

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Ysgol Mair Catholic Primary School,
St Margaret's Drive,
Rhyl,
Denbighshire.
LL18 2HY**

School Number: 6633315

Date of Inspection: 26/01/09

by

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Ysgol Mair Catholic Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Ysgol Mair Catholic Primary School took place between 26/01/09 and 29/01/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by Dr Jim Hewitt, 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 Ysgol Mair is a Catholic Voluntary Aided primary school which caters for pupils aged between three and eleven years of age. It is located in the southern part of the seaside town of Rhyl in Denbighshire and serves the parishes of Rhyl, Prestatyn, Towyn and Abergele. The majority of pupils are of the Catholic faith, although 17 per cent are from other Christian denominations and 15 per cent are from non-Christian homes. A significant percentage of pupils (17 per cent) live in the south-west of Rhyl which has been described as one of the most deprived areas in Wales and is a Communities First Area. Overall, pupils come from a mixture of advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds. The school was opened in 1955. It had additional building development in the 1960s and major remodelling in 1993.
- 2 There are 328 pupils on roll including 10 pupils currently attending the Local Authority [LA] funded Language Resource Provision [LRP] for infant pupils, who have speech and language difficulties, residing in the Rhyl area. There are 12 mixed-ability classes for pupils in each year group from reception age to Year 6; two of these are mixed-age classes. There is also a Nursery providing either morning and afternoon sessions for 38 children. The overall number of pupils has remained steady with a slight decline in 2008.
- 3 Intake into the Nursery is on a termly basis following a child's 3rd birthday. Children begin full-time education in the Reception classes in the September following their 4th birthday. Baseline assessment, undertaken when children join the Nursery is below LA averages for social, emotional and language attainment.
- 4 There are 18 full-time equivalent teachers and 13 full-time equivalent teaching assistants at the school. The current head teacher was appointed in January, 2002 following the retirement of the previous post holder.
- 5 The school identifies 77 pupils (24 per cent) as having additional learning needs [ALN] which is well above national averages; of these, 8 pupils have a statement outlining their special educational needs [SEN]. The National Curriculum [NC] is not modified for any pupil and no pupils are disapplied from it. A quarter of the pupils (25 per cent) are entitled to free school meals which is well above LA and national averages. Three pupils are 'looked after' by the LA. Five pupils have been excluded over the past 12 months.
- 6 English is the home language of many of the pupils (83 per cent). A fifth of the pupils (20 per cent) have English as an additional language [EAL] and either come from families of mixed ethnic origin or from a non-British background. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language.
- 7 In 2008, the school gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark 2, the Eco Schools Award, the Healthy Schools Award Phase 1 and the North Wales Champion School Award for Community Links in developing the school nature garden.
- 8 The school was last inspected in January, 2003.

- 9 A separate inspection of denominational education, Canon 806 [under section 50 of the Education Act, 2005] was made on behalf of the Bishop of Wrexham during the course of this inspection.

The school's priorities and targets
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- 10 Mission Statement:
Byddwch Lawen, Cadwch y Ffydd. Be joyful, Keep the Faith.
"We are a Catholic School which endeavours to be a community. Demonstrating the Love of God in action. We support one another in the development of individual talents, knowledge and skills to their full potential since we believe we are all part of God's family." 'Do not be afraid for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are mine.' Isaiah 43:1.
- 11 The main priorities for 2008/9 are to:
- continue to raise standards for Nursery and Reception pupils by implementing the Foundation Phase;
 - continue to raise standards for Key Stage 2 pupils by implementing the new NC Orders, 2008 and focussing on a skill-based approach to teaching and learning; and
 - develop further appropriate assessment and record-keeping procedures; target-setting procedures and pupils' self-assessment.
- 12 The general school aims identified in the School Development Plan are to promote a Christian ethos at all times throughout the school and endeavour to:
- develop pupil and staff potential to the full;
 - ensure a secure, caring and friendly environment;
 - provide experience of the wider community and prepare children for transition;
 - ensure successful delivery of the Foundation Phase and National Curriculum;
 - promote good standards of discipline and behaviour;
 - encourage respect, consideration and understanding for others;
 - provide good quality homework and extra-curricular activities;
 - maintain a good pastoral care system, and
 - maintain an active partnership and links with parents and the local community.

Summary

- 13 Ysgol Mair Catholic Primary is a good school. The positive attitudes of pupils and the good standards they achieve is the direct result of the dedication of its staff and the school's positive family ethos. The school is in a strong position to raise standards even further.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

- 14 The standards achieved by pupils in the lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5%	84%	11%	0%	0%

- 15 These percentages are higher than the percentages published in the latest Annual Report by HMCI for 2007/8 where standards are good or better in 84 per cent of lessons but they fall below the percentage of lessons reported as being outstanding.

Areas of learning for under-fives

Area	Nursery	Reception
Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity	Grade 2	Grade 2
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh language development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 16 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.

Grades for standards of achievement in subjects inspected

Inspection Area	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Under-fives	Grade 2	

- 17 Throughout the school, standards in the key skills of numeracy and communication are good. Pupils also achieve good standards when using their creative skills. However, there are shortcomings in the standards of pupils' skills in using information and communication technology to improve learning in other subjects. There are also some shortcomings in the progress pupils make in developing their bilingual skills.
- 18 End of Key Stage 1 [KS1] teacher assessment results for 2008 are down on the previous year's. The percentage of pupils gaining level 2 exceeds national averages for mathematics, matches them for science but is below them in English. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher level 3 is below national averages in all three subjects. When compared to schools of a similar type in Wales (those placed in a similar free school meal band), the school is in the upper 50 per cent in mathematics and science and in the lower 50 per cent in English. Boys slightly outperform girls in science.
- 19 End of Key Stage 2 [KS2] assessment results for 2008 are an improvement on previous years'. Results match national averages for the percentage of pupils gaining level 4. The percentage of pupils gaining level 5 is above the averages in mathematics but below them in English and science. When compared to schools of a similar type in Wales, the school is in the upper 50 per cent in all three subjects. Boys generally outperform girls in mathematics. Boys also outperform girls gaining level 4 in English, but girls outperform boys in gaining the level 5. Science results are similar.
- 20 Overall, pupils progress well in their learning as they move through the classes. Pupils with additional learning needs [ALN] based both in mainstream classes and the Language Resource Provision [LRP] make good progress in relation to their varying needs and abilities. Pupils who have English as an additional language [EAL] also achieve and progress well. However, more able pupils are not consistently challenged in lessons and so do not always achieve their potential. Further, the majority of pupils are insufficiently involved in evaluating their own performance and identifying what they need to do to improve. These are shortcomings.
- 21 Pupils make good progress in their personal, spiritual, social, moral and wider development. Their behaviour is outstanding. They show great respect for others from a wide range of different cultures and backgrounds. Pupils show enthusiasm and application in relation to their work and collaborate well. However, their skills in independent learning are underdeveloped.
- 22 Attendance rates are slightly above national averages but slightly below local averages and Welsh Assembly Government targets.

The quality of education and training

Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6%	77%	17%	0%	0%

- 23 These percentages match those published in the latest Annual Report by HMCI for 2007/8 where the quality of teaching is good or better in 83 per cent of lessons but they fall below the percentage of lessons reported as being outstanding.
- 24 Teachers' subject knowledge, understanding of recent curriculum developments, lesson planning and use of a range of strategies and resources to motivate and engage pupils is good. The good relationships between pupils and all staff have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Teachers are developing their understanding of teaching EAL and now have the opportunity to become specialists in this field themselves. The school's systems of assessment, recording and reporting meet all statutory requirements. However, as the school has identified, they require further refinement to inform teaching and learning most effectively and provide focussed and challenging targets for the school.
- 25 The school provides equal access to a range of good learning opportunities for all pupils, including those with ALN and those who have EAL. However, teachers do not always extend more able pupils sufficiently. The school is very successful in tackling social disadvantage, challenging stereotyping and in promoting equal opportunities.
- 26 The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and meets the needs and interests of the full range of pupils in the school. It fully incorporates recent developments such as the Foundation Phase and the new curriculum orders, 2008. It meets all statutory requirements. The school has made good progress in developing the use of key skills across the curriculum although there are shortcomings in the provision for information and communication technology and for bilingualism.
- 27 The quality of provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good and enriched by the good links with community. Schemes of work are well planned to incorporate *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is outstanding. The school provides a good range of learning experiences beyond the National Curriculum including out-of-school learning, work-related education, and the promotion of sustainable development and global citizenship. However, the promotion of pupils entrepreneurial skills is underdeveloped.
- 28 The school provides excellent care, support and guidance to ensure the well-being of its pupils. Staff do their utmost to create a 'family' atmosphere and to ensure that pupils' pastoral and educational needs are fully met. Induction, monitoring and transition arrangements for pupils of all nationalities are exemplary. Pupils feel secure and valued. Policies and procedures to ensure equal opportunity, racial equality and full inclusion for pupils with disabilities are outstanding.
- 29 The provision for meeting the additional learning needs of pupils throughout the school is well managed by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator [SENCo]. Effective diagnosis and intervention, good use of outside agencies, together with

strong support from staff ensures that all pupils are fully included in the life and work of the school. Very good policies and procedures are in place to monitor attendance, health and safety, child protection and complaints and, as part of the *Welsh Healthy Network of Schools*, the school is successful in promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Leadership and management

- 30 The leadership and management of the school is good. The school's broad religious and educational aims underpin all aspects of school life. The head teacher provides clear direction and, through personal example, has built a committed and dedicated team with a shared sense of purpose. He is ably supported by the deputy head teacher in this. The senior management team [SMT] display a good understanding of where the school is now and how it can continue to improve. However the SMT is currently understrength and its distribution of responsibilities needs review.
- 31 Subject co-ordinators undertake their responsibilities with commitment and enthusiasm. The support they provide to colleagues is reflected in pupils' improved standards. Comprehensive arrangements for the professional development of all staff has provided them with the skills to set and meet increasingly challenging targets.
- 32 The governing body provides good support. Governors ensure that through a range of appropriate committees all statutory requirements are met. They are well informed and effectively involved in determining the school's strategic direction and meeting identified priorities. The governing body discharges its duties effectively.
- 33 The school is developing a strong culture of evaluation which increasingly engages all stakeholders. Areas for development identified in the self-evaluation report translate into targets in the school development plan. However, the plan does not always clearly indicate priorities nor provide a sharp focus on how they might be best addressed. Nevertheless, identified strategies for improvement have been well resourced and resulted in significant improvements in standards and provision.
- 34 The inspection team agrees with the grades given by the school in six of the seven key questions but identifies outstanding features in key question 4 and so awarded the higher grade 1 in this instance. Several issues identified by the school for further attention are similar to those identified by the inspection team.
- 35 The overall provision for staffing, accommodation and resources is good. There are sufficient, suitably-qualified, committed and experienced teachers to deliver every aspect of the curriculum. Dedicated, enthusiastic teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school is well resourced for all subjects and the accommodation is spacious and appropriate.
- 36 The head teacher and governing body carefully monitor the work of the school to ensure spending decisions match identified priorities. The school makes economic and effective use of available finances to improve the quality of teaching and so raise standards. Pupils make good progress, achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school has effectively addressed key issues identified in the previous inspection relating to the raising of standards and provision. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

Recommendations

- 37 In order to maintain and build on recent improvements, the school should:
- R1 Consolidate current good practice and continue to raise standards in all subjects*.
 - R2 Develop independent learning by improving standards in the key skill of information and communication technology and also improve pupils' bilingual skills to ensure progression*.
 - R3 Build on the recent achievements of Senior Management Team in planning for improvement by further rationalising their strategic role.
 - R4 Embed assessment procedures and systems to track pupils' progress and ensure that the information gained is used rigorously to raise standards; particularly with more able and talented pupils*.
 - R5 In conjunction with the Advisory Service, continue to develop the school's expertise in meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

*The school has identified this as an area for improvement in its current school development plan.

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 38 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 39 Pupils standards of achievement in the lessons observed are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
5%	84%	11%	0%	0%

- 40 These figures exceed the percentages published in the latest Annual Report by HMCI for 2007/8 where standards are reported as being good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 84 per cent of lessons but fall below the figure of 12 per cent of lessons reported as being outstanding (grade 1). However, percentages are higher than those reported

during the previous inspection. There is good achievement and progress at all levels in the school.

Areas of learning for under-fives

Area of learning	Nursery	Reception
Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity	Grade 2	Grade 2
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 2	Grade 2
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Welsh language development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Creative development	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 41 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.

Grades for standards in the subjects inspected

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
Mathematics	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Design Technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
History	Grade 2	Grade 2
Art	Grade 2	Grade 2
Under-fives	Grade 2	

- 42 The subject grades awarded for science, design technology and art are higher in both key stages than those awarded at the previous inspection. The grades awarded for mathematics and history are the same as the previous inspection. Overall, standards for the under-fives remain good.
- 43 Baseline assessment, undertaken when children join the Nursery, is below LA averages for social, emotional and language attainment. School records show that children in Nursery and Reception classes make good progress during their time in early years and achieve well.
- 44 The school produces realistic targets at KS2 for improvement in the core subjects. These are agreed annually with the LA. Whole school targets are based on pupils' individual targets and on ongoing assessment. Nearly all pupils achieve these.
- 45 Children under-five and pupils in both key stages achieve good standards with no important shortcomings in their communication skills. They speak confidently and express their ideas well, understanding and using relevant vocabulary appropriately. Children and pupils of all abilities have good listening skills, which are well developed in all areas of the curriculum. They respond to requests, questions and instructions appropriately and listen carefully to what others have to say when working in groups. They apply their developing reading skills well to a wide range of different texts.

Children and pupils write appropriately and accurately for their age for a variety of purposes in a range of different contexts.

- 46 Children under-five and pupils across the school make good progress and achieve good standards in numeracy. They work accurately and methodically, and show increasing competence in calculating, measuring and communicating in a variety of situations and subjects.
- 47 Children under-five develop good problem-solving skills which they apply effectively to a wide range of learning situations. There are also good examples of older pupils using organisational and decision-making skills; for example, in the development of the school garden but, overall, pupils' problem-solving skills are underdeveloped in KS1 and KS2. Further, most pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their capacity for independent study.
- 48 The application of the key skill of information and communication technology to develop independent research skills and to present information effectively is underdeveloped across the school. Although many pupils use computers confidently to practise spelling rules and multiplication, few pupils are able to use information and communication technology to extend and enrich their work in other subjects. This is a shortcoming.
- 49 Nearly all pupils achieve good standards in creative skills and have received many awards for dance, music, art and craft at local and national levels in the Urdd Eisteddfod.
- 50 Overall, children under-five make good progress in their bilingual skills. KS1 pupils listen very well and speak with good pronunciation and understanding of routine questioning and commands. Pupils in KS2 respond positively to opportunities to speak in Welsh and have a generally good idea of basic vocabulary. However, in both key stages, there are shortcomings in the progress pupils make in developing their knowledge of sentence patterns and vocabulary. Pupils in the LRP and those with EAL make good progress overall relative to their ability. They show good understanding and confidently use a range of basic vocabulary.
- 51 End of KS1 teacher assessment results for 2008 are similar to local and national averages for science, exceed them for mathematics, but are below them in English and the core subject indicator, which is the percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in all three core subjects. Results over previous years have fluctuated, however, they are generally down on the results for 2007. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher level 3 is below local and national averages in all three subjects.
- 52 When the school's results are compared to schools of a similar type (those placed in a similar free school meal band in Wales) the school is in the upper 50 per cent in mathematics and science and the lower 50 per cent in English and the core subject indicator.
- 53 In Science, boys slightly outperform girls in gaining at least a level 2 and in gaining the higher level 3. Boys' and girls' results in English and mathematics are fairly similar. School targets for KS1 were attained.

- 54 End of KS2 assessment results for 2008 show good improvement on previous years'. The school is performing in line with local and national averages in each of the core subjects and in the core subject indicator, which is the percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in all three subjects. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher level 5 is above the averages in mathematics and science but below them in English. In preceding years, when compared to similar schools in Wales, the school has been in the lower 50 per cent but last year improved its position to the upper 50 per cent in each subject and in the core subject indicator. School targets at KS2 were met.
- 55 In looking at the relative performance of boys and girls in KS2, boys generally outperform the girls in gaining at least a level 4 in English and mathematics and the higher level 5 in mathematics. Girls outperform the boys in gaining the level 5 in English. The performance of boys and girls in science is similar. Results for pupils 'looked after' by the local authority match the average results for the school.
- 56 Lesson observation, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of previous and current work show that, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background, pupils make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in all subjects. Sustained improvement and good results are evident in nearly all areas of pupils' work.
- 57 Pupils with ALN achieve good standards and progress well in relation to their varying needs. Pupils with SEN in the LRP achieve standards commensurate with their abilities and perform well when they integrate for specific lessons in mainstream classes. They enjoy their lessons and understand their need for support. Pupils with EAL achieve results which match or are higher than the school's average results.
- 58 Pupils with ALN in mainstream classes or those who display potential behavioural problems make good progress towards the targets set for them. However, pupils of above average ability are not consistently challenged and extended in all lessons, and many make insufficient progress. This is a shortcoming.
- 59 Overall, in relation to their varying abilities, age and background, pupils achieve the realistic targets set for them and most pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential, attaining agreed learning goals and moving on to the next stage in their education. However, the academic targets being set are not always sufficiently challenging nor focussed on the needs of particular cohorts or groups of pupils as they progress through the school.
- 60 Although most pupils have a good awareness of their current levels of achievement, the majority do not evaluate their own performance nor plan with the teacher how they can improve. Pupils are given targets for improvement but these frequently are very general and not all pupils are familiar with the process. Systems for engaging pupils in a dialogue about their own learning to help them establish a good understanding of the work they are doing and what they need to do to improve are underdeveloped. This is a shortcoming.
- 61 Pupils make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and in their moral and wider development. Throughout the school, pupils show a positive attitude to work and enthusiasm for learning. They make valuable verbal contributions to lessons and answer confidently in question and answer sessions. Pupils of all ages

engage in open discussion readily and listen closely and consider carefully what others are saying. Their ability to work co-operatively in pairs or small groups is good.

- 62 In all aspects of school life, pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They move sensibly around the school at all times. After break and lunch, pupils walk in to the buildings in a disciplined manner under the guidance of school prefects and staff. The school is a very orderly community. Pupils are polite, well mannered and greet visitors in a sensible and courteous manner. In the classroom, pupils show respect to fellow pupils and to all staff. The high regard and respect pupils show for each other and adults creates a very positive learning environment. Their spiritual development is outstanding.
- 63 Pupils undertake their responsibilities conscientiously as members of the school council, of the eco-committee; or as "buddies" on the playground trying to ensure that no one feels left out or that they are being bullied. Pupils from a very young age understand what to do should there be any bullying and report it appropriately. Class discussions and 'circle time' show that pupils of all abilities understand the benefit of positive relationships and the need to develop empathy for one another. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong.
- 64 Pupils show a good awareness of equal opportunities issues and a great respect for diversity of life both in their own school environment and in the wider multi-cultural society. They develop racial awareness through a variety of activities including 'International Week' and through stories told during collective worship. They show positive attitudes to different cultural traditions, values and beliefs evident in the wider society. Older pupils are becoming good global citizens with a good understanding of sustainable development. Pupils show a sense of belonging and growing understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales through *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*.
- 65 Pupils take part in many community activities. Their art work has been included in a prominent sea-front location and groups and individuals participate enthusiastically in cultural events such as the Urdd Eisteddfod. Many pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of the world of work through contact with visitors to the school. However, this aspect is currently underdeveloped.
- 66 The head teacher has introduced rigorous procedures to monitor and encourage good attendance and punctuality and there is clear evidence that these procedures are having a positive impact. Attendance rates for the three terms prior to the inspection are now just below local averages and Welsh Assembly Government targets – but above the all-Wales averages. This is a significant improvement. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start on time. Registration is conducted electronically and in accordance with regulations.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

67 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.

68 The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6%	77%	17%	0%	0%

69 These percentages match the percentages published in the latest Annual Report by HMCI for 2007/8 where the quality of teaching is reported as being good or better (grade 1 and 2) in 83 per cent of lessons but fall below the figure of 16 per cent of lessons reported as being outstanding (grade 1). However, these figures exceed the percentages reported during the previous inspection.

70 Where the quality of teaching was judged to be grade 1, the outstanding features include:-

- very high expectations of achievement and behaviour based upon very positive working relationships with the pupils;
- the use of stimulating activities and strategies to engage pupils totally in the learning process;
- the delivery of their lessons with pace and energy;
- the use of probing questions to challenge pupils at all levels of ability; and
- the ability to modify their planned lessons in order to adapt to unforeseen circumstances and responses.

71 In the majority of lessons where teaching is good, members of staff:-

- plan well and use of a wide range of resources which are appropriate to pupils' age and ability;
- make learning objectives clear at the outset and consolidate them during the lesson;
- build effectively on previous learning and incorporate pupils' own experiences and contributions effectively into the lessons;
- give clear instructions and explanations and provide positive feedback;
- deliver lessons at a brisk pace to meet deadlines;
- use a range of strategies and intervene appropriately to keep pupils focussed and on task; and use outside agencies and voluntary support to good effect, and
- ensure that the more confident and more reticent pupils participate equally.

72 In those lessons where shortcomings were identified, members of staff:-

- do not explain learning objectives sufficiently clearly;
- do not give sufficiently clear explanations and instructions to pupils;
- do not provide lessons with appropriate pace and challenge;
- do not take opportunities to develop pupils' key skills, particularly ICT skills;

- do not challenge and extend more able and talented pupils; and
 - do not ensure that pupils are consistently and actively learning.
- 73 Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and are well informed about recent developments such as the new curriculum orders, 2008 and the Foundation Phase. Detailed schemes of work assist teachers in planning sequences of lessons so that objectives build on previous learning. All teachers plan their lessons carefully, and plans indicate where activities and resources have to be adapted to suit pupils who learn at different rates. The enthusiasm of many teachers for promoting their specialist subjects is a notable feature of the school.
- 74 In the early years' classes, teaching is consistently good, with all opportunities to develop children's independent learning skills fully exploited. All staff make significant contributions to children's learning. Planning successfully incorporates the philosophies of the Foundation Phase.
- 75 Teachers and teaching assistants in KS1 and in KS2 know their pupils well. Teaching assistants are very effective and provide very good support and guidance to individual pupils and groups of pupils. They have a clear understanding of their role and collaborate well with teachers in assessment, planning and classroom practice.
- 76 Teachers work hard to ensure that all learners are valued and treated equally. Their support for pupils with ALN is good. Pupils of different racial and cultural backgrounds are fully included in all aspects of lessons. Pupils with disabilities are fully included in all aspects of school life. Teachers have built very supportive and productive working relationships with their pupils. There are clear expectations of high standards of behaviour and achievement. In dealing with rare instances of poor pupil behaviour, teachers use a systematic and consistent approach to discipline.
- 77 The school has a high percentage of children whose first language is other than English or Welsh. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils are fully included and benefitting from the lessons. Pupils with EAL and school staff receive valuable support from specialist EAL teachers. The staff have made considerable progress in developing their own expertise in this area and are in a strong position to develop their skills further to incorporate and utilise the specialist techniques into their teaching repertoire.
- 78 Not all teachers are equally confident in speaking and teaching Welsh. Consequently, the development of pupils' bilingual skills varies widely. Although teachers make good use of incidental Welsh in registration, give simple commands in Welsh and provide good models of the language, insufficient attention is paid to consistently promoting progression.
- 79 The school meets all statutory requirements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress. Whole school assessment procedures have many good features but there are some shortcomings which the school has started to address. Where a particular cohort or group of pupils have been identified as having areas of weakness, the school has begun to introduce systems to project both short and long

term targets and subsequently applying appropriate intervention strategies. As the school has identified, this is an area for development.

- 80 Teachers have a good picture of the standards achieved by the pupils. Internal moderation has supported teachers' understanding of the levels expected of pupils at the end of each key stage. Core subject coordinators are developing good links with local primary and secondary schools to moderate work and ensure standardisation. Systems for assessing and measuring progress in the foundation subjects are developing. All subject areas have well-developed subject portfolios to support these aspects. Class teachers keep manageable records in assessment and SEN files along with individual educational programmes, ongoing records of pupil progress, as well as other pupil information.
- 81 Procedures for assessment for the under-fives pupils entering the system are effective in gathering data on individuals. Individual 'Pupil Profiles' are valuable sources of information. However, the use of tracking sheets is at an early stage of development. Information gained from the Early Years assessment to track different cohorts of ability or need, identify appropriate realistic and challenging targets and subsequently provide specific intervention is insufficiently developed; because of the differing backgrounds and abilities of pupils entering the school each year, this is particularly important.
- 82 The school analyses data from end of key stage assessments and other commercial schemes and is using this to inform teaching and learning and to set targets for the school. However, systems for planning for continuity and progression through the school for individual pupils, different ability groups, different racial groups and annual cohorts of pupils although having an impact lack rigour and consistency. The school has identified this as an area for development and further recognises that the use of an electronic tracking system would greatly enhance its performance.
- 83 Hence, the quality of planning to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds is inconsistent. Generally, the provision for pupils with SEN and ALN is good. The provision for pupils who have English as an additional language, where it is informed by sound advice from the EAL service, is good. However, not all lessons are as well informed. Similarly, in some lessons, due account is taken to provide stimulating and challenging activities for the more able and talented pupils but, in many instances, this is not the case.
- 84 The school has a detailed marking policy and day-to-day marking clearly acknowledges pupil achievement. However, the use of diagnostic marking and continual assessment to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work and make progress is inconsistent. Rigorous formative assessment opportunities are insufficiently linked to pupil targets. All pupils have targets in core subjects but a minority of them are not familiar with the procedures.
- 85 The effective use of 'Assessment for Learning' strategies, such as developing pupil self assessment, peer evaluation and a focus on jointly-discussed learning objectives is underdeveloped.

- 86 Teachers inform parents and carers about their children's progress at parents' evenings and through written annual reports. The end-of-year reports for pupils are comprehensive, clear and informative. Parents and carers find the information they receive on their children's progress to be helpful. However, parents and pupils are not given the opportunity to comment in writing about the annual pupil report.

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

- 87 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 88 The school caters effectively for the wide range of pupils' needs and interests. It provides equal access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum which fully meets the statutory requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government including those for religious education and collective worship. It is well planned to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum and further enhanced and enriched by many purposeful and practical extra-curricular activities. The curriculum for pupils with ALN and SEN in both mainstream and in the LRP is good and well managed. Provision for pupils with EAL is very good. The school uses the expertise of outside agencies well to access and supplement the curriculum for all pupils.
- 89 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes. Children enjoy a good range of learning opportunities and experiences that are well matched to their stage of development and learning needs and are notably enriched by the use of the outdoor learning environment.
- 90 The head teacher and staff are making good progress in introducing and reviewing policies and schemes of work in line with the new curriculum orders, 2008. Revisions are more advanced in some subjects than in others. Schemes of work are compiled collaboratively by teams of teachers whose produce detailed plans in order to ensure that learning builds on previously acquired skills and knowledge. Sex education is provided in line with the school's policy.
- 91 The school has made good progress in developing the use of key skills of communication and numeracy across the curriculum in all subjects and this has been instrumental in raising standards in those subjects. However, insufficient provision is made for pupils across the school to make progress in the key skill of information and communication technology. Further, curriculum plans in KS1 and KS2 do not adequately allow pupils to develop independent thinking and problem-solving skills
- 92 These are shortcomings.
- 93 Schemes of work in most subjects are well planned to include *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*, ensuring that the language, history and culture of Wales is well promoted. Pupils visit Castell y Waun when studying Welsh history, enjoy performing Welsh songs and

dances, and study the art of Kyffin Williams and other Welsh artists. The school receives good support from the LA's Athrawes Fro to enhance the teaching of Welsh across the school. However, the school's provision for the promotion of pupils' bilingual skills and their use of Welsh during school routines is limited. There is insufficient planning to ensure pupils progression. This is a shortcoming.

- 94 Pupils of all abilities benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include a variety of musical, dance, sporting and cultural activities. The clubs are well supported and enjoyed by both boys and girls and pupils gain valuable knowledge and skills from them. The school has achieved considerable success when participating at local and national level in the Urdd Eisteddfod. Residential visits to outdoor pursuits centres further develop pupils personal and social skills. The school welcomes a variety of artists, sculptors and other visitors who bring specialised expertise to the school.
- 95 The school provides good learning experiences which successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Social development is fostered well in all aspects of school life and there is a strong emphasis on pupils showing consideration for each other. Recently, the school has made good progress in its provision for personal and social education. In particular, there are good developments in the vocational, environmental and health elements of the scheme.
- 96 There are many opportunities for pupils to develop an appreciation of their own culture and that of others through frequent visits from members of the community and planned opportunities to experience other faiths and cultures in geography and religious education. The school uses the diverse range of background and culture of the pupils themselves as a valuable teaching resource for broadening their awareness and tolerance of each other.
- 97 The school makes a strong effort to foster positive values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice. Collective worship fully meets statutory requirements and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. The quality of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is an outstanding feature. A strong Catholic ethos underpins the life and work of the school and provides a framework for all pupils to bring meaning and purpose into their lives.
- 98 The school has developed firm and effective partnerships with parents, the local community, and with other schools, colleges and teacher training organisations. Parents are highly supportive of the school and are generally well informed through the provision of regular newsletters. Parents are made welcome into the school to discuss any concerns they have. The school has good links with several community groups which support major school projects such as the design, construction and maintenance of the nature garden. The school has productive links with other local primary schools and there are excellent links with the local secondary school to ensure that pupils' transition to the next stage of learning is smooth and effective. The school also provides work experience opportunities to secondary-age pupils and training for students from local colleges who are undertaking vocational qualifications.

- 99 Work-related education is well established throughout the school. The community policeman, fire service and school nurse are among the many visitors who contribute towards pupils' knowledge of the world of work. Last year, the whole school had the opportunity to design 'fish face heads' as part of a project to rejuvenate Rhyl promenade. Several pupils' designs were selected and these pupils were involved in producing a bronze finished product and visiting to a furnace to see their designs 'fired.'
- 100 The head teacher and staff are highly successful in tackling social disadvantage, in challenging stereotyping and in promoting equal opportunities for all pupils. High expectations of pupils with regard to behaviour and achievement, coupled with work to enhance pupils' confidence and self-esteem ensure that all pupils know they are valued equally and as individuals.
- 101 Sustainable development is promoted well with the school working towards its silver Eco award. The school has a compost heap and there are regular litter picks with paper and cans being appropriately recycled. An outstanding eco/environmental garden was completed last year, with the commitment and partnership of parents and the local community. The whole school makes good use of the area which is a source of great pride.
- 102 Global citizenship is developing well. Although there are no current formal links with any other countries, the school makes good use of its own natural resource of pupils from other countries. A recent 'International Week' saw pupils coming to school in their national costumes and the cook providing 'tasters' of some of the food from their homelands. Twelve different languages (excluding Welsh and English) are spoken in school and a large map of the world charts where pupils come from.
- 103 The school is committed to laying the foundations for life-long learning. National priorities such as Healthy Schools and Eco Schools are an established part of school life. Pupils are well prepared for transition to high school.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 104 The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The team considers that the school's provision for care, guidance and support has several outstanding features and so awarded the higher grade 1.
- 105 The school is an exceptionally welcoming, secure and caring community, in which pupils are very well looked after and effectively supported. They state they are happy and feel safe. A particular focus of the school is generating the sense that staff and pupils are members of a family. This is achieved very successfully and is reflected in the positive caring ethos of the school and the way it quickly embraces pupils from other countries. This is an outstanding feature.

- 106 Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils well as individuals and cater very effectively for their particular needs and well being. In discussions with pupils and the school council they said they were confident that any concerns would be treated seriously and dealt with quickly and fairly. Care arrangements are very well managed and parents are quickly informed when the need arises. Supervision at break times and in the hall at lunch time is very good.
- 107 Although pupils on the school council have some opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills, this is an area which is in further need of development. Pupils in the athletics and hockey clubs raised funds for equipment by bag packing at local supermarkets.
- 108 The partnerships with pupils, parents and carers are very strong. Parents' and pupils' questionnaires are sent out and all suggestions are considered and acted upon where appropriate. There are half-termly newsletters by which parents are informed about what pupils will be doing in the curriculum and also in religious education. There is a very active parent teacher association which has raised a considerable amount of money towards the eco/environmental garden. The school council have been involved in various decision-making opportunities and have just recently given a presentation to governors about their work. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting and nearly all those who returned the questionnaires were very positive in their support of the school.
- 109 Induction programmes to help new pupils settle in quickly are good. There are good links with the playgroup which is held in a building on site. Parents of Nursery and Reception pupils are invited to attend 'taster' sessions with their children during the summer term. Pupils arriving outside normal admission times are welcomed and encouraged. They spend time in school before they are admitted. Upon admission, they are allocated a child to help them settle into the life and routines of their new school. This is particularly important where children arrive from other countries. They are quickly made to feel at home. Transition arrangements with the feeder high school are very strong and well established. This is an outstanding feature.
- 110 The school provides outstanding personal support and guidance for pupils. Teachers know their pupils very well and this enables them to monitor each child's needs and development. Personal and social education, circle time, assemblies and the religious education syllabus 'Here I Am' are used very well to support and guide pupils. Effective use is made of specialist services such as the police liaison officer and the school nurse. The 'Seasons for Growth' programme is particularly effective for pupils who have experienced grief and loss. It is run by the school nurse with support from two trained members of staff and is an established and appreciated area of school life.
- 111 Monitoring procedures for attendance and punctuality are outstanding and procedures for monitoring behaviour and performance are good. The electronic registration system is used to good effect. Records are well kept and accurate. The school sets realistic targets for attendance which parents are made aware of in newsletters. Good attendance is rewarded both individually and as a whole class. Holidays in term time are discouraged and not automatically given authorisation. Consideration is given to attendance and whether or not pupils are undergoing

assessment. There is a governor with responsibility for attendance who meets regularly with the head. The educational social worker is also a regular visitor to the school and works with families where attendance and punctuality are concerns. A new initiative in agreement with the local authority and the local health board to make dental and medical appointments outside school hours is proving effective.

- 112 The school has a detailed policy and set of good procedures to promote health, safety and well being and including risk assessment. These are monitored and implemented consistently by the head teacher, staff and the governing body. The school is in its second year of the *Welsh Network of Healthy Schools* initiative. Healthy eating is positively encouraged with a good choice of school meals and healthy snacks. There are three water fountains providing chilled water throughout the day.
- 113 Seven members of staff are trained first aiders and all other staff have received emergency first aid training. Appropriate security measures are in place. Arrangements for dealing with accidents, emergencies and medical needs are well established, and pupils are well supervised at all times.
- 114 The school has appropriate measures to deal with appeals and complaints and to promote the protection of children. The head teacher is the named person with responsibility for child protection and is trained to the appropriate level. All other staff and all governors have received child protection training. There is also a named governor with responsibility for this. Records and files are kept in a secure cabinet. There is a child protection policy which is in line with local and all-Wales procedures. All staff are checked with the criminal records bureau.
- 115 The provision for ALN is of good quality overall.
- 116 The school's SEN policy is comprehensive and fully complies with the SEN Code of Practice and the framework for inclusive education. The school effectively identifies pupils' individual needs and monitors progress in meeting these needs both in mainstream classes and in the LRP. The school's SEN Co-ordinator [SENCo] manages her responsibilities very well.
- 117 In the mainstream setting, pupils needs are accurately diagnosed at an early stage and there are clear procedures for identification including regular screening, tracking, and more formal termly assessments and standardised tests as appropriate. There are appropriate assessment and record keeping systems for identifying and recording pupils' progress.
- 118 An appropriate register of pupils with SEN is maintained, indicating the range of support given at the 'school action' and 'school action plus' stages of the Code of Practice . Pupils on the register have their own Individual Educational Plans [IEPs]. These are written by class teachers and monitored by the SENCO. IEPs are of good quality and include short step targets and achievement criteria. They identify which classroom strategies are to be used. In Early Years, as well as other year groups, there are monitoring lists kept of pupils who are giving cause for concern. Over the preceding 12 months, several pupils have made such good progress they have been

taken off the SEN register. Annual review procedures meet legal requirements. Parents are involved fully in the process throughout.

- 119 Pupils on the SEN register are well supported within the mainstream classes. For example, pupils who have under-developed skills in literacy and numeracy benefit not only from carefully considered organisation of lessons to cater for all abilities but also from targeted intervention. Where pupils are withdrawn from classes, their lessons mirror those provided in the mainstream setting. The expertise of the teaching assistants in this area is a strength of the school.
- 120 Provision for pupils in the LRP who have been identified as having speech and language difficulties is good. A distinctive feature is the high quality teamwork that combines skills of teaching and support for learning to very good effect. Very good opportunities are taken to include pupils in all aspects of school life. The school is an inclusive community where all pupils whatever their difficulty are welcomed. The LRP is a positive learning and nurturing environment where all pupils make good progress towards recognised and relevant goals. Pupils in the LRP are well cared for, guided and supported and make good progress.
- 121 The school has a policy for supporting more able and talented pupils. However, in many instances, planning and teaching do not fully challenge and extend such pupils. As the school itself recognises, provision in this area is at an early stage of development.
- 122 The school makes good use of outside agencies including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists together with valuable input from social services and the health authority. The specialist input is incorporated into individual programmes and has a very positive impact on pupils' skills. However, the school notes that the extent of support from the educational psychology service is limited.
- 123 A significant proportion of the school's pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. There are 12 languages other than English or Welsh spoken at home as a first language. A fifth of the pupils receive excellent direct support from the EAL service to help them develop their bilingual skills and to integrate them more fully into the school community. School staff have acquired many skills in this area. However, they recognise that in order to be flexible and more skilled in meeting the language needs of differing cohorts of pupils each year they need to develop further their own expertise in acquiring specific EAL teaching strategies. This is also desirable because such skills are readily transferable to all pupils with language learning difficulties.
- 124 There is good support for pupils whose behaviour could potentially impede their own progress or that of others. The school's extremely positive ethos and very good staff-pupil relationships ensure that behaviour is generally exemplary. Nearly all pupils have the opportunity to learn effectively without interference or interruption. A low-profile system of rewards and sanctions underpins an atmosphere of understanding, negotiation and discussion about inappropriate behaviour. Pupils from a very early age learn the rules and know the consequences of not following them. Individual

behaviour plans are in place for pupils whose behaviour causes concern or who are at risk of exclusion.

- 125 The quality of the school's provision for equal opportunities is outstanding.
- 126 All pupils whatever their social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background are very well supported and treated with dignity and respect. They have equal access to all lessons and activities and any form of stereotyping is consistently challenged by all staff. The school has a substantial range of multicultural and non-English books in the library. Dolls and puppets representing people from a diverse range of cultures are well used in the foundation phase classrooms. There are a variety of displays and artefacts around the school representing the many different traditions from the varied countries of origin of pupils in the school. This is an outstanding feature.
- 127 Every opportunity is taken in personal and social education, religious education and the humanities to foster acceptance, tolerance and understanding of people from different backgrounds. The school positively promotes good race relations and has actively and regularly reviewed policies and procedures to ensure that should any instances occur they will be dealt with promptly and effectively. The success of the strategies is evident in the positive relationships pupils have with each other. This is an outstanding feature.
- 128 Boys and girls have full and equal access to every aspect of day and extra-curricular activities. School resources have been thoroughly scrutinised to ensure there is no gender stereotyping. In contrast to national trends, boys perform very well when compared to girls in end of key stage assessment.
- 129 There are effective measures in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including racial discrimination, bullying and all forms of harassment. In discussions, pupils said they would be happy to report any bullying in the knowledge that it would be dealt with promptly and effectively. The police liaison officer is a regular visitor to school and helps pupils develop strategies to deal with issues such as bullying. The school council and playground arrangements also play an important part in supporting the excellent behaviour and well being of pupils.
- 130 The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure equal treatment for pupils with disabilities. Disability access to the site is good with appropriate disability facilities. Pupils with disabilities are as fully integrated into school life as possible – it is a strength of the school. Pupils have attended residential trips and experienced personal achievements. There is a Disability Equality Scheme and action plan. The school has consulted widely with disabled people in drawing up its action plan. The school and governors have begun to gather information about the effect of their policies on disabled pupils, parents and visitors to the school.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 131 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 132 The quality of the school's leadership and management is good. The head teacher provides clear, positive and well-considered direction to the life and work of the school. His personal commitment and focus on improving standards in all aspects of pupils' learning, behaviour and relationships underpins every aspect of school life. He has successfully generated a shared sense of purpose, motivation and dedication amongst all staff and forged strong links with pupils and their families. He is strongly supported in this by his deputy head teacher and senior teachers.
- 133 The SMT is well informed and makes a valuable contribution to monitoring, evaluation and planning and ensuring that agreed strategies to improve teaching and learning are effectively applied. Members of the team fulfil their responsibilities with energy and commitment. However, with the re-organisation of the school into teams, the SMT is under strength. The current distribution of responsibilities needs review in order to continue to improve provision and raise standards further.
- 134 Subject co-ordinators have clear responsibilities which they undertake with commitment and enthusiasm. They work very closely with colleagues and provide effective leadership, direction and support. The impact of their work is reflected in the improvements in standards identified since the previous inspection. The SENCo provides dedicated and valuable support to her colleagues throughout the school in supporting the academic and personal needs of pupils on the SEN register.
- 135 The school's aims express its religious and educational purpose clearly and form the basis of its policies. They are well reflected in its life and work and are well suited to the age and abilities of the pupils. Through its policies and procedures, the school successfully promotes and monitors equality of opportunity.
- 136 Good progress has been made in achieving the school's targets and goals. The school development plan comprehensively identifies many areas for improvement across all aspects of school life; although how these are prioritised is not always clear. Systems for setting rigorous and relevant short, medium and long-term targets for individual pupils and for cohorts of pupils are under developed. Detailed monitoring and analysis of results to inform future target setting effectively is in an early stage of development. This is a shortcoming.
- 137 Teachers develop their own knowledge and skills and improve their effectiveness in meeting the school's developmental needs through the school's well established performance management systems. A similar appraisal process for teaching assistants is currently being developed. Newly-qualified teachers receive thorough and effective support. The head teacher has completed a range of professional leadership and management courses. The deputy has almost completed a

qualification for aspiring head teachers and two subject coordinators have completed subject leadership courses.

- 138 The school takes good account of local and national priorities, such as the implementation of the Foundation Phase and the Curriculum Orders, 2008. Recently introduced initiatives have helped pupils to achieve higher standards.
- 139 The governing body is supportive, hard working and makes a valuable contribution to the success of the school. Governors understand their role and review the school development plan at every governors' meeting. Governors have previously completed questionnaires in which they acknowledge what they do well and identify areas for self improvement.
- 140 Governors are supplied with comprehensive information and data about the life and work of the school through the head teacher's reports, and are in a clear position to measure the school's performance against other schools both locally and nationally.
- 141 Every governor is linked to a curriculum area of responsibility, with some also having particular areas of responsibility. They meet with subject co-ordinators each term and together with the subject coordinator produce a report to the full governing body. In this way, governors are able to monitor the quality of provision. The governing body fully meets all regulatory and legal requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 142 The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 143 The school is developing a strong culture of self-evaluation. The governors, head teacher, senior management team and teachers all have a good overview of the school and make a valuable contribution to evaluating the school's success in meeting each year's goals and priorities. All stakeholders, including pupils and parents, are consulted regularly and formally through a variety of methods, including questionnaires, to assess the school's performance across all aspects of school life.
- 144 Subject-coordinators evaluate provision in their subjects to identify strengths and areas for development. They have a good overview of planning, resources and teaching in their particular areas of responsibility. They have a good understanding of standards through regular monitoring of pupils' work and teacher planning. They produce good quality subject reviews and identify appropriate subject priorities for development.
- 145 The self-evaluation report itself gives an accurate picture of the school's strengths. It provides a secure evidence base and, in the majority of sections, is effective in identifying areas for development. However, although set out in the format of the Common Inspection Framework, a few of the analyses are less rigorous than others;

for example, the section on pupils' personal, social and learning skills. Overall, the grades in the report match the grades given by the inspection team in six of the seven questions. In Key Question 4, the inspection team identified several outstanding features and so awarded the higher grade 1. Several of the issues identified by the school as requiring further attention are similar to those identified by the inspection team.

- 146 The school's performance management systems for teachers and informal appraisal processes for teaching assistants together with regular lesson monitoring by the head teacher and the SMT further inform self-evaluation.
- 147 In addition to receiving regular questionnaires, parents say they can make suggestions informally to staff and that these are considered and acted upon appropriately. Pupil representatives on the school council are given the opportunity to discuss relevant issues and to make suggestions for improvements which are given serious consideration and have resulted in school improvements.
- 148 The school's self evaluation processes have informed strategic planning and enabled the school to move forward. However, the actual school development plan document itself, despite categorising focus areas, activities, timescales, lead person, resource and training requirements and success criteria, is unclear. There are many aspects listed for development but the main priorities, targets and objectives are not immediately apparent and the targets themselves are frequently not SMART (specific, measurable, attainable realistic, and time-based), not sharply focussed and lack ongoing monitoring. The phrase 'raising standards' is mentioned only twice in the body of the document.
- 149 However, good progress has been made since the previous inspection in the key issues then identified. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning has improved. The effectiveness of subject co-ordinators in monitoring performance in their subjects have improved and shortcomings identified in specific subject areas have been addressed. The school's assessment and target setting arrangements have improved although there is more work to be done in refining and focussing these systems. School attendance levels have been improved and pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning have been maintained.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 150 The findings of the inspection team match the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 151 The school has an appropriate provision of well-qualified and specialist teachers with a wide range of necessary knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the school's curriculum and meet the needs of the pupils effectively. Teachers' subject responsibilities generally match initial or subsequent in-service qualifications. Following the introduction of the Foundation Phase, the school has met the required staffing ratios in order to embed the process as quickly as possible.

- 152 Expertise and experience is spread across the school. All staff members have job descriptions linked to their roles and these are reviewed annually. Following a comprehensive and supportive induction process, newly-qualified teachers have fitted seamlessly into the life and work of the school. Good use is made of a range of peripatetic and EAL teachers to develop pupils' skills and understanding.
- 153 There are sufficient, appropriately-skilled teaching assistants to support pupil learning. All have clear roles and are deployed effectively. They make a valuable contribution to classroom activities and are engaged effectively in planning, teaching and recording pupils' progress.
- 154 Staff are well trained and take part in relevant and appropriate professional development. Teachers undertake relevant in-service courses to improve their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Training is appropriately linked to areas of school development and performance management. Teaching assistants have benefited from a range of appropriate accredited courses and make an effective and valued contribution. Teachers and teaching assistants work together very effectively as a team to provide good quality education for pupils of all abilities. The school has a very strong team spirit.
- 155 There are effective and efficient administrative systems in place and the secretarial staff support the head teacher and staff appropriately. Cleaning and midday staff undertake their duties diligently and effectively. Daily routines are well established. The cook and caretaker make a significant contribution to the well being of the school. Staff support each other at all levels and there is a good team spirit. The contribution of all personnel at the school is good. They work as a dedicated team to ensure pupils are cared for and taught well.
- 156 There are suitable arrangements in place to provide all members of staff with the required preparation, planning and assessment time and good use is made of this. The school has responded fully to the requirements of workforce remodelling and for reducing teachers' workload.
- 157 The school is well-resourced for all subjects. Effective and economic use is made of all new resources purchased. There is a well-equipped and well-used computer suite, together with personal computers and interactive whiteboards in several classrooms. Learning resources are of good quality and readily accessible to staff and pupils. Recent acquisitions are in line with school priorities and suited to the age, ability and educational needs of pupils. These investments have had a positive impact on pupils' learning and successfully raised standards across the subjects.
- 158 The accommodation consists of one building in spacious grounds. Accommodation is of good quality, mostly accessible for all disabilities, sufficient to meet pupils' needs and is used well by teachers and support staff to promote learning. The school also benefits from access to the staff and resources of a LA speech and language therapy unit which is based at the school. The school benefits from ready access to its staff and resources.
- 159 Decoration is in a good state, both internally and externally. Displays enhance the learning environment throughout the school. The best examples of display work are

interactive and use pupils' work to enhance learning and teaching. The main entrance is locked and buildings are secure.

- 160 There is adequate car parking, along with spacious fields and playgrounds. The Early Years playground is safe and secure. The school has carried out some developments regarding the outdoor area for the Foundation Phase and has had further major work approved. There is open access to KS1 and KS2 playgrounds around the side of the building from the car park entrance. Outside facilities have enhanced opportunities for learning and teaching, such as the recently developed school gardens. The school makes good use of the locality for field and other study trips and uses external human resources to good effect.
- 161 The school makes efficient, effective and economic use of resources, linking spending decisions to the school's identified priorities. The head teacher and the governing body finance and staffing sub-committees review the school's needs, as well as the use of resources, on a regular basis. The school is involved in a financial control risk self assessment and received an internal school fund audit in 2008, highlighting four recommendations with respect to procedures. These have been addressed.
- 162 Overall pupils achieve good standards and progress well. They are well prepared for the next phase of their education. The school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s areas of learning

- 163 The Foundation Phase has been fully implemented in the Nursery class. Although not statutory, the school has made good progress and implemented the principles of the Foundation Phase in the Reception Class.
- 164 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the pupils are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.

Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

- 165 Nearly all children make good progress in their personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity. The vast majority leave their parents and carers happily and very quickly engage in their activities showing increasing independence when engaging in classroom routines.
- 166 The youngest children behave well and concentrate for suitable periods of time, taking turns and sharing resources well. Most display increasing confidence when choosing their activities and are eager to find out about and explore new experiences. They listen attentively during registration and answer the appropriate questions. The majority participate well in small-group discussions.
- 167 The older children build on the skills already established and sustain their concentration for longer periods of time. Boys and girls co-operate and play well together. They take turns appropriately when playing games, listen well to others and do not interrupt. Through circle time activities, they develop a positive self-image and begin to appreciate the importance of care and consideration for others.
- 168 The majority of older children dress and undress independently for physical activities and listen well to instructions. Children's understanding of hygiene develops well and they realise the importance of washing their hands before meals and brushing their teeth afterwards.
- 169 The majority of children develop good relationships with all practitioners and display a good degree of maturity in their dealings with others. They display a good understanding of the behavioural expectations in the classroom such as 'Golden Rules'. They quickly develop a strong spiritual awareness, participating and contributing positively to prayer and worship.
- 170 All children naturally begin to develop a good knowledge, understanding and acceptance of their own and other cultures as a result of the time and learning experiences shared with other children and pupils from a wide and diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Shortcomings

171 There are no important shortcomings.

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

- 172 All children make good progress in developing their language, literacy and communication skills. By the end of the Foundation Phase, standards of achievement are good.
- 173 The youngest children engage well in discussion with practitioners and each other when choosing and taking part in various activities. In role-play and more formal settings, most adapt their language well. They enjoy and participate in familiar songs and rhymes. Nearly all children produce effective pieces of emergent writing linked to stories and role-play throughout the day. Children display an enthusiastic interest in books and enjoy their content; they love stories and poems and are very keen to join in familiar ones. Many choose and take home books to share with parents.
- 174 Older children talk confidently, in both formal and informal situations. They listen carefully to stories and participate well in language songs and games. All children enjoy sharing books and readily express opinions. Most hold the books correctly and distinguish accurately between print and pictures.
- 175 Most are developing a good knowledge of phonics and the majority know the sounds of initial letters well. They reinforce their understanding of letter formation using a variety of different media. Many regularly choose the writing area to follow writing patterns, and to draw and colour pictures. The majority write their own names with reasonable accuracy; most either trace or underline their own names, with a few making successful attempts at independent writing.

Shortcomings

176 There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Deleted: ¶

Good features

- 177 Throughout the Foundation Phase, children make good progress when using mathematics in their day-to-day activities and use correct mathematical terms. They develop their number skills well and are confident solving problems.

- 178 Children become increasingly proficient at sorting and sizing objects, in using non-standard measurements, in recognising and naming two- and three-dimensional shapes and in investigating patterns using beads and shapes.
- 179 Younger children develop a good understanding of number. They recall a good range of number songs, rhymes and actions. They count using their fingers accurately. Most select pictures and objects appropriately and repeat actions confidently. The vast majority reinforce their number skills in their daily activities through counting and matching patterns and shapes.
- 180 They talk effectively with practitioners and confidently use appropriate apparatus. They confidently sort objects, giving sensible reasons for doing this. Most use a wide range of materials well and they enjoy playing various games to reinforce their understanding of number and mathematical vocabulary.
- 181 Older children understand and record numbers to 10, using practical activities well. They begin to add and subtract numbers of objects accurately using various apparatus and they record their answers successfully. They gain confidence with the vocabulary of addition and subtraction in context. Many are developing good skills in coin recognition and role of money. Children construct and interpret simple pictographs relating to familiar themes such as hair and eye colour. More able children begin to develop good skills in estimating.

Shortcomings

- 182 There are no important shortcomings

Welsh language development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

- 183 Nearly all Foundation Phase children make good progress with their Welsh language skills.
- 184 The younger children progress well in their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language. They respond appropriately to the register in Welsh and understand and use the names of the times of the day. They listen to and engage in songs and finger rhymes, such as 'Bore Da' and 'Hwyl fawr, ffrindiau' enthusiastically. They respond well to daily greetings in Welsh and display cheerful responses to praise. Most begin to know and use the primary colours in Welsh.
- 185 The older children build well on this knowledge and extend their repertoire of songs and rhymes; for example in helping them recognise and name parts of the body they sing "Llygaid, clustiau". They use Welsh with increasing confidence. They listen to and use the language throughout the day; for example when discussing the weather. Children participate enthusiastically in the 'Helpwr Heddiw' routine. They have a good knowledge of the colours.

186 Their reading skills develop steadily when they read words or labels around the classroom and through reading Welsh stories such as 'Tedi Twt.' Many children are confident to introduce themselves using '.....ydw i' and in role play can ask 'Pwy wyt ti?'. At snack time more able pupils use 'Wyt ti eisiau....?' and simple words such as 'plis', 'diolch', and 'llaeth' appropriately.

Shortcomings

187 There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

188 Nearly all children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and show enthusiasm and curiosity about the world around them.

189 Younger children accurately describe the differences between various features of their local environment. They show recall when describing local shops and farms they have visited. They describe their own home enthusiastically and from this discuss suitable types of home for different people and animals.

190 Older children develop a very good understanding of the differences between farm, zoo and wild animals in order to group them. They investigate which products come from farm animals and when investigating baby animals name them and match them to the adult. Most enjoy finding out about different animals' needs and how to care for them. More able children investigate how the seasons affect animals and birds; for example, through hibernation and migration.

191 Children become increasingly proficient at naming body parts, and use mirrors effectively to identify similarities and differences between themselves. Older pupils sequence stages of growth accurately. In snack time discussions, children develop a very good understanding of healthy and unhealthy foods.

192 The older children switch on computers to access programmes, navigate with a mouse and use it confidently to change colours and access 'paint box' tools such as 'fill', 'spray' and 'erase'. Most pupils have good understanding of key vocabulary.

193 Younger children participate successfully in a wide range of practical activities. They make Welsh cakes from basic ingredients and select appropriate adjectives to describe the texture of jelly.

194 Older children clearly recognise the differences between toys which are 'old and those which are 'new' and enjoy playing with toys kept at the Victorian toy room in Bodelwyddan Castle. They have a growing awareness of important events and characters from the past and most use appropriate language when discussing the change in the seasons. Many begin to develop their investigative skills well when investigating what material the toys are made from and whether they *push* or *pull*.

Shortcomings

195 There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

196 Throughout the Foundation Phase children make good progress in developing their physical skills.

197 All the younger children enjoy exploring their indoor and outdoor learning environments. They develop a good awareness of the need to be healthy and they control their body movements well, moving with good control and co-ordination appropriate to their age. They develop their gross motor skills throughout the year both in the hall during formal physical education sessions and in using the large outdoor equipment on the main playground. They use a wide range of small and large apparatus confidently, showing a good awareness of space. They confidently run, hop and jump on and off outdoor apparatus. All children enjoy using large-wheeled toys and display concern for other children when using them.

198 All older children progress with their skills and create good movements in dance and gymnastics activities. For example, they develop good creative movement skills when acting like different toys in response to music. They listen to instructions carefully, know that exercise is good for them and understand that their heart beats quicker during exercise. Most children begin to put movements together to create a simple sequence.

199 The majority of children use paint brushes and scissors with good fine motor control and they demonstrate sufficient control when using pencils and crayons to include detail in their work.

Shortcomings

200 There are no important shortcomings

Creative development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

201 Nearly all children in the Foundation Phase develop their creative skills well and make good progress.

202 The younger children play expressively and creatively when taking part in role-play and acting out in the home corner or 'pretending' to be in role as a policeman or lady. Children's cutting, moulding and sticking skills develop effectively and they safely use

a wide range of media and tools. For example, most use printing stamps effectively to create interesting designs. The majority draw accurately and independently mix colours to fill in their pictures. A few children produce attractive 'rubbings' from the wall to create rectangular patterns.

203 Younger children respond well to music and movement, sing a good range of simple songs from memory and clap simple repeated rhythms. Most explore quiet and loud sounds and learn to keep a steady beat.

204 Older children continue to develop their skills well and progress with their art work, mixing colours successfully and using a wider range of materials and equipment. They explore and develop a good range of craft skills when making small umbrellas, making miniature boats, bubble painting, investigating zebra stripes, and wheel painting.

205 Most children use their imagination well in role-play and confidently sing a wide range of songs in both English and Welsh, with clear diction and appropriate actions. They order instruments from the quietest to the loudest and effectively use a wide range of instruments. They listen attentively to music by Welsh composers, singers and bands.

Shortcomings

206 There are no important shortcomings.

Subjects

Mathematics

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

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

Good features

207 Nearly all younger KS1 pupils add and subtract accurately to 10 and form the numerals 0 to 9 correctly. All pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject and most use mathematical language confidently and appropriately. Many pupils know different words for 0.

208 All pupils identify simple 2-D and 3-D shapes successfully, applying this knowledge to identify squares in floor tiles and rectangles in doors. They make and name recognisable 3-D shapes with play-dough. All pupils make accurate tally charts of their pets. Most tell the time by the hour correctly. They measure items in the classroom with their fingers systematically and use a centimetre ruler with control.

209 By the end of KS1, most pupils have good standards in number work and place value, counting, writing numbers in the correct order and in simple additions using three numbers and subtraction from 10. All pupils solve simple numerical problems, filling in missing numbers and choosing a suitable method of computation. All make simple 2D and 3D shapes with care.

- 210 Pupils measure accurately using string for curved lines and centimetre rulers. All use measuring skills well in making good full length pictures of themselves. All pupils have completed local area traffic surveys using tally sheets, graphs and reports, with good interpretation of graphic information in identifying the busiest and quietest times. Pupils produce clear and accurate tally charts and graphs for their favourite colours. KS1 pupils in the LRP effectively control a programmable toy 'beebot', to complete a series of movements to a specified location on a large grid.
- 211 Most pupils make good progress in lower KS2 showing good understanding of place value and money. All pupils have a secure grasp of simple 2-D and 3D shapes and fractions. Most pupils read temperature scales accurately and record findings on tally charts and graphs, with good understanding in locating hot and cold spots in the classroom. All pupils complete 'the weighing workshop', with good understanding of estimating and measuring everyday foods. Most pupils show good mental agility responding to verbal number problems. All pupils plot two-figure coordinates correctly showing good understanding of first quadrant coordinates.
- 212 By the end of KS2 most have made good progress and many check their work regularly and accurately. Pupils calculate numbers well in dice investigations and notation, showing good understanding of place value in relation to digit position, though there is little evidence of the use of calculators. Overall, pupils calculate in a variety of ways, explain different mental methods and use the relationship between the four operations, including negative numbers well. Most pupils show a good understanding of 'mean', 'mode', 'median' and 'range'. Pupils use fractions accurately to estimate and complete proportions of a whole. Pupils use measures well in investigating areas and populations. Most pupils solve problems with money correctly. Nearly all pupils make complex 2D and 3D shapes with increasing accuracy.
- 213 All pupils across the school show positive attitudes towards the subject and enjoy their lessons. Pupils with EAL make good progress and achieve good standards. Many more able pupils attend extra-curricular mathematics clubs. Many pupils apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- 214 All pupils' work is well presented.

Shortcomings

- 215 There are no important shortcomings.

Science

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

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

Good features

- 216 Pupils make good progress and achieve good standards in relation to their previous attainment and abilities at both key stages.

- 217 The majority of pupils in KS1 have a good understanding of the function and nature of the five senses. By investigating with torches in a dark room, most younger KS1 pupils learn that their eyes can see only those things which are sources of light or which reflect light. Many know that light is necessary for plants to grow.
- 218 In lower KS2, many pupils understand clearly that some materials can conduct electricity better than others and identify correctly which ones can complete a simple circuit. When investigating which materials are most suitable for keeping ice cubes cool, a majority of pupils in lower KS2 explain accurately the factors which influence their results. A minority begin to appreciate the concept of fair testing.
- 219 Most pupils in Year 4 explain correctly how a switch makes or breaks an electric circuit. The majority know the dangers associated with mains electricity. Year 4 pupils learn how to use thermometers correctly when comparing temperatures in different areas of the school. They use tables and graphs appropriately to display their findings.
- 220 Many pupils in lower KS2 name the major bones of the human skeleton correctly. They realise that muscles operate in pairs when moving bones about a joint.
- 221 In upper KS2, most pupils explain accurately the differences between states of matter, and understand that powders are solids with very small "gaps" between the particles. A few pupils devise an investigation which enables them to make a sensible estimate of the amount of air in the gaps between marbles in a jar.
- 222 The majority of pupils in Year 6 understand that not all substances dissolve in water and use their scientific skills appropriately to set up a fair test to see how the rate of dissolution can be increased. Most correctly describe their reasons for controlling certain variables and make sensible predictions. They make good use of planning and recording sheets which they annotate correctly. However, only a few pupils react appropriately to unexpectedly high or low measurements, although many pupils can explain why tests should be repeated to increase their reliability.
- 223 Pupils with EAL work effectively and make good progress.

Shortcomings

- 224 There are no important shortcomings.

Design Technology

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

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

Good features

- 225 Although no lessons in KS1 were observed, evidence gained from scrutiny of written and displayed work and discussion with pupils indicates that they have achieved good standards.
- 226 Following a visit to the playground at Bodelwyddan Castle, pupils in KS1 consider carefully the materials and design of the various playground structures. Younger pupils successfully make accurate and attractive models of swings, roundabouts and slides. Using masking tape, rubber bands, plasticine and pipe cleaners, the majority give careful consideration to making their structures stable. A few produce very ambitious structures using construction kits.
- 227 Most older pupils in KS1 show good research and planning skills to design more complex models such as play houses and a climbing frame. They show good understanding of strength and stability in producing the structures.
- 228 In food technology, all KS1 pupils develop good cutting, slicing, grating and juicing skills. The majority describe and evaluate effectively their success in making a fruit salad against their original design. All recognise the importance of eating more fruit and vegetables.
- 229 Across KS2, most pupils demonstrate good planning and making skills. They make good use of their preliminary investigative work to ensure that the end products are of good quality.
- 230 Younger pupils in KS2 investigate thoroughly how to make a free-standing photograph frame. The majority develop good skills in using set squares to mark up and in using modelling saws to cut through strips of wood held in a vice. They develop a good understanding of how to join the strips together to form the structure of the frame which they subsequently decorate attractively. A few produce very good labelled diagrams of the whole process.
- 231 Younger KS2 pupils reinforce their understanding of how a simple battery-operated circuit works and how this can be controlled by employing different kinds of switches. The majority produce well-constructed and well-finished working torches.
- 232 Working under the guidance of teachers from the local comprehensive school, older KS2 pupils, produce good working models of mechanical toys based upon their own designs. Following thorough investigation, they consider carefully how the parts can be guided to ensure accurate movement. Most pupils produce effective mechanisms involving handles and cogs to produce good quality working models of windmills and cranes.

233 Pupils in Year 6 produce comprehensive notes and drawings when investigating how slippers are made. Most produce accurate plans to show the sequence of work. All develop good understanding and skill in using appropriate materials and techniques to produce mock-up slippers. The majority of pupils use a variety of stitching techniques and attractive decoration to create a high-quality finished product.

234 Pupils with EAL achieve good standards.

Shortcomings

235 Pupils' use of information and communication technology to find information and to communicate and present their ideas is limited.

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

236 Although no lessons in KS1 were observed, evidence gained from scrutiny of written and displayed work and discussion with pupils indicates that they have achieved good standards.

237 Following a visit to a Victorian classroom, all KS1 pupils make good quality booklets about life in Victorian times, including detailed pictures and descriptions of what they have seen and how life was different to their own experiences.

238 All pupils complete accurate timelines of their activities since starting school. They speak confidently about the important events in their lives, how they have changed since they were young and about the past in general. Most use specific words such as 'ancestors', 'century', 'long ago', 'one hundred years', 'old' and 'new' correctly. Pupils identify a range of different historical sources including the following: 'computer', 'visits', 'museums', 'family member', books, pictures, maps and photographs to help them find out about the past.

239 Following a visit to Chirk Castle, most lower KS2 pupils explain clearly the differences in diet between rich and poor people in Tudor times, pointing out that the diet of the rich was not always the healthiest.

240 The quality of pupils' historical writing is good. Diary entries as a Tudor servant, descriptions of their castle visit, and articles about Henry VIII are entertaining and accurate. All pupils make accurate timelines from the Celts to the modern day.

241 All upper KS2 pupils show good skills when identifying similarities and differences between maps of Victorian and modern day Rhyl. Most make informed judgements based on historical evidence about the reasons for Rhyl's development as a seaside town.

- 242 Many pupils show good knowledge and understanding of the past and use well-reasoned arguments to explain how it has helped to fashion the present. Most pupils write concisely and clearly about what life was like for a poor child. Small groups of more-able pupils produce good quality *Powerpoint* presentations about famous Victorians.
- 243 Year 6 pupils use the internet, reference books and photographs to research information on the social background of people in WWII. Most write good descriptions using appropriate vocabulary such as 'rationing' and 'propaganda'. Most produce lively diary entries as people from that time, such as a child hosting an evacuee, a housewife or an ARP warden.
- 244 All pupils sequence WWII events correctly and show a good understanding of the Welsh perspective. Pupils write with good empathy about victims of 'The Blitz' and make effective posters in WWII themes such as 'Be Careful of Spies' or 'Dig for Victory'.
- 245 Nearly all pupils in both key stages have a very positive attitude to History.

Shortcomings

- 246 The progress of pupils with EAL is limited by their weaker writing skills.

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

- 247 Most pupils in both key stages develop a good understanding of line, tone, colour, pattern and texture. Pupils improve the accuracy of their observations and the quality of their technique by regular use of sketch books. All pupils study the work of several Welsh artists and craft workers and many emulate features of their work with good results.
- 248 Many pupils in KS1 use viewfinders to develop their observation skills well. They have experience in using a wide range of media and practice using pencils, pastels and paint. Many pupils in KS1 work well to produce convincing representations of Russian icons, Filipino art and African masks and clay pots.
- 249 Nearly all pupils in lower KS2 use a good range of techniques when working in two- and three-dimensions. Most pupils in year 3 use a computer "paint" program competently and print greeting cards.
- 250 In year 4, most pupils make very good observational sketches to assist the evaluation of designs for chairs. They study a number of famous images of chairs and many produce very good reproductions. When studying aboriginal art, most

pupils in year 4 show a good understanding of symbolism and of the restrictions arising from using sticks to apply colours.

- 251 Upper KS2 pupils study storytelling through examples of narrative art. Nearly all make sensible evaluations of the 'Egyptian Book of the Dead' and the 'Bayeux Tapestry'. Many year 5 pupils co-operate to make a very effective biblical frieze by painting on silk.
- 252 By year 6, many pupils' drawing skills have developed very well. Their pencil drawings of people in action are convincing. Many pupils evaluate the work of Eadweard Muybridge critically, and create effective simple animations in the form of "Flick books". Many pupils have been inspired by the images of Delaunay to produce very creative images combining digital images of themselves against a cubist background.
- 253 Pupils with EAL achieve well and make good progress.

Shortcomings

- 254 There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

As a school we feel that the final report is an accurate reflection of the work of our school. It provides very positive recognition of all the hard work of all members of our school family.

The report recognises the very positive and caring atmosphere which is seen as an outstanding strength of our school.

There are many comments and statements in the report of which we, as a school, are very proud.

The whole inspection experience was a valuable one in that it affirmed that we have been moving forward in the right direction. As a school family, we found the inspection experience both a demanding and collegiate experience.

Many of the issues identified by the inspection team for further development had already been identified in our School Development Plan. The identified issues will now be addressed in a focused and measured way to raise standards even further.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Mair Catholic Primary School
School type	Voluntary Primary including Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3 to 11
Address of school	St Margaret's Drive, Rhyl, Denbighshire
Postcode	LL18 2HY
Telephone number	01745 350762

Headteacher	Mr Stuart Plunkett
Date of appointment	January 2002
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs Gill Greenland
Registered inspector	Dr Jim Hewitt
Dates of inspection	26 – 29 January 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	20	34	36	40	42	44	36	60	312

gfg

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	14	4	18

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	5 : 1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	24
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.3:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2008	80.1	92.3	93.2
Summer 2008	82.8	90.2	92.6
Autumn 2008	91.9	92.2	94.3

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	25
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	5

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of key stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:		43		
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	21	61	16
		National	0	4	14	63	19
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	23	58	16
		National	0	4	15	55	26
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	2	5	26	51	16
		National	0	5	16	68	11
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	14	74	9
		National	0	2	11	64	23
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	7	77	14
		National	0	2	11	65	22
Science	Teacher assessment	School	2	0	7	77	14
		National	0	1	9	66	24

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	72	In Wales	81

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1
Because some percentages have been rounded up or down, they may not always total 100%
National percentages are derived from 2008 data.

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008							Number of pupils in Y6		54		
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	19	71	10
		National	0	0	0	1	1	3	16	51	29
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School									
		National									
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	4	14	52	31
		National	0	0	0	1	1	3	15	51	30
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	4	10	73	14
		National	0	0	0	1	1	2	11	54	32

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by teacher assessment		by test	
In the school	77	In the school	
In Wales	76	In Wales	

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
Because some percentages have been rounded up or down, they may not always total 100 per cent
National percentages are derived from 2008 data.

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Five inspectors spent the equivalent of 15 inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection. Additionally, the headteacher acted as nominee.

These inspectors visited:

- 48 lessons or part lessons, 44 in the six subjects inspected and 4 in other subjects;
- registrations, assemblies and acts of collective worship; and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- senior managers, teaching, support and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils representing each year group;
- the school council; and
- representatives of organisations associated with the school.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 32 responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- a wide range of pupils' past and current work; and samples of pupils' reports.

After the inspection, the team held meetings with subject departments, senior managers and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Dr Jim Hewitt Registered Inspector	Context Summary Recommendations Key Questions 1; Key Question 5; Key Question 6 Under-fives, Design Technology
Mr Christopher Dolby Team Inspector	Aspects of Key Questions 1, 2 and 3 Science; Art
Mr Michael Thomas Team Inspector	Key Question 7; aspects of Key Questions 2 and 4 Mathematics; History
Mrs Justine Barlow Team Inspector	Aspects of Key Questions 1, 3, 4 and 5
Mr Stuart Plunkett Headteacher and Nominee	Liaison with inspectors, contribution to team discussions and the school's response
Mrs Alyson Williams	Contribution to lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff and team discussions.

The contractor was:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd., Oaks Lea, Higher Knolton, Overton, Wrexham. LL13 0LF

Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the inspection.