solve problems very well using an interactive whiteboard. A few reason and rationalise their answers clearly in front of the group. They use good mathematical vocabulary to explain their calculations.

Shortcomings

145. Many pupils are not secure in using and applying mathematics in practical tasks.

146. A minority of pupils in each class are insecure in the development and understanding and use of the four operations to solve problems.
147. Pupils ability to collect, represent and interpret data for a variety of purposes is underdeveloped.

Design technology

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

Good features

148. As pupils progress through the key stage, they make good progress through a wide range of interesting and challenging activities. The process of designing, planning, making and evaluating is well established and followed by all pupils.
149. They all use a number of tools safely, manipulate materials with care and are aware of health and safety issues connected with their use.
150. Nearly all pupils design and make products using a range of materials, matching the working characteristics of the materials successfully to their tasks. They investigate confidently how existing products look and function as a source of ideas for their own products. The end product is often of a high standard.
151. Many pupils successfully develop and communicate their ideas in a variety of interesting ways using models where appropriate. They successfully demonstrate their creative thinking when considering and recording solutions to problems that arise during their designing and making process.
152. When planning and carrying out activities associated with food they carry out the task safely and hygienically.
153. Nearly all pupils know how to build simple low voltage electrical circuits and show good understanding. For example, they confidently construct a simple lighting system to a model torch that includes a battery, switch and bulbs.

Shortcomings

154. There are no important shortcomings.

Geography

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

155. The majority of pupils in lower key stage 2 are beginning to make good use of simple plans and maps to identify successfully features around the school and in the immediate locality. They are beginning to draw their own simple maps accurately, using a key of their own choosing to show the main features in the school grounds.
156. Many correctly interpret symbols and use simple co-ordinates and geographical terms with some understanding. Many pupils' use of geographical vocabulary develops well as they progress through the key stage.
157. As they progress through the school, pupils have an increasing understanding of symbols and four-figure grid references with the more able using the eight points of the compass accurately. They identify and locate places using the index in atlases confidently and accurately.
158. The majority of pupils throughout the key stage name and locate geographical and physical features on a map of North Wales and Wales. They name and locate well known towns on a map. In upper key stage 2, the majority are now beginning to develop a good sense of location when following the journey of the river Dee from its source to the estuary. Many know which are the main European countries and the different continents.
159. In their study of Lesotho and St Lucia a few pupils can discuss confidently the similarities and differences between their own area and that of a contrasting underdeveloped region. They are aware of some the economic problems which these countries face and the difference in physical features and climate. They give good reasons as to why they see North Wales as a better place to live.
160. All pupils display a very good understanding of environmental issues and sustainable development, and identify ways in which human activity affects the environment. All pupils take an active part in the school's recycling activities and have a good grasp of the principles of sustainable development. They are also developing their ideas of world citizenship and the important part they have to play.

Shortcomings

161. Limited progression is made in the development of mapping skills as pupils move through the key stage.
162. Pupils' use of enquiry skills using a range of sources to research and retrieve information in relation to their local and contrasting areas is underdeveloped.

Music

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

Good features

163. Throughout key stage 2, all pupils show a good understanding of the three elements in music. A few pupils are very confident in composing and improvising and the majority perform well and sensitively evaluate their work.
164. Pupils in lower key stage 2 imitate a wide variety of increasingly complex rhythms well. All pupils perform enthusiastically and are well motivated. They clap and pulse and create good ostinato rhythms.
165. The majority of pupils in lower key stage 2 use untuned percussion instruments with flair and sing a round; maintaining their parts tunefully. They hold their notes well and sing Calypso with gusto. Most pupils show a good grasp of the duration of notes at the end of phrases and use relevant musical vocabulary.
166. Almost all pupils in upper key stage 2 practise and rehearse very well in group and whole class settings. They later enhance their performance of Cats and Mice creatively, after listening carefully to their recordings.
167. They are critical listeners. Many declare that they are out of tune and accept that their recording is less than complimentary! Most pupils use their percussion instruments appropriately and show good skills in contributing to the whole class performance. Many pupils play accompaniment with control and accuracy.
168. Pupils' learning in music is enriched by additional opportunities to learn a range of musical instruments. The good skills of pupils receiving additional support for violin and guitar make a positive contribution to their own and other's learning and musical appreciation. All pupils perform confidently in whole school assemblies, seasonal performances and take part in concerts and theatre productions.

Shortcomings

169. There are no important shortcomings.

Religious Education

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

Good features

170. Throughout the school, pupils show great enthusiasm when finding out about different religions. They understand and respect other people's beliefs. Most pupils are developing a secure knowledge of major faiths, as required in the locally agreed syllabus.
171. Pupils in lower key stage 2, listen attentively in a lesson on world faiths. Many pupils describe their own feelings and actions in simple terms and then later explore the actions and feelings of others with good levels of understanding. Many pupils work independently and are progressing well in their personal, social and moral development.
172. They show how well they have developed their prior knowledge of the Good Samaritan. In discussion groups, most show a good understanding of the parable as they generate more ideas and opinions about the story.
173. Pupils in upper key stage 2, confidently explain their views about the necessary qualities of a leader. They rank these and compare them well, relating these qualities to their own lives. Many pupils are developing a secure knowledge and understanding of the practices of Christianity. Most work productively and are well motivated, making effective use of their time.
174. After listening to an introduction to the religious leader, Mohammed, around half of the pupils respond correctly to questions about his leadership qualities. Many pupils fully describe what they have researched about the leader with confidence and clarity.

Shortcomings

175. There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

The staff and governors of Taliesin Junior School wish to thank the inspection team for their recognition of the many strengths of the school.

The recommendations identified will enable the school to build on this and move forward. An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations in the report.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Taliesin
School type	Community Junior
Age-range of pupils	7 - 11
Address of school	Taliesin Avenue Shotton Deeside
Postcode	CH 5 1HP
Telephone number	01244 830018

Head teacher	Mrs Helen Hughes
Date of appointment	September 2002
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr John Donnelly
Registered inspector	Mr Merfyn Lloyd Jones
Dates of inspection	18 – 20 May 2009

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25	32	40	36	133

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	3	8.2

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	16.6:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	N/A
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	3:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term			Rest of school
Summer 2008			91.7%
Autumn 2008			93.4%
Spring 2009			93.3%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2009							Number of pupils in Y6		38		
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	5	29	34	32
		National	0.2	0	0	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		National	0.3	0	0	0.8	0.8	4.4	16.7	53.4	23.6
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	8	24	39	29
		National	0.2	0	0	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	42	42
		National	0.2	0	0	0.5	0.6	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment			
In the school	57.9%	In Wales	75.5%

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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

A team of three inspectors and a peer assessor inspected the school over a period of seven inspector days.

The head teacher was the nominee and she played an extensive role during the inspection.

Twenty nine lessons or part lessons were observed and a selection of the pupils' practical and written work was scrutinised.

Registration, collective worship and extra-curricular activities were inspected.

Discussions were held with staff and pupils about their work.

All documents presented by the school prior to and during the inspection, were scrutinised.

Meetings were held prior to the inspection with the head teacher, staff, parents and the governing body.

Nine parents attended the meeting held prior to the inspection, and the parents' responses (51 in all) to the questionnaires distributed were analysed.

Post inspection meetings were held with the head teacher, staff and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Members	Responsibilities	Subjects/areas of learning
Mr Merfyn Lloyd Jones Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations key questions 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7	Welsh Second Language, Design and Technology and Geography.
Mrs Colette Gribble Team Member	Key question 3 and 4 and the Resourced Provision.	Mathematics, Music and Religious Education
Mrs Justine Barlow Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7	
Mrs Helen Hughes Nominee	Contributions to all questions by providing information	

The contractor was:

Evenlode Education Ltd
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Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, the head teacher, the staff, pupils and parents/carers for their co-operation during the inspection.