

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Ysgol Talhaiarn
Llanfair Talhaiarn,
LL22 8SD.**

School Number: 6622104

Date of Inspection: 02/03/09

by

**Edward Goronwy Morris
78283**

Date of Publication: 07/05/09

Under Estyn contract number: 1109408

© Queens Printer and Controller of HMSO 2009: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The copyright in the material must be acknowledged as aforementioned and the title of the report specified.

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

Ysgol Llanfair Talhaiarn 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 Llanfair Talhaiarn took place on the 02/03/09 and 03/03/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Edward Goronwy Morris 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 **short** 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	5
Standards	6
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	6
The quality of education and training	7
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	7
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	9
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	11
Leadership and management	12
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	12
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	13
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	14
School's response to the inspection	16
Appendices	17
1 Basic information about the school	17
2 School data and indicators	17
3 National Curriculum assessments results	18
4 Evidence base of the inspection	19
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	20

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Talhaiarn Community Primary School is situated in the village of Llanfairtalhaiarn near Abergele and is maintained by Conwy Education Authority. The school which is naturally bilingual serves the village and the surrounding rural area. Up to 97% of pupils come from homes where English is the main medium of conversation. Eleven per cent of the pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals. This is lower than the local authority's (LA) average of 15 per cent and the all-Wales average of 17.5 per cent. Pupils represent the full ability range. Information from baseline assessments indicates that children's attainment generally on entry to school is around the LA average.
2. There are currently 29 pupils on the school register from reception to Year 6. In addition, five children attend the nursery part-time. Nursery pupils are admitted to school in the academic year in which they are four years old. Six pupils have been identified as having additional learning needs (ALN), including four on school action plus. No pupils are looked after by the LA or receive support in English as an additional language (EAL).
3. The current headteacher in charge has been in post since September 2008. She teaches a class for three days per week. In addition, there is a full-time teacher and one part-time teacher at the school. There has been a significant decline in pupil numbers at the school since it was last inspected in October 2002. The current headteacher is the fourth since the last inspection.

The school's priorities and targets

4. The school aims to create an environment and atmosphere where pupils can grow, develop and mature to become confident individuals, aware of the welfare of others and responsible members of society. It seeks to offer education of the highest possible standard which reflects the requirements of the LA, the government and the individual.
5. The school's priorities and targets for 2008-2009 are outlined in the school development plan (SDP). Priorities include:
 - reviewing curriculum planning in the light of the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements;
 - improving provision for science and music;
 - developing long term/medium term plans for the Welsh language;
 - reviewing accommodation needs;
 - beginning the Healthy School Plan; and
 - ensuring sufficient resources to meet pupils' needs.

Summary

6. Ysgol Talhaiarn succeeds in creating a happy and supportive learning environment where pupils feel secure and respected. Following a period of instability, there are clear signs that the actions taken by the current headteacher in charge are having a positive effect on standards of achievement. Pupils benefit from the staff's dedication and commitment. Relationships within the school are very positive and as a result pupils develop as polite, friendly and confident individuals. Progress since the last inspection has good features which outweigh shortcomings.

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 3
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	Grade 2
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

7. The findings of the inspection team concur with the opinion of the school in its self-evaluation report in two of the seven of the key questions. In the other five the team awarded a lower grade.
8. The number of pupils who take part in national curriculum assessments at the end of key stage 1 is too small to make meaningful comparisons with national data year by year. Statutory teacher assessments in 2008 indicate that 75 per cent of pupils in key stage 2 achieved the core subject indicator (CSI) i.e. the expected level 4 in the three subjects of English or Welsh, mathematics and science. This is slightly below the national average of 75.5 per cent.
9. Consideration of the National Curriculum data over a three year period indicates that, although assessments in both key stages are often above local and national averages, they are generally in the bottom 50 per cent when compared with similar schools. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
10. Regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, most pupils make good progress.

11. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the foundation phase outcomes.
12. Children under five make good progress in their communication skills, in personal and social skills and in Welsh language skills.
13. Good features outweigh shortcomings with regard to pupils' standards and progress in the key skills in key stages 1 and 2. Most pupils make good progress in their listening, reading, numeracy, information communications technology (ICT) and creative skills. Their writing and problem solving skills, however, have shortcomings.
14. Pupils' bilingual competence is good. This is a strength of the school.
15. The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills is good. They understand the importance of keeping healthy and their behaviour is good; this contributes positively and constructively to the quality of life in the school. Attendance and punctuality are good.
16. Although most pupils work well on given tasks, their capacity for working independently is underdeveloped.
17. Pupils' awareness of equal opportunities is good. They display a responsible attitude, as well as respect towards the diversity of other faiths and cultural traditions. They play an active role in the life and work of the local community but their understanding of the world of work is currently underdeveloped.

The quality of education and training

Grades for teaching

18. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	67%	25%	0%	0%

19. These figures are an improvement on the previous inspection. However, they are below the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief inspector (HMCI) in his latest Annual Report for 2007-2008, where the quality of teaching in primary schools in Wales is Grade 1 and 2 in 83 per cent of lessons of which 16 per cent is grade 1.
20. Good teaching was observed in both classes. In the majority of lessons where teaching is good, teachers display good subject knowledge, use resource purposefully and sequence learning effectively. Where lessons have outstanding features they include tasks that stimulate pupils to develop their independent learning skills. Where there are shortcomings lessons lack pace and learning tasks are insufficiently differentiated to meet the range of abilities.

21. Teachers provide very good role models in their use of both Welsh and English. This effectively promotes the development of pupils' bilingual skills.
22. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the quality of the procedures for assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' progress. The school's procedures meet statutory requirements and have recently been strengthened; pupil progress is carefully tracked. As yet, however, the information on individuals is not detailed enough to assist teachers to differentiate work effectively. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in the steps they need to take to plan for their own progress and improvement.
23. The school's curriculum meets legal and statutory requirements and learning experiences meet the needs and well-being of the majority of pupils. The school recognises that current schemes of work are not detailed enough to ensure continuity and progression in every aspect of learning. Recently produced schemes make reference to the development of basic and key skills, however, they have yet to impact consistently on pupil achievement.
24. Pupil experiences are enhanced by a number of out-of-hours and off-site provision. Their personal development, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is fostered very well. Daily acts of collective worship make a positive contribution to these aspects and enrich pupils' experience.
25. The school offers good care and support to all its pupils: this is a strength. Pupils' ALN are very clearly and carefully identified at an early stage. The provision for these pupils is good and conforms to the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice.
26. The school acknowledges and respects diversity well. All pupils are respected and treated fairly.

Leadership and management

27. The current headteacher in charge has in the short time since her appointment brought stability and a sense of direction to the school. She has a clear vision for the future of the school. The impact of the changes, however, has yet to become fully embedded. The governing body (GB) is very supportive but its role in monitoring standards achieved by pupils is underdeveloped. No decision has been taken regarding the future leadership and management of the school.
28. A culture of self-evaluation is developing within the school and the procedures are increasingly inclusive. The school recognises the need to be more systematic in the way it monitors and evaluates performance and how it uses this information to set clear priorities for improvement.
29. Generally, the school is well resourced. The school has sufficient and suitably qualified teachers. Classroom assistants and support and administrative staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Overall, the school has a good supply of teaching and learning resources, although there are some shortcomings in specific subjects. Accommodation is generally adequate for the

number of pupils. However, the outdoor learning environment does not fully meet the needs of children in the foundation phase. Recently introduced budget management enables the head teacher and the governors to keep costs and spending under closer scrutiny. The school gives value for money.

Recommendations

In order to improve the school further, the head teacher, governors and members of staff need to:

- R1 improve standards in the key skills of writing and problem solving;
- R2 improve pupils' capacity to work independently so that they become increasingly responsible for their own learning;
- R3 make better use of assessment to ensure that teaching and learning consistently meet the needs of learners of all abilities;
- R4 further develop schemes of work to ensure continuity, progression and challenge in pupils' learning;
- R5 confirm future leadership and management arrangements;
- R6 strengthen the self-evaluation and school improvement process focusing more specifically on pupils' achievement; and
- R7 work with the LEA to improve the outdoor learning environment for children in the foundation phase.

Note: The school has already identified R1, R2, R3, R4 and R7 as areas for development within its own self-evaluation report and SDP.

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

30. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 2 judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report because the inspection team identified shortcomings in pupils' key skills and in their ability to evaluate their own work. As such the team awarded a lower grade.
31. The number of pupils who take part in national curriculum assessments at the end of key stage 1 is too small to make meaningful comparisons with national data year by year. Statutory teacher assessments in 2008 indicate that 75 per cent of pupils in key stage 2 achieved the core subject indicator (CSI) i.e. the expected level 4 in the three subjects of English or Welsh, mathematics and science. This is slightly below the national average of 75.5 per cent.
32. Consideration of the data over a period of time shows that, although assessments in both key stages are often above local and national averages, they are generally in the bottom 50 per cent when compared with similar schools. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
33. Regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, most pupils make good progress. Those with ALN, including those with SEN, achieve at least as well as expected taking account of their ability and specific needs. Generally pupils make good progress towards meeting their potential and predicted levels of achievement. They are keen and ready to move on to the next stage of their learning.
34. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the foundation phase outcomes. They show positive attitudes to learning, co-operate well together and engage enthusiastically in their learning. They make particularly good progress in their communication skills and in their personal and social skills. Their Welsh language skills develop well.
35. Standards of speaking and listening in both key stage 1 and key stage 2 are good. Pupils listen attentively, speak confidently in discussion and offer contributions freely in both languages. Generally their reading skills progress well across the age range. Most have a very positive attitude to reading and read with appropriate fluency and expression relative to their ages in both languages.
36. Pupils' writing skills have good features which outweigh shortcomings. Across the age range they write imaginatively and creatively. However, their written work is often marred by errors in spelling and punctuation. Handwriting and presentation skills are not yet fully developed by many pupils in key stage 2.
37. Pupils' numeracy, ICT and creative skills develop well throughout the school. Older ones use ICT confidently to research and present information in a

- number of subject areas for example in history and in developing a play about the Pied Piper. Their problem solving skills are less well developed.
38. Pupils' bilingual competence is good. The majority become confident bilingually. This is a strength of the school.
 39. Pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. They settle quickly into their lessons and are eager to participate. However, although most work well on given tasks and show the ability to concentrate for long periods, their capacity for working independently is underdeveloped. They are only beginning to develop an understanding of their strengths, how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to improve their work. Many have yet to develop the confidence to set their own targets for improvement.
 40. Pupil behaviour, both during and outside lessons, is good. They are respectful and courteous to their teachers, support staff and visitors to the school. They are very considerate towards each other during breaks from lessons.
 41. Attendance for the last reporting year was 94 per cent. This is above the LA and all Wales average and compares favourably with similar schools. Virtually every pupil arrives at school on time each day.
 42. Across the school, pupils are making good progress in their personal, social and moral development. They show good moral values and demonstrate these in their work, their relationships and during activities in and around the school. Pupils' spiritual development is good throughout the school.
 43. Pupils' understanding of issues related to equal opportunities and the differences between people in society are good. They recognise, understand and respect diversity of beliefs, attitudes and cultural traditions within a society.
 44. Pupils contribute significantly to events and activities within their local community and develop the skills required for lifelong learning. Their understanding of the world of work is currently underdeveloped. The school is aware of this.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

45. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 2 judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report because the inspection team identified shortcomings in teaching and in the way assessment is used to ensure that learning tasks fully meet individual needs. As such the team awarded a lower grade. This has been identified as an area for development by the school.
46. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
8%	67%	25%	0%	0%

47. These figures are an improvement on the previous inspection, however, they are below the national picture reported by HMCI in his latest Annual Report for 2007-2008 where the quality of teaching in primary schools in Wales is Grade 1 and 2 in 83 per cent of lessons of which 16 per cent is Grade 1.
48. Good teaching was observed in both classes. A particularly strong feature is the way teachers across the age range establish very positive relationships. This encourages pupils to give of their best and all children are valued and treated equally. Pupils with ALN play a full part in learning.
49. Where lessons have outstanding features, they include:
- interesting and lively presentations and tasks that stimulate pupils' interest and motivation including opportunities for them to develop their independent learning skills; and
 - exceptionally good questioning skills which means that pupils make good progress in developing their ability to communicate.
50. In the majority of lessons where teaching is good, good features include:
- clear learning objectives for all pupils;
 - good subject knowledge and suitable tasks which correspond to individuals' needs;
 - well paced lessons in which teachers use resources purposefully and pupils are actively involved in their learning; and
 - appropriate teacher interventions for the age and ability of all pupils.
51. Where shortcomings were noted:
- introductions are overlong, lessons lack pace and there is an over reliance on worksheets;
 - learning tasks are insufficiently differentiated to meet the range of pupil abilities; and
 - pupils are not sufficiently focused on improving their own learning.
52. Teachers actively address the issues of gender, race and ability and promote equality of opportunity for all.
53. Teachers provide very good role models in their use of both Welsh and English. This effectively promotes the development of pupils' bilingual skills.
54. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting pupils' progress. Overall, the school's systems and procedures for assessment have good features that outweigh shortcomings.

55. The 'Travelling Together' booklet is used to record individual pupil progress from nursery to the end of key stage 1. This gives a good indication of the progress pupils have made since starting school. The newly introduced tracking system at key stage 2 covers all the national curriculum subjects and religious education, but as yet the information on individual pupils is not sufficiently detailed to assist teachers to differentiate work effectively.
56. The school's marking policy is clear and indicates the importance of oral and written feedback. Marking is undertaken regularly across the school. Where it is good, particularly in language work, written comments clearly inform pupils of what they need to do in order to improve their work. However, this good practice is not replicated in other subjects. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in the steps they need to take to plan for their own progress and improvement. The school has identified this as an area of development.
57. Portfolios of work are being developed to support teachers' judgements about pupils' levels and standards. Discussions have begun with other local schools to moderate and strengthen assessment at key stage 2.
58. Annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements. They provide information for parents about their children's academic and personal progress. In the best examples specific and clear targets are set for future progress. Opportunities are given for parents to visit the school to discuss their child's progress on parents' evenings. The recently introduced short report completed at the parents' meeting further summarises a child's main achievements and areas for development. Both parents and pupils are invited to comment on the progress made and advice is given on how parents can support their children; the school and the home have found this to be a useful record of the meeting.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

59. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 2 judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report, because the inspection team identified shortcomings in some aspects of planning for continuity and progression.
60. The curriculum and learning experiences meet the needs of the majority of pupils and are equally accessible to all, including those with ALN. Statutory requirements are met.
61. The quality of curriculum planning has improved since the arrival of the new headteacher. The school recognises that current schemes of work are not detailed enough to ensure continuity and progression in every aspect of learning. Recently produced schemes make reference to the development of basic and key skills, however, they have yet to impact consistently on pupil achievement.

62. The curriculum is enhanced by a number of out-of-hours and off-site provision. Educational visits to the school by staff that specialise in music, art and history enrich pupils' experiences. Visits to places of interest such as a Celtic site and places of worship all contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The school intends to enhance this provision by starting gardening, cooking and sports clubs.
63. The school provides good quality personal and social education (PSE) and successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Collective Worship meets statutory requirements and they are special times when the school community comes together to reflect sensitively on the needs of others and on improving their own attitudes and behaviour. There is an appropriate emphasis on Christian values and personal responsibility.
64. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig and activities associated with the Urdd feature prominently in the work of the school and this raises pupils' awareness of the language and culture of Wales. Through various curriculum activities and religious education pupils have opportunities to study other countries such as Botswana, and learn to respect different beliefs and religions.
65. The school is an integral part of the community and has good links with parents. The local rector visits regularly to hold services and pupils further benefit by visiting places of worship and societies in the village. Links with the Ysgol Feithrin, which is located on the school site, are good. Some activities and resources are shared and discussion on pupils' progress and achievement works well. There are regular meetings between the local high school and the primary schools in the area to discuss transitional issues. Pupils who transfer benefit from the 'Bridging Units' that have been devised. The 'immersion programme' and visits by teachers from the secondary school again help pupils who transfer. A supportive partnership exists with Coleg Llandrillo and the University College of Wales, Bangor.
66. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their bilingual skills through a range of school activities.
67. Pupils' awareness of the international dimension and global citizenship has some presence within the educational programme, but is currently under-developed. The school is aware of this. The attention given to sustainable development, within the curriculum and through re-cycling projects has begun but also requires further development.
68. The school introduces the skills required for lifelong learning and effectively promotes the principles of citizenship and community responsibility. Links with industry are underdeveloped.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

69. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
70. The school offers good care and support to all its pupils. Members of staff know them very well and are fully aware of their individual needs and they are committed to ensuring that their well-being and best interests are met. Pupils have the confidence to turn to any member of staff for advice if necessary. The outcome is a school of happy, confident and motivated pupils. Observations of, and discussions with pupils throughout the school demonstrate these qualities clearly.
71. The school has effective arrangements for sharing information and working with parents. The flow and content of letters, including the schedule of projected events, reports and meetings and other information sources, are good. The school has also conducted a research questionnaire for parents and its results are currently being analysed. All parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire consider their children are happy in school and they are very satisfied with the help and guidance their children are given. The school council, which involves all pupils at the school, discusses school matters sensibly and in a democratic way. Its influence on some aspect of the school's life is already evident.
72. There are effective arrangements for making sure that new pupils settle in quickly at school. Administrative and educational support for these pupils is good.
73. Personal support and all aspects of educational guidance are good. Health, disability access and all other welfare needs are good.
74. Pupils' behaviour and performance are well monitored. Policies and the administration of attendance and punctuality are effective.
75. Registration is conducted promptly and efficiently with any absences or lateness recorded and enquired into forthwith. Registration complies with the requirements of National Assembly of Wales Circular 47/06.
76. The school now has appropriate policies for child protection, first aid, fire prevention, health and safety and equal opportunities. These are effective and members of staff are aware of the provisions made. Risk assessments for the school, as well as for educational visits, are made appropriately.
77. Across the school the provision for pupils with ALN is good and responds to the statutory requirements. There are effective systems in place to identify early those children who need additional help. The support provided is good and focuses appropriately on pupils' specific educational needs.

78. In key stage 1 and 2 pupils receive good support in English and mathematics through programmes such as 'Catch Up' and 'Maths Recovery'. All with SEN are fully integrated into the life of the school.
79. Individual education plans (IEP) are of good quality and identify manageable targets for pupils to work towards. Parents of children who have ALN are kept fully informed about targets set and progress made. Steps towards learning goals are monitored carefully and regular reviews take place to which parents are invited. The school makes effective use of a range of external services to support the needs of individual pupils, when the need arises.
80. The school expects high standards of behaviour and does not tolerate inappropriate behaviour. Training is in place to develop the skills of members of staff to take effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination and bullying, if the need arises. In discussion with pupils they said they would be confident to report any incidents of inappropriate behaviour to members of staff in the knowledge that they would be dealt with quickly and fairly.
81. The school has race relations, and diversity policies together with action plans that guide the school's approach to engendering positive attitudes. It ensures that all pupils have the same rights and opportunities and actively strives to ensure that there is no discrimination according to race or gender. Good race relations are promoted and the school recognises and respects diversity.
82. The school has taken reasonable steps to ensure that no disabled pupils would suffer from being treated less favourably.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

83. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 2 judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school has been through a period of significant change since the last inspection. Whilst the current headteacher has in the short time since her appointment brought stability and a sense of direction to the school, the impact of the changes in leadership and management have yet to become sufficiently embedded and sustainable to merit the Grade 2 awarded by the school. As such the team awarded a lower grade.
84. The current head has a clear vision for the future of the school. She has succeeded in re-establishing the confidence of parents and the community. The staff are very committed to the school and the pupils in their care. They work well as a team and have shared values about learning, behaviour and relationships.

85. Appropriate aims and policies have been devised and updated which ensure equality of opportunity for all. These are reflected well in the school's work and ethos. Relationships between members of staff and between members of staff and pupils are very positive and impact well on pupils' personal, social and educational development. The opinions of pupils of all ages are respected.
86. Good consideration is given to local and national initiatives. The school has gained accreditation through the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and is working towards the first Healthy School and Eco Schools awards. Staff are working co-operatively with local schools on the physical education and schools sport (PESS) scheme. Good progress is being made in introducing the foundation phase and in implementing the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements in key stage 2.
87. Recently introduced performance management arrangements have yet to become firmly established. Classroom observation is not a regular feature of school life. The head teacher recognises the need to use classroom observations, monitoring of pupil achievement and opportunities to share good practice more effectively as tools to raise standards.
88. The school meets statutory requirements for reducing teachers' workloads. Teachers have a fair balance of responsibilities and administrative tasks are kept to a minimum.
89. The GB is very supportive of the school and the current headteacher. Governors are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about school activities. The head teacher's reports are comprehensive and governors' visits enable them to gain first hand evidence of the school at work. The GB's role in monitoring the effectiveness of the school's provision and in helping to set the strategic direction of the school is in the early stage of development. It fulfils its legal and statutory requirements. No decision has been taken regarding the future leadership and management of the school.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

90. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
91. The head teacher is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A culture of self-evaluation is developing within the school. The arrangements are still evolving as the staff become more proficient and confident in this aspect of their work. Currently self-evaluations carried out by members of staff are based on informal discussions, reviewing assessments, scrutinising examples of pupils' work and visits by advisers. The school recognises the need to be more systematic in the way it monitors and evaluates performance and how it uses this information to improve teaching and learning. At present the process does

not concentrate specifically enough on evaluating standards achieved by pupils and what needs to be done to improve.

92. Performance data is carefully recorded and effective use is made of the information in some areas, for example in comparing end of key stage 2 assessments with predicted grades based on performance at key stage 1.
93. Current self-evaluation procedures are increasingly inclusive and involve all staff. Governors are aware of the process and occasional questionnaires are sent to parents. Pupils have an opportunity to express their opinions on aspects of school life through the school council.
94. The self-evaluation report produced by the school before the inspection is open and honest. It identifies strengths and areas for development. It is not, however, explicit enough about what needs to be improved. The school acknowledges that the grading in their report does not fully reflect the grade descriptors set out in the Estyn Guidance document. The grades awarded by the inspection team match the school's grades in only two of the seven of the key questions. In the other five the team awarded a lower grade.
95. The SDP sets out a programme covering the period 2008–09. The link between the self-evaluation document and the priorities listed in the SDP is not clear. The key priorities identified are based mainly on reviewing and updating policies and procedures. They do not focus sufficiently on pupil achievement, what needs to be improved and specific performance indicators by which progress can be measured. As a result, the plan does not provide an effective tool for school improvement.
96. Whole school targets set for pupils at the end of each key stage for 2009, based on an assessment of the likely performance of each pupil, are challenging and attainable.
97. There appears to be little evidence that the key issues identified in the previous inspection report in 2003 have been systematically addressed until very recently. After an unsettled period, there are clear signs that the actions taken are having a positive effect on pupils' standards of achievement. Recently produced schemes of work make specific reference to the development of key skills. However, insufficient use is made of assessment to promote higher standards and the school's processes for self-evaluation and planning for improvement remain underdeveloped. This is acknowledged by the school.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

98. The findings of the inspection team do not match the Grade 2 judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report because the inspection team identified shortcomings in aspects of accommodation, resources and financial scrutiny. As such the team awarded a lower grade.

99. The school is well staffed and teachers are suitably qualified to teach all aspects of the school's curriculum. There is a good balance of staff between those who have been at the school for a number of years and those that are fairly newcomers. Induction arrangements for the newly qualified teacher are good and she is well supported by all. There are clear job descriptions for every member of staff. Classroom assistants and support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
100. Effective administrative support is provided which ensures that the day-to-day life of the school runs smoothly and effectively. The caretaking and catering staff all make an important and valuable contribution to the school.
101. Teachers attend relevant training courses to update their knowledge and they use the outcomes of these to improve practice in their classrooms. However, teachers have not yet had the opportunity to observe good practice in other schools.
102. Planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time by teachers meet statutory requirements. All teachers benefit from time away from their classes. The school takes full account of workforce remodelling requirements.
103. Overall, the school has a good supply of teaching and learning resources that stimulate and engage pupils and help them to learn effectively. When necessary, additional resources to support subjects such as religious education and history are provided by the County Library Service. In the past, the school has invested heavily in ICT, but now recognises the need to replace some of the old hardware along with improving resources in science and music.
104. Pupils are taught in three classrooms, one of which is used as the school hall. They are of a good size and suitable for the age and range of pupils at the school. Additional classrooms on the first floor can only be used occasionally because of dampness. The school playground is suitable and safe; it is well marked for a number of leisure and organised games activities. A pagoda provides shelter in hot weather. The absence of a grassed playing field does restrict some sporting activities. The school recognises that the current outdoor learning environment does not fully meet the needs of children in the foundation phase.
105. There are interesting displays and photographs in the classrooms and other areas of the school, which help to create a stimulating learning environment and show appreciation of the pupils' work and effort.
106. Budget management has been a concern in the past, but new arrangements recently put in place enable the head teacher and governors to keep costs and spending under closer scrutiny. Resource allocations are now better matched to priorities in the SDP and the immediate needs of the school. Overall, the school gives value for money.

School's response to the inspection

107. The staff and governors of Talhaiarn School, after studying the results of the inspection, are happy to note that the report is fair, positive and constructive.
108. The inspection was a developmental process that involved a professional and fruitful dialogue. Opportunities were provided to display the appropriate evidence, to support views and to express opinions on different aspects. We felt that the role of the nominee had been a positive one in the inspection process.
109. The inspection identified many positive elements. We were very pleased that the school successfully creates a happy and supportive teaching and learning environment where the children feel safe and respected. Pupils' good behaviour was noted as well as the fact that they are friendly, confident and courteous. The inspection emphasised the successful development of pupils' bilingual competence. This reflects the hard work and dedication of all members of staff and the school community.
110. We were pleased to note that five of the inspection recommendations are identified in our self-evaluation report and in our school development plan. We are confident that we can address the recommendations and that we can move the school forward to reach higher standards.
111. In Talhaiarn School there is a genuine feeling of pride in all that we accomplish. The inspection provided the school with the opportunity to look at every aspect of the life and work of the school, and the preparation of the self-evaluation report was a positive process as we noted the current successes of the school. This reflected the self-evaluation culture that is now embedded in the life of the school.
112. The inspection has reinforced our strengths and noted clearly the areas that we need to improve further.
113. Copies of the school action plan, in response to the inspection recommendations, will be sent to all parents. The governing body's annual report to parents will include a report on the school's progress in relation to the inspection recommendations.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Talhaiarn
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11
Address of school	Church Street Llanfair Talhaiarn, Abergele. Conwy
Postcode	LL22 8SD
Telephone number	01745 720242

Head in charge	Mrs Eifiona Price Williams
Date of appointment	1.09.08
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Hayley Evans
Registered inspector	Mr Goronwy Morris
Dates of inspection	2/3.03.09

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	2.5	1	10	2	2	2	5	7	31.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	2	1	2.4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	11.6:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	N/A
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	N/A
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	15.5:1
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.2:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	89	97	95
Summer 2008	92	89	93
Autumn 2008	91	94	94

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	11%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008	Number of pupils in Y2	2
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 2009			Number of pupils in Y6					12			
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	67	17
		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	0	50	25	25
		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	0	25	42	33
		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	25	75	0
		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	75%	In Wales	75.5%

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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent five inspection days at the school. Additionally, a peer assessor took a full part in the process over the inspection period. The head teacher attended team meetings and acted as nominee on the inspection team.

The inspectors visited:

- 12 lessons or parts of lessons;
- every class; and
- daily acts of collective worship.

Members of the team met at the start of the inspection and with:

- members of staff, governors and parents prior to the inspection; and
- the head teacher, teachers, support staff, the school council and groups of pupils during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-assessment report;
- 11 responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation prepared by the school prior to and during the inspection; and
- a wide range of pupils' previous and present work.

After the inspection, meetings were held with members of staff and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Members	Responsibilities
Mr.Goronwy Morris Registered Inspector	Context Summary and Recommendations Key questions 1, 2, 5 and 6
Mr William Owen Lay Inspector	Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7
Mr Merfyn Lloyd Jones Team Member	Key question 3, 4 and 7; and contributions to Key Question 1 and 2
Mrs Anne Marie Collins Peer Assessor	Contributions to all aspects
Mrs Eifiona Price Williams Nominee	Contributions to all questions by providing information.

Acknowledgement

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

Contractor:

ELLIS Cymru
Jasmine Enterprise centre
Unit 1
Treseder Way
Cardiff
CF5 5BQ