

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Ysgol Bro Elwern
Gwyddelwern
CORWEN
LL21 9DF**

School Number: 6632219

Date of Inspection: 22/06/09

by

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Ysgol Bro Elwern 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 Ysgol Bro Elwern took place between 22/06/09 and 24/06/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Phil Mostert undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a standard inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. This naturally Welsh school is located in the rural village of Gwyddelwern, near Corwen, in Denbighshire. The vast majority of its pupils come from the village and its surrounding areas. 21 of the pupils are from outside the school's catchment area.
2. According to the school, the area in which the pupils live is neither prosperous nor disadvantaged. 19% of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, a percentage slightly higher than the national and county average. There are six pupils on the special educational needs [SEN] register but none are statemented. There are no pupils from a different ethnic background.
3. Approximately 25% of the pupils come from a background where Welsh is the main language but the school ensures that the vast majority are bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary school. Since 2006, pupil numbers have decreased from 53 to the current 49. The pupils on the school register represent the full range of ability.
4. The current headteacher was appointed in April 1997. The school was last inspected in June 2003.
5. This time the school received a standard inspection.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's main priorities as noted in the School Development Plan [SDP] are as follows:
 - to incorporate the basic skills in the schemes of work;
 - to develop classroom assessment to provide further opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and to contribute to target setting;
 - to raise standards in oracy and reading;
 - to develop the self-evaluation procedures;
 - to develop the roles of members of the governing body;
 - to adapt the school to meet the additional requirements of the Foundation Phase;
 - to purchase physical education equipment.

Summary

7. Ysgol Bro Elwern has a number of good features, including a number of subjects in which good standards are achieved, but there are shortcomings in some aspects of leadership and management.
8. The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's judgements in five of the seven Key Questions. A lower grade was awarded for Questions 5 and 6.

Table of grades awarded

9. The inspection team judged the school's work as follows:

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

Standards

10. Standards of achievement in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Children under five

Areas of learning	NURSERY	RECEPTION
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

SUBJECTS	KS1	KS2
Welsh	Grade 3	Grade 3
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art and design	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

11. Standards in the lessons observed are as follows:

Pupils' Standards of Achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	5%	80%	15%	0%	0%

12. Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons were similar to the national picture portrayed in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools' [HMCI] most recent Annual Report which states that standards are good or very good in 84% of lessons.
13. With the exception of information and communication technology [ICT], every pupil is given full access to a broad and balanced curriculum and equal opportunities to experience all the school's activities.
14. The general standard of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs. Pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
15. Early Years pupils make good progress in their speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT skills. Their ability to solve problems and their creative skills are also good.
16. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their speaking, listening, reading and numeracy and appropriate progress in writing and ICT. Their ability to solve problems and their creative skills are good and they co-operate well.
17. In Key Stage 2, pupils' oral skills in English are good; their numeracy skills, their ability to solve problems and their creative skills are also good. There are some shortcomings in their oral skills in Welsh, in their reading and writing skills in Welsh and English, and in ICT.
18. Pupils' bilingual skills develop appropriately.
19. In both key stages, there are deficiencies in the presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting is untidy.
20. As only three pupils were eligible to be assessed at the end of Key Stage 1, no analysis of the information is included.
21. In Key Stage 2 in 2008, according to teachers' assessments, 89% of pupils achieved level 4 or higher across the Core Subject Indicator [CSI], [the median for Wales is 74%]. The results for 2008 place the school in the top 50% in Welsh, English and mathematics. The result for science places the school below the mean when compared with similar schools.
22. There is no difference between the achievements of boys and girls.

23. Pupils with additional learning needs [ALN] make good progress in achieving the targets set for them. The school conforms well with the requirements of the Code of Practice for SEN.
24. Pupils' behaviour is very good.
25. Attendance percentages in the school over the past three terms were close to 96%, which is virtually the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government[WAG] for schools in Wales. The level of unauthorised absences is low

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	73%	18%	0%	0%

27. The percentages noted above are slightly lower than those for the whole of Wales for the year 2007-2008 [HMCI] Annual Report], where grades 1 and 2 were awarded in 84% of lessons, and Grade 1 in 16%.
28. There are excellent features in the grade 1 lessons, such as using a variety of teaching techniques which enable pupils to be active, and where they are challenged to achieve high standards with considerable independence.
29. In the grade 2 lessons, stimulating activities are presented which challenge pupils from different backgrounds to achieve their best work. Teachers ask questions skilfully and promote creativity, independence and originality.
30. In the grade 3 lessons, although there were some good features, there were also some shortcomings, such as lesson introductions which were too long and a lack of appropriate challenges for pupils. Teachers often fail to sufficiently promote pupils' independence.
31. In both key stages, there are deficiencies in the presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting is untidy.
32. The quality of assessment and recording is good.
33. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good; insufficient emphasis is placed on their spiritual development.
34. The quality of the curriculum documents is varied and ranges from good to unsatisfactory. The requirements of the 2008 Curriculum are not fully implemented in a number of areas. The education provided satisfies the needs of all the pupils.
35. Links with parents are good.

36. The staff provide a homely and very caring environment and ethos. The relationships between pupils and all who work in the school are good.

Leadership and management

37. The headteacher's leadership has had a positive influence on expectations in a number of subjects across the school and on the standard of pupils' work.
38. The SDP includes a substantial list of matters which have a direct link to raising standards and includes a review of that which was achieved last year. However, adequate attention has not been given to the steps involved in their implementation or to their effect on the budget. The anticipated outcomes are not sufficiently detailed.
39. The governing body is very supportive and plays a valuable part in the life of the school. However, the governing body is not sufficiently involved in discussing managerial issues such as the targets in the SDP and the self-evaluation programme.
40. No specific programme has been established to ensure that attention is given in turn to every subject or aspect as part of a self-evaluation programme. There is no co-ordinator for every subject.
41. Good consideration is given to WAG priorities such as bilingualism, sustainability, world citizenship and health education and fitness.
42. The school has a wealth of resources, many of them of good quality, but there is a lack of large apparatus for physical education. There is a lack of space in the classroom for the youngest pupils. The school is maintained in a tidy condition and very good attention is given to cleanliness.
43. The school has made appropriate or partial progress in six of the eight Key Issues listed in the 2003 report. Further attention needs to be given to self-evaluation and raising standards in some aspects.
44. The school provides value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school in the areas inspected, the school needs to:

- A1. raise standards in Welsh across the school;
- A2. ensure that more use is made of ICT to enrich cross curricular aspects across the school and to raise standards in reading and writing across the curriculum in Key Stage 2;
- A3. create a comprehensive self-evaluation system to maintain a continuous watching brief on standards and to fully involve the subject co-ordinators and governors in every aspect of the work;
- A4. ensure that all staff members and the governing body contribute fully to the leadership and management of the school;
- A5. improve the handwriting and the quality of presentation of pupils' work;
- A6. take immediate steps to ensure that the requirements of the 2008 curriculum are implemented in every aspect.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving the report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

45. The findings of the inspection team correspond with the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report. There are some shortcomings in standards in Welsh, but approximately one third of the pupils are recent learners or late-comers.

Children under five:

Areas of learning	NURSERY	RECEPTION
Language, literacy and communication	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

SUBJECTS	KS1	KS2
Welsh	Grade 3	Grade 3
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art and design	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

46. Almost all the pupils achieve the targets set for them.
47. As only three pupils were eligible to be assessed at the end of Key Stage 1, no analysis of the information is included.
48. In Key Stage 2 in 2008, according to teachers' assessments, 89% of pupils achieved level 4 or higher across the CSI, [the median for Wales is 74%]. The results for 2008 place the school in the top 50% in Welsh, English and mathematics. The result for science places the school below the mean when compared with similar schools.
49. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
50. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	73%	18%	0%	0%

51. Pupils' standards of achievement in lessons were similar to those portrayed in HMCI's most recent Annual Report, which states that standards are good or very good in 84% of lessons. It is also very close to the all-Wales target set by WAG, namely that 98% of lessons are expected to be grade 3 or better.

52. Early Years pupils make good progress in their speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT skills. Their ability to solve problems and their creative skills are also good.
53. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in their speaking, listening, reading and numeracy skills and appropriate progress in their writing and ICT skills. Their ability to solve problems and their creative skills are good and they co-operate well.
54. In Key Stage 2, pupils' oral skills in English are good; their numeracy skills, their ability to solve problems and their creative skills are also good. There are some shortcomings in their oral skills in Welsh, in their reading and writing skills in Welsh and English, and in their ICT skills.
55. Pupils with ALN make good progress in achieving the targets set for them. The school conforms well with the requirements of the Code of Practice for SEN.
56. Pupils' bilingual skills develop appropriately.
57. Pupils display a high level of motivation and interest in the range of educational and extra-curricular activities provided for them. They concentrate well and apply themselves for extended periods. The school successfully meets the needs of a range of pupils of varying ability.
58. In both key stages, there are deficiencies in the presentation of pupils' work and their handwriting is untidy.
59. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They are courteous and welcoming with adults and are anxious to learn and to co-operate effectively in groups and pairs. The older pupils share play activities well with their younger counterparts. Systems have been established to eradicate any oppressive behaviour and to ensure that discipline is maintained.
60. No pupils have been excluded since the last inspection.
61. Attendance percentages in the school over the past three terms were close to 96%, which is virtually the target set by the WAG for schools in Wales. The level of unauthorised absences is low, about 1%. Pupils arrive punctually. Lessons start and end on time. Attendances are recorded accurately.
62. Pupils have a good awareness of the varying circumstances of life in Wales and beyond. Members of the School Council organise regular events to raise funds for good causes of their own choice. Through the themes they study, pupils of all ages become aware of world citizenship, equality of opportunity and respect for variety within society.
63. There are strong links with the local community and each is supportive of the other's activities. Pupils' awareness of the world of work is less developed.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

64. The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.

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

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	73%	18%	0%	0%

66. The percentages noted above are slightly lower than those for the whole of Wales for the year 2007-2008 [HMCI Annual Report] ,where grades 1 and 2 were awarded in 84% of lessons, and Grade 1 in 16%.

67. There are excellent features to the grade 1 lessons, namely:

- the use of a variety of teaching methods which provide opportunities for pupils to be active;
- pupils being challenged to achieve high standards;
- pupils being challenged to produce their best work, frequently when working independently of teachers' supervision;
- extended and challenging feedback sessions are organised.

68. Where the teaching achieves grade 2, there are features such as:

- stimulating activities;
- appropriate tasks are set which match the needs of all individuals of all abilities;
- the questioning is skilful;
- creativity and originality are fostered well;.
- the aims of lessons are well explained;
- effective use is made of classroom assistants during lessons.

69. In the grade 3 lessons, although there were good features, there were also shortcomings such as:

- over-long introductions to lessons;;
- tasks which were not sufficiently differentiated to match the ability of pupils;
- pupils were not sufficiently involved;
- pupils' independence was not sufficiently developed.

70. In a majority of lessons, the aims are shared with pupils. When details of success criteria are shared with pupils, this has a positive effect on their learning.

71. Teachers' knowledge of the changes in the new curriculum [2008] is appropriate, but to date aspects such as thinking skills and assessment for learning have not been given sufficient attention.

72. An effective system for tracking pupils' progress has been established across the school.
73. The assessments for the children under five are detailed and accurate but are too onerous for the teacher.
74. The standard of assessment and recording in both key stages is good. The core subjects are scrutinised in greater detail. Individual records are kept for each pupil. There are no records to show pupils' development in ICT.
75. Although teachers mark pupils work constructively and sensitively, the pupils are not given enough responsibility for improving their own work. Insufficient emphasis is placed on suggesting ways in which their work could be further improved, especially in the context of syntax in both languages, and specifically in relation to verb forms in Welsh. Older pupils set their targets in conjunction with their teacher.
76. Two open evenings are arranged during the year and parents praise these meetings.
77. The quality of the annual reports on the children under five and on key stage 1 pupils is good. The annual reports on pupils at the upper end of the school do not provide sufficient detail about pupils' progress and to what has been learnt in each area. The space provided for comments on the foundation subjects is limited and this prevents the teachers from reporting in sufficient detail.
78. Portfolios of assessed pupils' work in Welsh and English are maintained to exemplify standards and to ensure consistency across the school. Teachers hold successful moderation meetings with other schools in order to establish consistent standards. These meetings have been beneficial.

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

79. The findings of the inspection team match the grade 2 the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report.
80. With the exception if ICT, the school provides a wide range of experiences and equal access to a curriculum which is based on stimulating and relevant activities.
81. The general standard of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs. Pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. Although the experiences provided for pupils are wide ranging, not all the schemes of work for the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 fully reflect the requirements.
82. The range of extra-curricular activities which is arranged and the visitors who are invited to the school enrich the curriculum well. Among recent visitors have been an artist and a specialist on pyramids. Recent visits include those to the Urdd Centres in Glanllyn and Tryweryn.
83. Good attention is paid to pupils' moral, social and cultural development within the general school curriculum; insufficient emphasis is placed on their spiritual development. The sessions of collective worship contribute to pupils' understanding of relevant issues and encourage them to respect others, but the pupils' contribution to these sessions is minimal.
84. The Circle Time periods enable pupils to discuss emotions, feelings, and the importance of friendship. They also develop an awareness of how to behave in relation to others in a variety of situations. The school makes use of visitors to reinforce principles such as the importance of helping others who are less fortunate. This is further developed by arranging collections for a number of charities.
85. Links with parents are good and the pre-inspection questionnaires show a high percentage of satisfaction with the provision and with the relationship between the parents and the school. The parents have responded well to the Home/School agreement. They support the school in a variety of ways and the Friends of the School are very active in raising funds
86. A strong partnership, with a cluster of five local primary schools, has been established with the headteachers meeting at the beginning of every term to jointly organise schemes of work. Effective transfer projects ensure good social and academic continuity as Y6 pupils move to secondary education. There are also close links with Coleg Llysfasi.
87. Pupils' bilingual skills are promoted in an appropriate manner and the school has a secure Welsh ethos. A strong emphasis is place on the Cwricwlwm Cymreig as part of the school curriculum and through its inclusion in the displays of pupils' work.

88. The explicit equal opportunities policy and inclusive ethos ensure that all pupils are given equal access. All the pupils are included in every aspect of the school's life such as sports, music and other social activities. Pupils are aware of the need to show respect for others, irrespective of their background.
89. Increasing attention is given to education in sustainability. The school has achieved bronze status in the Eco-schools campaign. Useful work on recycling is undertaken in the context of the school's close relationship with a local metal recycling business. By sorting and sending a variety of metals to the company the pupils gain experience of the changeable prices operating in the metals' market.
90. The Stage 1 accreditation in the 'Healthy Schools Scheme' has been achieved. Pupils understanding of issues concerning health and fitness is good.
91. Good efforts are made in some subjects to foster the pupils' awareness of world citizenship. Strong e-mail links have been established with a school in Sweden and letters and songs recorded on CD have been exchanged.
92. Local workplaces are visited occasionally. The pupils have been given talks on car mechanics and building crafts. With the exception of the opportunities they are given to run stalls in money raising events, there are few opportunities for pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills and to learn about the basics of running a business.
93. Pupils compete very successfully in sports activities.
94. On two occasions, the school has gained the Quality Mark accreditation.
95. The school curriculum, especially in historical studies, fosters pupils' pride in their area and heritage.
96. Pupils are very aware of the religious, cultural and economic variations which exist in various parts of the world. Pupils of all ages have a good awareness of living conditions in the third world.
97. Racial differences are treated with sensitivity. The school provides good support and guidance to ensure that there are no prejudices based on educational, linguistic or social background.

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

Grade: 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

98. The findings of the inspection team match the grade 2 the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report
99. The quality of the care, support and guidance provided for pupils is good. Pupils are very happy in the school and the relationships between them and with all staff members are good. A caring, warm and homely ethos has been established in the school and pupils feel that they are appreciated and supported.
100. The provision for pupils with ALN is planned and managed effectively and has several good features. Pupils' files are well organised and comprehensive and reflect the care and commitment of the Co-ordinator. The school conforms well with the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice.
101. Through its screening procedures, the school identifies pupils with ALN at an early stage. The contribution of the Unitary Authority [UA] support team contributes well to the raising of the standards achieved by pupils with ALN who integrate well into the normal activities of their class.
102. Pupils with ALN make good progress as they achieve the targets set for them. A formal audit of the Individual Education Plans [IEP] is held twice a year, when targets and support levels are checked and assessed. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils and the parents agree with the targets.
103. Effective arrangements are made to help nursery pupils settle in and they quickly establish themselves in the school situation.
104. The Home /School agreements have been completed appropriately.
105. The school has produced a comprehensive personal and social education programme [PSE] to be followed in specific lessons. In addition, this aspect is taught on a cross-curricular basis through sessions such as collective worship. Nevertheless, the programme has not been reviewed since the advent of the new national document.
106. The school has a racial equality policy. No instances of racial hatred have been recorded.
107. Pupils find it easy to turn to their teachers for support. Pupils and parents testify that there is no oppressive behaviour in this school. The school's anti-bullying systems are very effective.
108. The School Council is well established and has committed itself to making decisions to improve the school's facilities and environment.
109. The school conforms with the registration requirements and differentiates appropriately between different types of absence. The school cannot recall any occasions when it has been necessary to involve the county's School Welfare officer because of concern about absences.

110. Health and safety aspects receive appropriate attention. The governors' attention has been drawn to some shortcomings in the building.
111. The electrical and fire extinguishing apparatus are inspected regularly and a fire drill is held each term. Staff members have received basic first aid training.
112. The support staff supervise pupils with care during break times and the lunch hour. There are locks on all the doors to prevent entry by strangers, but all the doors are not locked during the day.
113. All members of staff are familiar with the school's arrangements for protecting and caring for the children and the procedures work effectively; appropriate internal training has been provided for all staff members. When required, a governor and senior member of staff are responsible for overseeing this aspect.
114. Parts of the building have been adapted to meet the needs of those with physical disabilities however, because of its confined nature, the building is not convenient for wheelchair users. The school has prepared an appropriate accessibility policy which has been accepted by the UA.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

115. The judgement of the inspection team does not correspond to the grade 2 the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report. A lower grade was awarded because there are some shortcoming in the leadership and management of the school. Although standards and the use of resources are generally good, all staff members and governors do not fully contribute to the leadership and management of the school.
116. The headteacher's leadership has had a positive effect on expectations in a number of subjects across the school and on the standard of pupils' work.
117. The staff's dedication to their work is very good; they co-operate well within their current responsibilities. The expectations set for subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently challenging.
118. The SDP includes a substantial list of matters which directly relate to raising standards and includes a review of what was achieved last year. Adequate attention has not been given to the steps involved in their implementation or to their effect on the budget. The anticipated outcomes are not sufficiently detailed.
119. The governing body is very supportive and plays a valuable part in the life of the school. Three of its members are new to their posts. Some members have visited the school during the past year and are beginning to take an interest in curricular issues.
120. Although the governing body, working in conjunction with the headteacher, gives careful consideration to the school's expenditure programme, it does not plan the spending efficiently enough. There is no plan which offers the governors a variety of spending options and there are no plans relating to the use of the school's financial reserves. The sum involved is within the limits set by the Audit Commission.
121. All staff members have appropriate job descriptions, but these are not updated regularly.
122. There is no policy on the use of reasonable force. A number of suitable risk assessments have been produced.
123. Although performance management systems contribute to identifying the professional needs of staff members, the school does not provide training which is totally appropriate to meet their needs. Only a few courses which provide information about developments in the core subjects have been followed. The teachers maintain that the courses available have not prepared them adequately to meet the demands of the new curriculum

124. As part of their professional training the teachers visit other schools. These visits have been valuable.
125. The national agreement for re-modelling the workforce is implemented effectively. The school benefits well from the teachers' planning, preparation and assessing [PPA] periods and good use is made of supply teachers who have a variety of specialisms.
126. Good consideration is given to WAG priorities and the school's targets are appropriate.
127. The school prospectus and annual report to parents contain all the necessary information. Parents were not informed about the teachers' assessments of pupils' level of achievement at the end of the key stages, or about comparisons with the remainder of Wales. The figures in question were not issued because of concern that individual pupils might be identified if the percentages in question had been published.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

128. The judgement of the inspection team does not correspond to the grade 2 the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report. There are some shortcomings in the self-evaluation arrangements.
129. The self-evaluation report submitted by the school is a detailed document, but it contains too many descriptive sections. The evidence base for arriving at a decision is noted in most instances.
130. There is no specific programme that ensures that each subjects or aspect is considered in turn as part of a self-evaluation programme.
131. The self-evaluation which does take place is based on the headteacher observing one lesson by each teacher annually. These records are valuable as they focus well on the quality of the teaching and contain an unambiguous statement of opinion.
132. A whole school self-evaluation is carried out annually with the assistance of an officer from the Education Department. The outcomes are used to identify priorities for the SDP. This is a useful document.
133. The teachers meet regularly to standardise pupils' work. They have recently been standardising work in Welsh and English. As a follow up, successful sessions have been held with other schools to jointly standardise work; these meetings have been beneficial.
134. There is no co-ordinator for each subject and the leaders of individual subjects are not sufficiently proactive in co-ordinating, analysing pupils' work and formally discussing ways of improving quality with the other teachers.
135. The school has made suitable, or partial progress in six out of the eight Key Issues listed in the 2003 report. It was necessary to:
 - *raise standards, especially in KS2, by addressing the shortcomings noted in the various subjects:*
Success has been achieved in the raising the standards of the children under five in three areas, namely language, literacy and communication; mathematical development and physical development. Standards are also higher in history and geography in both key stages. Standards in Welsh have deteriorated and standards in ICT have not improved.
 - *establish whole school methods of planning the curriculum and the assessment of pupils' progress, to reflect the good practice which exists in KS1;*
The assessment system is well established but further attention needs to be given to the planning documents and to the production of agreed curriculum policies. This work is currently being undertaken in conjunction with other schools in the cluster.

- *include priorities and targets in the SDP which place greater emphasis on issues relating to raising standards than is apparent in the current Plan;*
There are a number of issues relating to the raising of standards in the current SDP, but more attention needs to be given to preparing a strategic overview, extending over time, which outlines methods of implementation and details of outcomes.

- *place a greater emphasis on pupils' attainments and progress in the written reports to parents;*

This aspect still needs attention at the upper end of the school.

- *formalise the school's monitoring systems and implement an agreed programme of evaluation within a specific time frame;*

This recommendation has not been given adequate attention.

- *set in place and implement a programme for preparing new policies or updating the current policies so that they are specific to the school;*

A number of policies have been updated prior to the inspection. Nevertheless, there are some gaps in the provision. There is no policy on the reasonable use of force.

- *hold more discussions between the teachers and parents when deciding the content of IEP for pupils with educational needs;*

The Current IEPs are discussed in a satisfactory amount of detail.

- *conform in full with the requirements in relation to registers, the school handbook and the annual report produced by the governors for parents;*

The registers now conform with the statutory requirements and the prospectus and the governors' annual report now contain all the necessary information.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

136. The findings of the inspection team match the grade 2 the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report. The effective use made of resources ensures good general standards.
137. The school's staffing levels ensure a favourable pupil: teacher ratio of 15:1. Three qualified full time teachers and one part time teacher are employed to enable the school to implement a broad and balanced curriculum.
138. The school is adequately staffed, and the teachers and other staff members have qualifications which are appropriate to meet the needs of the school and its pupils. The school makes effective use of its ancillary staff and good use of the teachers' specialisms.
139. No use has been made of Teaching Council funding to develop teachers' specialist skills. Few opportunities are provided to develop teachers' skills through the use of continuous professional development. The links between the priorities for in service training and the priorities expressed in the SDP are inadequate.
140. Arrangements have been made to implement the allocation of PPA time and this is used effectively by the teachers. This provision is appreciated by the teachers.
141. The financial contributions of the UA and parents are substantial. The school is fortunate to receive this support. It enriches the teaching environment and ensures that there is a generous supply of good quality teaching and learning materials which are easily accessible to the pupils. Nevertheless, the lack of large physical education apparatus has a deleterious effect on standards in gymnastics. Pupils do not yet make full use of the ten laptop computers available to them to achieve good standards in ICT.
142. Appropriate supervision is arranged as pupils arrive and leave at the beginning, at the end and during the school day.
143. All staff members have a job description.
144. When judged by modern standards, the school building is inconvenient. The classroom used for the Foundation Phase is inadequate and space is rather limited in another classroom. The school has no hall or dining room so that a classroom has to be used for whole school meetings and to serve food from the nearby kitchen. The fabric of the building is in generally good condition.
145. There are expansive open areas around the school and an adequately sized play area. The school grounds and building are well maintained. Standards of cleanliness are good. The walls are attractive and colourful and promote learning. Part of the land has been set aside for the younger children and an adequate supply of suitable large toys is available for them. The village hall is used for physical education.

146. The school gives value for money.
147. The school receives effective support from UA services such as the psychological service and the ALN support team.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Graded 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

148. The general standard of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs. Pupils make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

Good features

Language, literacy and communication.

149. The language and communication skills of the nursery pupils are good. They talk confidently when participating in activities. The majority listen well to adults and to each other. They show an interest in books and respond well when listening to and seeing a story presented on the interactive whiteboard. With encouragement they ask and answer questions. They enjoy making marks on paper and produce pictures using crayons and paint.
150. The reception class children communicate well. They talk enthusiastically about themselves and their families. They recall stories they have heard previously and retell them accurately. They are ready to talk to adults and to ask and answer questions. They show an interest in books and behave like readers. They read the words which are displayed around the classroom and recognise the names of other children. They form letters independently.

Personal and social development

151. The personal and social development of the nursery pupils is good. They have settled in well in the school and socialise well with other children and adults. They respond well to everyday routines. When playing, they share equipment and take turns courteously. They make good efforts to put on their aprons without support when getting ready to paint.
152. The personal and social development of the reception children is good. They are continuing to build relationships with adults and with other children. They readily undertake responsibilities and concentrate well on their tasks. They make good progress in their ability to work together, showing concern and helping each other.

Mathematical development

153. The early mathematical development of the nursery children is good. They know a number of number rhymes. They classify objects on the basis of colour and match objects with pictures. They understand the terms 'larger' and 'smaller' and 'first' 'next' and 'last' and count to ten and beyond. They develop a good understanding of mathematical language as they discuss the number of children present in their class. They describe some shapes such as square and round.

154. The mathematical development of the reception children is good. They develop a good understanding of number and of mathematical concepts. They count up to 20. They are beginning to understand appropriate mathematical terms such as 'heavy' and 'light'. They identify patterns and can continue a pattern which has been started. They identify some two dimensional [2D] shapes and describe their properties. They are beginning to understand the purpose and value of money.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

155. The nursery children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. They are curious and anxious to observe various aspects of the world around them and make good progress in this area of learning. They talk confidently about the animals of the jungle. They show an early awareness of the effects of the seasons by talking about the need to wear sunglasses and shorts in summer and a scarf, gloves and warm clothing in winter. They make confident use of the interactive white board to form letters and experiment and use instructions to control a moving toy. They play simple games on the computer.
156. Children in the reception class know a great deal about their environment and living things. They investigate animals with eight legs successfully and carry out detailed observations of the patterns on a snail shell and on the characteristics of an elephant's body. They name the animals of the jungle and compare them with farm animals. They collect different kinds of eggs and gather information about animals that lay eggs. With help, they use eggs to make pancakes and egg sandwiches. They know the names of some seasons and their characteristics. They are beginning to acquire technological skills as they play games on the computer and control a moving toy.

Creative development

157. The nursery children's creative development is good. They sing rhymes and songs enthusiastically and respond in a lively manner to an audio tape of jungle sounds. They join in imitative movements such as moving like a row of elephants, and enjoy performing with their peers. They paint and glue to produce mosaics and models, using a variety of materials. They take part in role playing involving members of a family in the play house. They utilise a variety of materials to build a den in the open air.
158. The reception children's creative development is good. They sing songs and rhymes with enthusiasm. They move effectively to musical accompaniment. They select from a range of materials to produce mosaics and patchwork and use paint brushes confidently to produce original paintings. They show increasing imagination as they make hats and masks. With some assistance, they make sandwiches, pancakes and chocolate nests.

Physical development

159. The nursery children's physical development is good. They move confidently and have a good general awareness of space. They display good control of their gross physical skills, such as pedalling and pushing, as they respond to interesting tasks in the play area. Their manipulative skills are developing well; the children use brushes and pencils skilfully.

160. The reception children's physical skills are good. They have increasing control of their bodies and movements. They move confidently in response to instructions. They control their bodies as they move ponderously to imitate the movements of an elephant or copy the slinking movements of a tiger. They respond appropriately to instructions involving spatial relationships, for example 'over', 'through' and 'in front of'. Their detailed manipulative skills are good and they handle small apparatus skilfully.

Shortcomings

There are no significant shortcomings.

Welsh first language

Key Stage 1 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 2 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

161. Almost all the Key Stage 1 pupils express themselves clearly for a variety of purposes and with increasing accuracy. They talk fairly confidently to each other and with adults. Their ability to listen and to follow instructions is good.
162. All the pupils discuss and respond perceptively to the stories they read together. Approximately half the pupils read well. They read to others independently and with appropriate understanding and expression. The remainder read at a level which matches their ability.
163. All the Key Stage 1 pupils write in a variety of ways for different purposes. They include descriptions in their writing and record factual information effectively; their grasp of the basics of spelling and punctuation shows progress.
164. In Key Stage 2, all the pupils listen carefully to presentations and are ready to answer questions and offer comments; a few of them, across the age range, develop their comments confidently. The vocabulary of the majority is adequate enough to enable them to express their opinions effectively. A minority of Y5 and Y6 pupils express their feelings and opinions clearly and coherently and their comments are often mature and appropriate.
165. Approximately half the pupils in Key Stage 2 read fluently and with appropriate expression. By Y5 and Y6, the vast majority express their opinions about events and characters in books.
166. The information gathering skills of all the pupils are developing well. They locate and interpret information skilfully.
167. Pupils make good progress in their use of spelling and punctuation skills. They cope with a range of forms of writing as they use language for a variety of purposes.

Shortcomings

168. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' syntax is stilted, particularly in their use of verb forms. This has a deleterious effect on their progress in oracy and writing.
169. In Y5 and Y6 pupils too few pupils read fluently and with appropriate expression. Most of them do not discuss authors or their preferences confidently.
170. In Key Stage 2, many of the pupils do not exercise sufficient care when they correct their own work.

History

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

Good features

171. In both key stages, the pupils recall previous work, showing an understanding of life and events in the past.
172. In Key Stage 1, all the pupils have an understanding of life in the home a century ago. The work is often stimulated by the use of interesting artefacts and local connections such as buildings and locations of historical interest.
173. Most of the pupils have a clear understanding of life in the middle of the last century and differentiate between the life of ordinary people of that period with present day life.
174. Through interesting stories, the pupils learn effectively about historical events and periods and make interesting comments when comparing the way of life during different periods.
175. Following work undertaken on the theme 'A school in Victorian times', almost all Key Stage 2 pupils have acquired a clear understanding of life in their local area and wider afield.
176. Pupils' ability to offer their own interpretation of historical events is good. They differentiate between fact and legend and offer opinions about the reasons for some historical events as well as the influence of the Celts, the Romans and Life in the Victorian Age on life today.
177. Older pupils' have a good comprehension of the life of a child in Corwen Workhouse and their knowledge about the changes which have occurred in education and society since that period is also good. They use evidence gathered from a log book, artefacts they have collected, photographs of the period and from conducting an interview with an author who has written a book about the period.
178. By the end of the key stage most of the pupils show that they have a good understanding of chronology and the passage of time.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings.

Geography

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

Good features

179. All the pupils, across both key stages, have a good knowledge and understanding of their local area.
180. Key Stage 1 pupils describe the differences between their local area and a contrasting area on the Isle of Struay in Scotland. They make ready comparisons using simple geographical terms such as mountain, lake, bridge, beach and sea. They describe the differences between the two areas and express simple opinions about the advantages of living in one or the other.
181. They use symbols and designs when producing a map of the locality. A good number of pupils successfully locate and identify places on a map of their locality and a map of Fferm Tŷ Gwyn by using simple grid references.
182. Almost all Key Stage 2 pupils have a good level of knowledge about the capital cities of the United Kingdom, the continent of Europe and the rest of the world.
183. All Key Stage 2 pupils make good use of books, Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs and the internet in their studies. They use the eight points of the compass confidently when describing the location of places.
184. Pupils in the senior classes have followed the course of the River Conwy from its source to the sea. This work has encouraged all the pupils to use appropriate geographical terms and has also provided them with opportunities to investigate, discover and interpret.

Shortcomings

185. In Key Stage 2, there is little evidence of work based on data or on identifying or interpreting patterns.

Art

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

Good features

186. Most of the pupils have good control of a variety of media, including paint, pastels, crayons and coloured pencils, and produce a variety of interesting work. Their understanding of pattern and texture increases as they create murals,
187. In Key Stage 1, pupils have access at an early stage to a range of art experiences. They all experiment confidently with different materials to produce work of a good standard including 2D and 3D models.
188. Following a visit to Coleg Llysfasi, Key stage 1 pupils produced a range of work, including weaving and macramé which demonstrate good creativity and imagination.
189. Work of a good standard is produced across the key stages. Pupils are allowed to select resources appropriate to the tasks in which they are involved, and use a variety of techniques skilfully.
190. Key Stage 2 pupils use sketch books which contain interesting and useful work based on investigating line and tone. Many of the pupils discuss art, and the style of well known Welsh artists such as William Morris. They emulate their work effectively, and show an understanding of the characteristics of their patterns.
191. Key Stage 2 pupils carry out detailed observations of the features of the village of Gwyddelwern. They study pictures with care and their finished work reaches a good standard, especially in the colouring work where they use pencils and paint to produce a variety of images.
192. Many of the older pupils discuss and evaluate each other's work confidently as well as assess and improve their own work effectively. They use appropriate vocabulary when describing their investigative work with form, shape, space and texture.

Shortcomings

There are no important shortcomings.

Physical education

Key Stage 1: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

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

Good features

193. All the pupils have a good understanding of the beneficial effect of physical education on health and of the need to work safely during lessons.
194. In Key Stage 1, many of the pupils link a series of movements well, and demonstrate good control of balance.
195. The quality of virtually all the pupils' movement during dance lessons is generally good. Most of them respond adroitly to music, and produce a variety of movements which match the beat of the music.
196. All the pupils take increasing responsibility for planning aspects of the work, They ask pertinent questions in order to solve problems and improve their performance. They are aware of the factors which foster quality.
197. In Key Stage 2, in gymnastics lessons, many Y4, Y5, and Y6 pupils work effectively to create a variety of shapes and a sequence of movement.
198. In football lessons, all Y5 and Y6 pupils, including the girls, demonstrate good knowledge, skill and understanding when manoeuvring a ball, doing so with consistent control and accuracy.
199. All the pupils co-operate well and respect the conventions of fair play, equality and appropriate behaviour.

Shortcomings

200. The lack of apparatus has a deleterious effect on standards in gymnastics, especially in relation to jumping and landing skills.

School's response to the inspection

The school accepts the comments made during the inspection and subsequently included in the report. We will be responding positively to them. The report provides clear guidance about the steps we need to take.

In addition, on behalf of all the people associated with the school, we would like to thank the inspection team members for their professionalism during the inspection. A friendly atmosphere prevailed throughout the inspection period and this was much appreciated.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Bro Elwern
School type	Community
Age- range of pupils	3 - 11
Address of school	Gwyddelwern CORWEN Denbighshire
Post code	LL21 9DF
Telephone number	[01490] 412332

Headteacher	Mr Keith Williams
Date of appointment	April 2007
Chair of governors / Appropriate authority	Mr Glyn Jones
Registered Inspector	Mr Phil Mostert
Dates of inspection	22 –24 June 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	3	3	7	9	3	6	10	5	46

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	1	3	3.3

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	15:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	14
Teacher (ftel): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection			
Term	R	KS1 and 2	Whole school
Spring 2009	93.4	95.3	95.3
Summer 2008	97.3	95.8	95.8
Autumn 2008	79.2	96.2	96.2

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	19%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to the inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008	Number of pupils in Y2	3
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of key stage 1 was fewer than five, summary information is not included		

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008	Number of pupils in Y6	9
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of key stage 2 in was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included		

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by teacher assessment			
In the school	88.9%	In Wales	74.1%

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Four inspectors and the nominee spent the equivalent of 8.5 inspection days at the school and met as a team prior to the inspection.

The inspectors visited:

- 22 lessons or part lessons
- registration, assembly and collective worship sessions.

Members of the inspection team held meetings with:

- staff, governors and 16 parents prior to the inspection;
- senior managers, teachers and ancillary and administrative staff; and the school council.

The team also considered;

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- pupils' attitudes and behaviour;
- 19 responses to the parent questionnaire;
- the response of the Education Authority;
- reports prepared by the school prior to and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' previous and current work, and
- samples of pupils' reports.

Following the inspection, the team held meetings with the school's teaching staff and with the governing body.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Phil Mostert Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key questions 1, 2, 5 and 6 Welsh and physical education. Children under 5.
R. John Roberts Lay Inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3, 4 and 7
John Blake Team Inspector	Key questions 3, 4 and 7 geography, history, art and design.
Len Brookes Peer Assessor	Lesson observation
The headteacher was the school's nominee.	

Contractor: Cwmni Cynnal
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Acknowledgements

The inspectors wish to thank the school's governors, headteacher, staff, pupils, and parents for their willing co-operation during the inspection.