

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Maesybryn Primary School
Lancaster Drive
Crown Estate
Llantwit Fardre
Pontypridd
Rhondda Cynon Taff
CF38 2NS**

School Number: 6742263

Date of Inspection: 05/03/07

by

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The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:

- * nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local education authorities (LEAs);
- * primary schools;
- * secondary schools;
- * special schools;
- * pupil referral units;
- * independent schools;
- * further education;
- * adult community-based learning;
- * youth support services;
- * LEAs;
- * teacher education and training;
- * work-based learning;
- * careers companies; and
- * the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre Plus.

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- * provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- * makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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Maesybryn 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 Maesybryn Primary School took place between 05/03/07 and 08/03/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Michael T. Ridout 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	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
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 Maesybryn School is a community primary school for boys and girls aged from three to eleven years. There are thirteen classes, including two nursery, one reception class, a mixed reception and Year 1 class catering for the under-fives and two special educational needs (SEN) classes provided by the Local Education Authority (LEA). One caters for pupils with physical disabilities and the other for pupils with communication disorders. In total, there are 324 full-time equivalent (fte) pupils on roll. The average class size is 29 (not including nursery and SEN classes). There are 14 (fte) teachers, including the head teacher and three part-time teachers. There are eight learning support assistants (LSAs), two full-time and six part-time.
- 2 The school is situated in Llantwit Fardre, a large village between Llantrisant and Pontypridd, in Rhondda Cynon Taff. The majority of pupils live in the local area. Most homes are privately owned and new housing is being built in the village. The community is described as neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is well below the local and national average. There are a few pupils from ethnic minorities. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. English is the predominant language spoken and the school teaches Welsh as a second language.
- 3 Assessment data confirms that the school receives pupils from the full range of abilities. Baseline assessments compare well with local averages. Subsequent assessments confirm that a good proportion of pupils is relatively able. Around 19 per cent of pupils are identified as having SEN. The proportion, excluding those attending the two SEN classes, is 15.4 per cent. Two pupils have a statement of SEN.
- 4 The school was previously inspected in March 2001. Since that time, the number on roll has increased and the number and organisation of classes has changed. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The school's priorities and targets

- 5 A mission statement: *Through endeavour we can all achieve* and five key aims that are published in the prospectus guide the school's work. The school development plan (SDP), 2006/2007, sets targets focusing on:
 - enhancing standards of learning and teaching in mathematics and science investigations;
 - improving planning for key skills and aspects of assessment, reporting and monitoring;
 - improving provision of information and communications technology (ICT);
 - updating policies and schemes in English, history, art, music, physical education and geography;
 - promoting education in sustainable development;
 - promoting bilingual skills;
 - developing citizenship and the role of the school council and;
 - seeking the views of parents in the self-evaluation process.

Summary

- 6 Maesybryn Primary is an established and successful school. At its heart are some outstanding features. These are most evident in its caring and supportive ethos that supports pupils' achievement and nurtures their personal development very well. The school continues to build on its strengths and recent improvements in practice are beginning to strengthen provision 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 3
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	Grade 2

- 7 The findings of the inspection match the school's self-evaluation in key questions, one, two, four and seven but differ in the rest.

Standards

- 8 In 33 lessons or parts of lessons in the subjects inspected, standards were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
3%	79%	18%	-	-

- 9 In more than 80 per cent of the lessons observed standards of achievement were good or better. This is well above the 2007 WAG target of at least good standards (grade two and above) in 65 per cent of lessons inspected.
- 10 The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 11 Learners in both key stages achieve good overall standards in subject knowledge, understanding and skills.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected:

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 12 Learners acquire a good knowledge of the key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, but the extent to which they use and deploy these skills and use a range of study skills is sometimes limited in KS2. In both key stages, pupils develop a good standard of bilingual competence.
- 13 The 2006 results of the end of KS1 NC teacher assessments in both key stages indicate standards in English, mathematics and science were above national figures. In comparison with similar schools having up to eight per cent free school meals, standards in KS1 are broadly average in English and below average in mathematics and science. In KS2, the results are below the average for similar schools in all three subjects.
- 14 Over the last six years the school's results indicate the maintenance of good standards. However, the trend in results is flat indicating the school has not improved its performance in line with similar schools.
- 15 The scrutiny of pupils' recent work and the observation of lessons in KS1 confirm a general consistency in pupils' progress in basic skills. In KS2, there is greater variation. This reflects the extent to which pupils are enabled to deploy key skills and the more-able pupils are challenged to achieve their potential.
- 16 Pupils with SEN attending the two special classes make good and sometimes very good progress. In mainstream classes, pupils with SEN make good progress, especially when they learn in small supported groups. However, this good progress is only maintained within the whole-class setting where individual education plan (IEP) targets are consistently developed.
- 17 Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are outstanding features of the school. This makes a significant contribution towards the good standards achieved.
- 18 Whole-school attendance averaged 91 per cent during the three terms preceding the inspection. This is below the average for primary schools in Wales.
- 19 The progress pupils make in their personal, social, moral and wider development is good with outstanding features. The quality of relationships is very good.
- 20 Pupils' awareness of equal opportunity issues and their respect for diversity are good. They are prepared well for effective participation in the workplace and the community.

The quality of education and training

21 In 46 lessons or parts of lessons the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	80%	13%	-	-

22 In close to 90 per cent of the lessons observed, teaching was good or better. This compares very well with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) in her annual report 2005 – 2006. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good in 84 per cent of lessons, with 17 per cent of lessons having outstanding features.

23 Teaching in the early years reflects high expectations and support staff contribute well to this provision. The teaching and support provided in the two SEN classes consistently demonstrates high levels of expertise.

24 Across both key stages, the majority of teachers have appropriately high expectations and they are successful in enabling pupils to achieve well. A particularly impressive feature of teaching is the very high quality of working relationships that members of staff establish and maintain with the pupils.

25 Teachers have a good range of subject knowledge and expertise. Effective teamwork is enhancing teaching and learning in some areas of the school's work.

26 The school has sound procedures for lesson planning. However, the quality and content of planning is widely variable. There is effective practice in some classes, but in a minority of lessons observed both the teaching and learning intentions were not linked rigorously enough to pupils' differing capabilities.

27 Teachers use a good range of methods, resources and organisational strategies. However, a minority of lessons restrict opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways, set limited expectations and result in a slow pace of work.

28 Regular assessments are implemented in English, mathematics and science. Procedures in other subjects are under-developed. The school is developing strategies, such as setting individual targets, to involve pupils in planning for progress.

29 Annual written reports inform parents well about their children's progress. However, they do not consistently set clear targets for the following year.

30 The school's curricular provision is broad and generally balanced. Subject schemes of work provide a good basis for a cohesive whole-school curricular plan. However, the effectiveness of the guidance provided for planning lessons is variable.

31 There is good emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Planning to promote the development of key skills is being developed.

- 32 Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. This is a particularly strong feature of provision.
- 33 The school promotes pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development effectively.
- 34 There are strong and effective links with parents, community organisations, other schools and higher and further education colleges.
- 35 The school's promotion of the Welsh language and bilingualism is exemplary. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is very well promoted and the school is successful in promoting recognition of and respect for cultural diversity.
- 36 An outstanding feature is the way in which pupils are cared for, supported and guided. A comprehensive programme of personal and social education (PSE) is implemented. The provision for ensuring the healthy development, safety and well-being of all pupils is good.
- 37 The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good overall. The provision in the two special classes is an outstanding feature.
- 38 The school successfully secures the equal treatment of pupils with disabilities. Its programme of inclusion for all is both an exemplar and an outstanding feature.

Leadership and management

- 39 Leadership is particularly successful in promoting a strong pastoral ethos. This is an impressive feature that has a very positive impact on pupils' development as young citizens and learners.
- 40 The strategic direction of the school is set appropriately through the School Development Plan (SDP). However, the means of achieving the school's key objectives and targets is not always made sufficiently clear.
- 41 The governing body (GB) is steadily developing its role as a critical partner in helping to set the strategic direction of the school. It fulfils its statutory obligations.
- 42 The school's self-evaluation report provides a narrative review of the school's work. Where inspection findings differ from the school's self-evaluation this indicates that the school's processes are not clearly enough linked to rigorous first-hand evaluations of the school's work.
- 43 The role of subject leaders in evaluating standards and developing plans of action to promote improvement is under-developed.
- 44 The school is well staffed and resourced, but the size of the classrooms and large classes in KS2 impose some constraints. On occasions, shared teaching areas are not utilised fully. Furthermore, the practice of organising lessons around four long sessions each day sometimes reduces the pace of learning.
- 45 On the basis of the previous inspection in 2001, the extent of the school's improvement since that time is limited. However, taking into account the

maintenance of good overall standards, together with some improvements in provision, the school continues to provide good value for money.

Recommendations

- 46 In order to improve further the standards achieved and the quality of educational provision the school should fully implement its current development plan placing particular emphasis on:
- R1 ensuring that more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged to achieve their potential in their day-to-day studies;
 - R2 consistently promote the use and deployment of key skills and the development of study skills, particularly in KS2;
 - R3 building on best practice in the school to ensure lesson planning is rigorous in promoting new learning and builds on focused evaluations;
 - R4 ensuring subject schemes of work provide well structured guidance to inform lesson planning;
 - R5 developing effective strategies for assessment in all subjects and areas of learning;
 - R6 developing leadership roles in defining the means of achieving the school's key objectives and targets;
 - R7 strengthening the school's self-evaluation processes.

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.

A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 47 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 48 In 33 lessons or parts of lessons in the subjects inspected, standards were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
3%	79%	18%	-	-

- 49 In more than 80 per cent of the lessons observed standards of achievement were good or better. This is well above the 2007 WAG target of at least good standards (grade two and above) in 65 per cent of lessons inspected.
- 50 The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 51 Children under five years of age achieve well and make a good start in the acquisition of basic and key skills, and progress well in their personal development.

Grades for standards in subjects inspected:

Subject	Key stage 1	Key stage 2
English	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Music	Grade 2	Grade 2
Physical education	Grade 2	Grade 2

- 52 Learners in both key stages achieve good overall standards in subject knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 53 The school is successful in enabling most pupils to attain at least the nationally expected standard in the subjects inspected. The school is successful in meeting most of its end of key stage targets for attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. It also sets individual targets for pupils in the core subjects, but the high standards that a range of data indicates that many pupils are capable of achieving are not always fully reflected in their day-to-day work.
- 54 Learners have a good knowledge of the key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, but the extent to which they use and deploy these skills across the curriculum is sometimes limited. They are developing a good standard of bilingual competence.
- 55 The 2006 NC results at the end of KS1, based on teacher assessments, indicate standards in English, mathematics and science were above national figures. However, in comparison with similar schools having up to eight per cent free school

meals standards are broadly average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level 2 in all three subjects was almost 91 percent.

- 56 In KS2, the schools 2006 NC results based on teacher assessments indicate standards above national figures in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, the results are below average in all three subjects. The proportion attaining at least the expected level 4 in all three subjects was just over 84 percent.
- 57 The school's NC results include the data for a small number of pupils with SEN. However, adjusting the figures to show the performance of mainstream pupils makes only a marginal difference and does not change the comparisons discussed above.
- 58 Over the last six years, the school's results indicate the maintenance of good overall standards. However, the trend in results is flat indicating the school has not improved its performance in line with similar schools, even though its results continue to compare well with the overall national picture.
- 59 Analysis of the school's results shows little difference in the performance of boys and girls. The school's figures are better than the national picture.
- 60 Baseline assessments and NC performance data confirm good standards throughout the school and indicate sound overall progress. However, the first-hand evidence of inspection reveals that progress is not always consistent.
- 61 Discussion with pupils and observing their contributions to lessons indicate that the majority learn a great deal orally, especially in KS2. The good standard of speaking and listening skills supports the acquisition of knowledge and skills particularly well.
- 62 The scrutiny of pupils' recent work and the observation of lessons in KS1 confirm a general consistency in pupils' progress in basic skills. On occasions, both the less-able and most-able pupils make very good progress, such as in writing well structured stories. In KS2, there is greater variation in progress. This reflects the extent to which pupils are enabled to use key skills and to develop a range of study skills within their learning. Furthermore, the progress of more-able pupils depends on the extent to which they are challenged to develop ideas and increase their understanding in line with their potential.
- 63 Pupils with SEN attending the two special classes make good and sometimes very good progress towards the learning targets set for them in individual education plans (IEPs). In mainstream classes pupils with SEN make good progress towards their learning targets, especially when they learn in small supported groups. However, this good progress is only maintained within the whole-class setting where IEP targets are consistently developed.
- 64 Most pupils show a clear understanding of what they are asked to do in lessons. However, their understanding of how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve is less well developed. Pupils' understanding of their individual learning targets is at an early stage of development.

- 65 By the end of Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and the majority make good progress towards fulfilling their potential.
- 66 Children under five are well motivated, happy in their learning and they maintain effort and concentration well. Pupils in both key stages are eager to learn and they answer questions with enthusiasm and often sustain their efforts well to complete their tasks. They work well in pairs and in groups and support one another very well when working collaboratively.
- 67 Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are outstanding features of the school. These make a significant contribution towards the good standards achieved. Throughout the school pupils are courteous, considerate and interact well with each other, with teachers and with visitors. Pupils willingly take on additional responsibilities appropriate to their ages. For instance, older pupils, supervise doorways as pupils file in and out of school, they ensure cloakrooms are kept clean and tidy and help with running the tuck shop. Some pupils become prefects and others are school councillors. These pupils discharge their responsibilities well.
- 68 Whole-school attendance (not including the Nursery), averaged 91 per cent during the three terms preceding the inspection. Despite the good efforts of the school levels of attendance have changed little since the previous inspection. Levels of attendance remain below the average for primary schools in Wales. Unauthorised absence is low and with few exceptions pupils arrive on time. Registration is completed promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and lessons begin on time throughout the day. Pupils who achieve one hundred per cent attendance are acknowledged and rewarded at the end of the school year.
- 69 Learners successfully develop the capacity to work independently and in small groups. They show good social interaction as they work together and this helps to prepare a firm foundation for developing and maintaining their skills for lifelong learning.
- 70 The progress pupils make in their personal, social, moral and wider development is good with outstanding features. Relationships are very good enabling pupils to express and explore their views openly. There is mutual respect between adults and pupils. This helps create a happy, caring and supportive learning environment. Through participation in lessons, assemblies, school council and extra-curricular activities; pupils successfully develop the skills to work as part of a team and as members of the school community.
- 71 Pupils' awareness of equal opportunity issues and their respect for diversity are good. As they progress through the school, pupils gain increasing respect for the many and varied cultural and religious traditions represented within the community and the wider world. School assemblies, visits out of school and visitors to the school play an important part in this process.
- 72 From the early years on, pupils are prepared well for their effective participation in the workplace and the community. Pupils enjoy learning about the world of work through visits and visitors who come to talk about a range of work related topics. Pupils are involved in community projects; they support the work of charities and other good causes, and learn that there are people in the world less fortunate than themselves.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

73 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school has a talented team of teachers with a good range of expertise. However, the overall impact of teaching is sometimes limited by the absence of a clear whole-school framework for learning and teaching.

74 In 46 lessons or parts of lessons the quality of teaching was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	80%	13%	-	-

75 In close to 90 per cent of the lessons observed, teaching was good or better. This compares very well with the national picture reported by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) in her annual report 2005 – 2006. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good in 84 per cent of lessons, with 17 per cent of lessons having outstanding features.

76 Teaching in the early years reflects high expectations and support staff contribute well to this provision.

77 Across both key stages, the majority of teachers have appropriately high expectations and they are successful in enabling pupils to achieve well. In more than eight out of ten lessons observed, lessons were stimulating and in the most successful lessons, pupils were skilfully involved in the learning.

78 The teaching and support provided in the two SEN classes consistently demonstrates high levels of expertise. The staff ensures both the teaching and care provided is stimulating and effective.

79 A particularly good feature of teaching across the whole school is the very high quality of working relationships that members of staff establish and consistently maintain with the pupils.

80 The profile of the teaching staff has begun to change after a period of stability. At the time of the inspection, around 20 percent of the teachers were employed on temporary contracts. There is a good balance between experience and the fresh approaches more recently appointed teachers bring to the school. Taken overall, there is good subject knowledge and effective teamwork is enhancing teaching approaches, based on *best primary practice*, in some areas of the school's work.

81 The school has sound procedures to promote effective lesson planning. The frameworks used ensure teachers establish subject planning for the long and medium-term, together with short-term planning for lessons. However, the quality of teachers' planning is widely variable. In the best examples, clear learning objectives

are identified and the learning experiences are structured well so that pupils gain a good understanding of the learning intentions. Furthermore, evaluations of achievement are clearly stated.

- 82 In some instances, lesson planning is less effective where the subject content is not sufficiently structured and evaluations lack rigour and focus.
- 83 Taken overall, teachers use a good range of teaching methods, resources and organisational strategies. Teaching is most effective when it promotes the active engagement of learners as was seen in particular English, science, music and physical education lessons. Such lessons explain the learning objective and use plenary sessions well to review the learning. However, in a minority of lessons there was over reliance on direct teaching followed by the pupils completing worksheets or written exercises. Such lessons limit opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways, limit expectations and result in a slow pace of work.
- 84 In general, teaching successfully promotes equal opportunity and promotes gender equality. However, at times insufficient opportunity is provided for the more-able pupils to achieve excellence.
- 85 Taken overall, teaching provides well for the language needs of learners. The recent whole-school emphasis on promoting pupils' bilingual skills is having a very positive impact. Although teaching has yet to develop a sufficiently structured whole-school approach to the development of oracy skills in English there is evidence of good practice such as in KS1.
- 86 Although teachers regularly review pupils' progress, the extent of planning to meet individual needs is sometimes limited in mainstream classes. As a consequence, the tasks and teaching provided is not always fully effective in matching learning to pupils differing needs. There is effective practice in some classes, but in a significant minority of lessons observed both the teaching and learning intentions were not linked rigorously enough to pupils' differing capabilities.
- 87 The school has a comprehensive assessment policy and is in the process of updating its assessment procedures. It uses a wide range of assessment materials, including standardised tests, to track pupil progress and inform end of key stage target setting. Data is used appropriately to identify pupils who are underachieving and may need additional support.
- 88 On entry to school, baseline assessment is systematic and provides a benchmark against which to measure progress. The arrangements for the NC end of key stage teacher assessments are appropriate. The school meets the statutory requirements for assessing and reporting pupils' progress and achievement.
- 89 Regular assessments linked to the programmes of study are implemented in mathematics and science. In English, focussed assessments each term in writing have been implemented recently. This provides valuable evidence of achievement and the work is annotated to show levels of achievement based on NC criteria. There are no formalised assessment procedures in the foundation subjects,

- 90 The school is developing strategies to ensure pupils understand the purpose of assessment and develop a greater understanding how they can improve their work. For example, the recent introduction of pupil target books for tracking pupils' progress in English is a promising initiative. However, as yet pupils' involvement in planning for progress is very limited.
- 91 The school has a marking policy, but this does not address marking to the learning objectives. In general, teachers' marking gives supportive comments, but strategies such as setting goals for pupils to improve their work is not yet evident.
- 92 Focused day-to-day assessments that are linked to the learning objectives set are clearly evident in some teachers' practice and are good exemplars. However, in many cases teachers' evaluations of pupils' progress in lessons are narrative and not evaluative.
- 93 Parents' evenings are well supported and parents are suitably informed of their children's progress and of any concerns. Annual written reports inform parents well about their children's progress. Comments in the reports include achievement in all subjects as well as comments about pupils' personal and social development. However, some comments especially in the foundation subjects do not reflect achievement clearly enough. Furthermore, reports do not set sufficiently clear targets for the following year.

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
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- 94 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 1. The inspection team judges that there is a good overall match between the needs and interests of pupils and the learning experiences provided by the school.
- 95 Overall there is good provision to meet learners' needs. The curriculum for the under-fives is well planned across the six areas of learning and reflects well the requirements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Across both key stages, the curriculum includes all subjects of the NC and religious education. The provision meets statutory requirements.
- 96 The school's curricular provision is broad and generally balanced. Suitable schemes of work in all subjects encompass the NC programmes of study, but their implementation has yet to assure appropriate progression across the key stages. Subject schemes of work provide a good basis for a whole-school curricular plan ensuring the appropriate allocation of curricular time and sufficient flexibility to cater for mixed-age classes as pupils move through the school.
- 97 However, the quality and effectiveness of the guidance provided for planning work in the subject schemes is widely variable. A good example is the well structured scheme of work for physical education. This sets out a sequence of skills development, provides clear objectives for lessons and suggests resources and

organisational strategies. A less effective scheme of work is that for English. On the one hand, this sets out a wealth of resources and appropriate age related expectations, but does not give sufficient structured guidance for planning the English curriculum. As a consequence, its implementation sometimes lacks sufficient rigour.

- 98 There is good emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The school has received recognition from the Basic Skills Agency in this regard. Whole-school planning to promote the development of key skills across the subjects is being developed through updated schemes of work and the planning of units of work. However, the school has yet to develop a structured learning and teaching policy to help ensure the consistent application of key skills across the curriculum.
- 99 Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities including out-of-school visits and clubs. This is a particularly strong feature of provision with after-school clubs for singing, reading and the arts as well as an extensive range of sporting clubs, including tennis, rugby, football, netball, hockey and dance. There is a high level of commitment by the staff and this provision makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social development. A significant number of pupils benefit from instrumental tuition and a good number of visitors contribute to the curriculum.
- 100 The school promotes pupils' personal development effectively. Members of staff provide good role models and pupils are actively encouraged to resolve disputes and mix harmoniously between the age groups. Appropriate time for reflection is given in assemblies that include an appropriate act of collective worship. Pupils' spiritual and social development is enhanced well. This is evident in the high levels of care and concern that both adults and children display to each other in the school community. The school provides strong moral guidance for pupils through the positive values of respect, courtesy and honesty it promotes through its life and work. The school is proactive in raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity both through *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* and the programmes of study in subjects including art, music, geography, history and religious education.
- 101 There are strong and effective links with parents who are very supportive of the work of the school. A home-school agreement is in place. Parents and grand parents are encouraged to take part in school activities and some do by regularly assisting within the classroom, with educational visits and in maintaining the nursery garden. The Bear Club (Be Enthusiastic About Reading) encourages parents of early-years children to work with their children, learn how they are taught and improve the help given at home.
- 102 Visits to the local community and beyond enrich the curriculum and contribute most effectively to pupils' learning. For example, pupils have visited the church for re-enactments of weddings and christenings; they have also been involved in tree planting to help improve the environment. The Salvation Army visits the school, helps with assemblies and runs a weekly 'Kidz club' at the school. Links have been established with senior citizens through the school's harvest festival services. Furthermore, visitors from the community such as the dentist, police, fire service and road safety trainers, provide pupils with a range of valuable experiences and further their awareness of the community.

- 103 The school has established very successful partnerships with other schools, initial teacher training colleges and further education colleges. Students are welcomed in school for practical experience and training. These partnerships have a positive effect on the quality of provision.
- 104 The school is successful in its efforts to broaden pupils' experience of work related education through a number of initiatives, for example children have visited local shops and the post office. Visitors to school, such as musicians and theatre groups, contribute well to the pupils' understanding of the wider world of work. Through its contacts with the Education Business Partnership (EBP), interesting science projects have been undertaken. Opportunities provided by organisations such as Careers Wales to support staff training through secondments to outside organisations have not been exploited of late.
- 105 The school's promotion of the Welsh language and bilingualism is exemplary. Notices remind visitors to the school that they are entering a *bilingual zone*. The use of incidental Welsh throughout the school day, by both teachers and pupils is becoming very well established. An outstanding feature is the way in which some teachers use the medium of Welsh in their teaching across other curriculum subjects. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is very well promoted throughout the school and across subjects. This includes the celebration of famous Welsh artists and achievers.
- 106 The school is committed to ensuring all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and everything the school has to offer regardless of the individual's background or circumstance. Pupils are proud to be members of the school community, they wear their uniform with pride and they confirm that whatever the occasion, be it involvement in sports or games, clubs or extra-curricular activities, all are encouraged and welcome to take part.
- 107 Pupils' understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship are promoted through the curriculum and reinforced well through activities within the school. For example, a recent visit by the Rain Forest Road show helped raise pupils' awareness of the need for sustainable development. Furthermore, pupils' awareness is developed through conservation schemes such as waste reduction and recycling. Waste paper is collected for recycling and material saved for the compost bin.
- 108 The development of pupils' entrepreneurial skills is promoted well through various activities. From the early years on, learners begin to develop problem-solving skills and to make considered decisions. Older pupils have successfully organised fund raising events, such as for *Children in Need* and they help in the running of the school's healthy eating tuck-shop. These activities help provide the early foundations of the skills needed to support economic development.
- 109 The school lays the foundations of lifelong learning well and appropriately promotes awareness of community regeneration through the curriculum. It promotes the involvement of parents in their children's education from the beginning and encourages pupils to be responsible for their own actions and to have understanding of the needs of different communities.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 110 The findings of the inspection team match the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
- 111 An outstanding feature is the way in which pupils are cared for, supported and guided. This reflects well one of the aims of the school that *is to develop a happy, caring and welcoming environment*. Following the head teacher's positive lead, members of staff contribute significantly in creating a special ethos of belonging that permeates the life and work of the school.
- 112 The school has a very good working relationship with the local authority and makes timely and efficient use of its available support. For example, physiotherapists, speech therapists, educational psychologists and support teachers for specific learning difficulties work regularly and successfully in partnership with the school's staff.
- 113 The school maintains a strong partnership with parents and carers. The Welcome Pack, issued to each parent provides a clear overview of the school's organisation and procedures. Parents are kept in touch with events through a variety of channels including regular newsletters, letters and the notice board. Formal parent-teacher meetings to discuss pupil's progress occur twice yearly and at other times by arrangement. Useful informal parental contact with teachers occurs daily.
- 114 A governor's report is issued annually, and a meeting arranged for parents to discuss its content. The school has implemented a suitable home-school agreement and takes appropriate account of the views of parents, largely through informal channels. However, the school has identified the need in the current SDP to consult all parents as part of its self-evaluation procedures. The school benefits from an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) whose efforts raise significant sums for additional facilities and resources.
- 115 The school has a very effective induction programme that ensures that the children settle happily and quickly into the nursery. Good liaison with parents is promoted very well through visits and the sharing of information. There are excellent arrangements for the transition of pupils to secondary school. Pupils in Year 6 spend time at the secondary school and teachers from the secondary school visit the primary school to teach lessons such as French. This is an outstanding feature that promotes successfully both pastoral and curricular transition.
- 116 The personal guidance, support and pastoral care given to pupils by the head teacher and staff is outstanding. Pupils say that members of staff are accessible and they are confident to approach them. A comprehensive programme of personal and social education (PSE), that includes contributions from specialist agencies, is being implemented. This includes effective measures such as *circle time* to address problems should they arise.

- 117 Attendance registers are maintained and are completed in accordance with statutory requirements. The head teacher reviews them regularly and takes appropriate action should there be concerns. The Education Welfare Service is on hand to support the head teacher as necessary.
- 118 Teachers apply the school's behaviour management policy consistently and act as positive role models. Younger pupils take on the role of *Helpwr Heddiw* assisting in the classroom. Older pupils, acting as prefects and school councillors, help maintain order and good standards of behaviour. The school responds positively to ideas put forward by the School Council. A recent initiative is the introduction of the 'friendship spot'. This helps to ensure all pupils are included in playground activities so that no child need feel ignored or friendless.
- 119 The school's provision for ensuring the healthy development, safety and well-being of all pupils is good. Health and safety issues are properly addressed with fire, electrical and other equipment regularly checked. There are good day-to-day systems in place to deal with any pupils who have an accident or who feel unwell during the day. The school regularly reviews and updates pupils' contact details.
- 120 Appropriate procedures, based on guidance provided by the Local Education Authority (LEA), are in place for child protection. The head teacher is the designated focus and ensures regular training of all other staff. Teachers and support staff understand the need to be vigilant and to recognise the signs that a child may need protection.
- 121 The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good overall. The provision to meet the needs of pupils with physical difficulties and communication disorders who attend the two special classes is excellent. This provision is an outstanding feature.
- 122 Before placement in one of the SEN classes, pupils' individual needs are diagnosed through detailed procedures managed by the LEA. The curriculum is suitably modified in line with need. Within the unit, there are very well-structured systems to assess and monitor pupils' progress. This is reflected well in pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). These are comprehensive and set appropriate learning and personal targets that are closely tailored to individual needs. Targets are embedded into daily practice and are reviewed regularly.
- 123 Reviews, including the annual review of provision set out in statements of SEN, are systematic and in line with the SEN Code of Practice (CoP). They take account of the views of parents and of other agencies where appropriate. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo), with responsibility for the special classes, manages the review and monitoring arrangements effectively.
- 124 In the SEN classes, the support provided by Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) is very good. They are closely involved in the delivery of targets and contribute significantly to the good quality of provision both within the unit curriculum and during inclusion activities. There is a well established inclusion programme where pupils in the SEN classes have access to a range of mainstream activities. Mainstream pupils also benefit from working alongside pupils with SEN when the expertise of the

special and mainstream staff is used to deliver subjects, such as science and music, within the mainstream timetable. This provision is outstanding.

- 125 The SEN classes provide highly structured learning environments that ensure very good support for those pupils who at times display challenging behaviours. Individual behaviour plans (IBPs) set focused targets for all pupils in the Communication Disorder class. The IBPs include positive handling strategies that are both appropriate and effective. There is clear evidence of good progress being made by pupils with extensive difficulties, in relatively short periods of time. Pupils operate with the maximum level of independence in many activities and clearly feel secure and supported.
- 126 In mainstream classes, the school uses appropriate standardised tests to assist the identification of pupils' additional learning needs. In line with the SEN CoP, teachers raise initial concerns, monitor and support progress informally within the class and through discussion with the SENCo, parents and the head teacher, pupils are provided with IEPs where appropriate.
- 127 The head teacher liaises with the special class SENCo and two deputy SENCOs from the mainstream classes to maintain an appropriate SEN register. At the time of the inspection, 29 pupils were identified at the school action stage of the CoP and 33 at school action plus stage. There are regular meetings within the school, convened by the head teacher, to discuss pupils' needs and progress and in some classes LSAs work effectively to support pupils with a range of learning difficulties.
- 128 The school is proactive in seeking the advice of appropriate professionals in diagnosing pupils' individual learning needs. The LEA provides a part-time language support teacher and she uses suitable diagnostic tools to help focus the teaching programme she provides for pupils supported at the school action plus stage in the mainstream classes.
- 129 Although the results of standardised tests clearly indicate a number of pupils are relatively able the school does not formally implement strategies to ensure that the additional needs of these pupils are adequately met.
- 130 Class teachers have copies of the IEPs for pupils in their class. The targets set are generally appropriate and these are reviewed regularly in consultation with parents and with other agencies where necessary. At present, pupils are not formally involved in contributing these reviews. In some cases, the IEP targets lack precision and sufficient details of the strategies and learning programmes to be developed. In the best practice, teachers use the IEP to inform provision in their class and both their lesson planning and day-to-day annotation of IEPs show that outcomes are systematically evaluated. However, this exemplary practice is not a consistent feature across mainstream classes.
- 131 In mainstream classes, no pupil has an IBP. The school is very successful in ensuring good behaviour helps to promote a positive climate for learning. This is a very positive feature of the school.

- 132 The quality of provision for equal opportunities is good with some outstanding features.
- 133 The school guides and supports pupils well, taking good account of social, educational and linguistic backgrounds. Its processes for dealing with race equality, disability and equal opportunity are evident in its day-to-day practice, ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly and consistently.
- 134 Girls and boys have opportunities to participate and excel in all activities provided by the school. This includes the very good provision in games and the performing arts.
- 135 The school's measures to minimise oppressive behaviour and incidents of harassment or discrimination that may result in bullying, are consistent and effective. In discussions pupils' indicate that the adults in the school deal with occasional issues of misbehaviour or bullying promptly.
- 136 The school successfully secures the equal treatment of pupils with disabilities. It has undertaken a disability audit and implements an appropriate disability access plan. Its programme of inclusion for all is an exemplar.
- 137 The school successfully promotes recognition of and respect for cultural diversity. This is evident through many areas of the curriculum, such as the celebration of religious festivals.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

- 138 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 1. This is because the inspection has not identified outstanding features to match the school's judgement. However, the inspection readily endorses the many strengths of leadership in the school.
- 139 Leadership is particularly successful in promoting a strong pastoral ethos. This is an impressive feature that has a very positive impact on pupils' development as young citizens and learners. The school's mission statement and key aims are well reflected throughout its life and work.
- 140 Members of staff successfully promote equality of opportunity and access to the full range of activities provided. However, on occasions the more-able pupils are not enabled to achieve their potential.
- 141 The positive values promoted by the school are particularly evident in the positive climate of learning that permeates lessons. The strategic direction of the school is set appropriately through the SDP. However, the means of achieving the school's key objectives and targets is not always made sufficiently clear. As a result, members of staff are not always clear about whole-school strategies to promote improvements.
- 142 The school takes good account of national and local priorities. Two recent examples of the positive impact of such initiatives are the school's involvement with other schools in developing an effective transition plan and achievement of Dyslexia Friendly school accreditation.
- 143 The school sets appropriately challenging whole-school targets for end-of-key-stage attainment. Projected targets are set over three years. In recent years, the school has been generally successful in meeting or exceeding most of its targets.
- 144 The school's managerial systems and processes, including those to manage and improve the performance of individual staff and departmental teams are well structured. The arrangements for performance management are in line with current requirements. However, there is limited evidence of actions taken to rigorously promote and enable the development of leadership roles, such as team and subject leaders.
- 145 There are systematic arrangements for staff appraisal. The information gained is used appropriately to help shape the school's strategic organisation, to promote teachers' professional development through the provision of in-service training and to improve the quality of learning and teaching.
- 146 The governing body (GB) has a good knowledge of the school. Members receive a wide range of information from the head teacher and other members of staff. This

enables them to discuss issues raised through the annual process of determining priorities for the SDP. The GB is steadily developing its role as a critical partner in helping to set the strategic direction of the school. As staff changes occur the GB has been particularly successful in strengthening the staff team through the recent appointments it has endorsed.

- 147 Through information provided by the head teacher and focused links between individual governors and subject leaders for example, the GB monitors the quality of provision and standards appropriately.
- 148 The GB meets its statutory obligations.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings
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- 149 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 1. This is because inspectors identified some shortcomings in the effectiveness of planning for improvement
- 150 The school's self-evaluation report provides a narrative review of the school's work. The inspection confirms the grade 1 awarded by the school in key question 4, and the grade 2 awarded by the school in key questions 1, 2 and 7 but differs with the school's grading in the other three key questions. This indicates that the school's self-evaluation processes are not clearly enough linked to the criteria set out in the Common Inspection Framework and neither are its procedures linked to sufficiently rigorous first-hand evaluations of the school's work.
- 151 The role of subject leaders in evaluating standards and developing plans of action to promote improvement is under-developed. Despite good subject knowledge and a responsibility for resources, subject leaders have no first-hand evidence to exemplify standards and quality in subject provision.
- 152 The school uses elements of a self-evaluation framework provide by the LEA. This provides a good basis for the school to develop its self-evaluation strategies. Currently there is regular discussion through staff meetings. Judgements of quality and standards are agreed, but these are not rooted in first-hand evidence. Although subject leaders complete evaluations of their subjects on an annual basis they have yet to develop plans of action for their subject.
- 153 The processes of subject monitoring, data analysis, scrutiny of teachers' planning, sampling books, talking to pupils, reviewing displays and lesson observation are not well developed. However, a pilot scheme being implemented in English provides a good model.
- 154 The school listens to the views of pupils, through the school council and a suggestion box. In its SDP, the school acknowledges the need to take into account the views of stakeholders as part of the self-evaluation process. A good example of a recent

initiative is the quality assurance survey implemented with parents of children attending the nursery. However, the school has yet to implement plans for a parents' suggestion box and to use a questionnaire to enable them to inform the future direction of the school.

- 155 There is over reliance on discussions in staff meetings to assure the staff's full understanding and involvement in the self-evaluation arrangements. The school has yet to develop a self-critical culture based on first-hand evidence, such as the standards seen in pupils' work and the levels of understanding indicated through listening to learners.
- 156 The SDP provides a three year projected plan and sets appropriate targets for one year. However, this planning is not clearly linked to an evaluation of progress towards previous goals. It does not set out the plans of actions to bring about improvement and provides very little detail of future strategies and areas for improvement. The SDP includes success criteria, but it only specifies the appropriate allocation of resources in a few instances.
- 157 Based on the evidence of development planning over the last year, there is only limited information to show that actions taken have resulted in measurable improvements. The best example is the added value shown during the inspection of the good progress made in promoting bilingual skills and the Cwricwlwm Cymreig. However, although policies and schemes of work have been updated in science and geography for instance, there is no evidence of formalised evaluations, such as a report to show if there has been an impact on standards.
- 158 On the basis of the previous inspection in 2001, the extent of the school's improvement since that time is limited. Standards in English, mathematics and science remain good, but the trend in results is flat. Furthermore, benchmarking data over the last three years shows that when comparing the school's performance with similar schools, its results are below average.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings
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- 159 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report. The impact of the school's resources on the standards achieved is good overall. However, on a few occasions some resources are not utilised fully.
- 160 The school has a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers to fulfil the requirements of the statutory curriculum. Taken overall, members of staff have high levels of expertise, with particular strengths in SEN and music.
- 161 There is appropriate provision of LSAs. These assistants make a particularly effective contribution to the learning experiences of pupils with SEN in the special

classes and with the under-fives. In other classes the available LSA are appropriately deployed.

- 162 The school clerk and her assistant provide effective administrative support. Together they ensure the routines of the school are carried out smoothly and efficiently. The caretaker, cleaner and the catering staff are valued members of the staff team, and make an important contribution to the caring ethos of the school.
- 163 The provision of learning resources is good overall, including the provision for the under-fives and those with SEN attending the two specialist classes. In physical education, the variety of resources is very good indeed and in other aspects such as ICT, resources are being improved and updated as funding allows. In general pupils have access to good quality learning resources in all subjects.
- 164 The accommodation provides a suitable setting to promote a wide range of teaching and learning styles. The main building includes a good size hall and three groups of classrooms set around shared work areas. There is one permanent detached and two demountable buildings that provide suitable accommodation for the two SEN classes, two nursery classes and a Year 6 class. All classrooms are enhanced well by eye-catching displays that celebrate pupils' achievements and stimulate learning.
- 165 The size of the classrooms in relation to the average class size of 29 imposes some constraints on the range of learning styles used. Furthermore, on occasions the resources room housing a bank of computers and some shared teaching areas, such as libraries, are not utilised fully and effectively. This sometimes limits the extent to which pupils use and deploy learning and study skills
- 166 In response to the steady rise in pupil numbers, plans are being developed by the LEA to provide enhanced accommodation.
- 167 The school's grounds are extensive and provide a well used resource for learning and playing. The nursery classes have direct access to a secure outdoor learning area. However, children in reception have only limited access to outdoor learning opportunities.
- 168 Playgrounds are level and marked for games and sports although little is provided to stimulate playground games during playtimes. Grassed areas surround the school and include a wildlife area and a playing field.
- 169 The strategic organisation of classes is generally appropriate, with clear criteria used to allocate pupils to mixed-age classes. However, the organisation of classes is not always efficient and effective. This is most evident when all the pupils in Y6 (36) are taught together for lessons in mathematics, science, Welsh as a second language and French. The number of pupils imposes significant constraints on the quality and effectiveness of learning.
- 170 On occasions the practice of organising lessons around four long sessions each day reduces efficiency. For instance, in subjects such as English and physical education this sometimes reduces the range of learning styles and the pace of lessons.

Furthermore, the available library, ICT and practical resources in mathematics and science for example, are not always utilised to the full.

There is appropriate provision for reducing teachers' workload and providing the required time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA). Pupils benefit from continuity of teaching provision through the deployment of regular staff to cover PPA sessions. However, the current arrangements to manage PPA time lack sufficient rigour, particularly in the aspect of assessment.

- 171 Teachers and LSAs are generally deployed well. Effective use is made of particular teaching expertise, such as in music and members of staff have access to appropriate in-service training to further their professional knowledge and expertise.
- 172 The school's resources, especially finance, are appropriately matched to its priorities for improvement. The high standard of financial controls was endorsed by the most recent auditors' report.
- 173 The use and provision of resources are regularly reviewed. There are appropriate systems to ensure value for money when making purchases. Taking into account the maintenance of good overall standards since the last inspection together with some improvements in provision, the school continues to provide good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

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

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

Good features

- 174 Pupils develop the skills of speaking and listening well in a variety of contexts, such as recalling their learning, presenting ideas to the class and through more formalised opportunities including presentations during assemblies. Pupils listen attentively and enthusiastically respond to questions. They express themselves confidently and extend their vocabulary well when discussing their work.
- 175 Standards in reading are good throughout the school. Pupils build up good levels of competence through reading an appropriate range of texts. In KS1, pupils read from 'Big Books' with their teacher. They gain confidence and skills in reading and learn about spelling patterns and punctuation, as well as identifying the features of books and distinguishing between fiction and non-fiction.
- 176 In Y1, pupils make good progress in reading and enjoy talking about the books they read. They confidently tackle new words making good use of picture cues and letter sounds to help them read 'new' words. Pupils in Y2 confidently recall key events and characters from stories such as *Winnie the Witch*. They build up reading skills well.
- 177 In KS2, appropriate progress is maintained in reading and pupils learn about libraries and how to locate information by using the contents and index. The more-able pupils discuss books that they have read and confidently express preferences.
- 178 In Y6, pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge of books and distinguish between different genres. They enhance their skills well through regular reading sessions and develop a good knowledge of library and reference skills.
- 179 Most pupils in KS2 are familiar with fiction and non-fiction texts and distinguish between stories, reports and instructions; those with under-developed reading and writing skills are generally well supported. They make appropriate use of sequencing activities and *writing frames* to help them recount and write events. Pupils in the SEN classes develop word recognition and writing skills well.
- 180 Writing skills are suitably developed across the school. In KS1, pupils describe accurately the events and characters from stories that have been read to them. The pupils write in interesting sentences that show growing confidence in the use of a good range of vocabulary and the correct use of appropriate punctuation.
- 181 Across KS2, on occasions, pupils draft and re-draft their work and that of others confidently. The older pupils give good reasons for their editing. In well-structured pieces of writing, pupils use good imagination and a wide range of vocabulary to

convey interesting stories, recounts and to express their opinions. The older pupils show they are capable of writing well independently and of discussing and analysing each other's work perceptively.

- 182 The scrutiny of previous work reveals the standard of handwriting is generally good and over time pupils' work reflects some good progress in developing different styles of writing. For instance, in KS1 the pupils build up their writing skills very well and in KS2 the older pupils have produced a variety of well-structured writing, including recounts, stories, poems and letters.

Shortcomings

- 183 In some classes in KS2, pupils do not sufficiently develop their writing skills.

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

- 184 In all classes, pupils have a broad knowledge of biological and physical science. They appreciate the everyday applications of their studies in science, develop a good understanding of fair testing, gathering and presenting information, making predictions and drawing conclusions based on their everyday scientific knowledge. As they move through the school pupils develop their recording skills using a range of tables, bar charts and graphs well.
- 185 In both key stages, pupils have a good understanding of the importance of safe methods of working. For example in Year 1, when experimenting with light sources pupils suggest that a candle should be placed safely on a plate to avoid contact with hot wax and in Year 2 pupils know that water and electricity do not mix.
- 186 In Year 4, pupils understand that it is safer to use batteries in their investigations than mains electricity because the voltage is lower and by Year 6 pupils explain why a short circuit is dangerous.
- 187 Across the school, pupils use and understand an appropriate range of scientific vocabulary and by Year 6 pupils confidently use a wide range of terms both orally and in their written work.
- 188 In KS1, pupils know the differences between living and non-living things. They describe what plants need to live and they know that animals move, feed, grow, breathe and reproduce and that humans have five senses. The pupils have a very good understanding of life cycles and they name accurately the young of different animals for instance.

- 189 Pupils identify and name sources of light and develop well their understanding of forces through investigating the mechanisms of different toys. They identify magnetic, pneumatic, wind up and spinning mechanisms.
- 190 Pupils build a simple circuit consisting of a battery, wires and bulb and understand why a break in the circuit will cause the light to fail.
- 191 In KS2, pupils name animals' habitats and have a good understanding of food chains. They name parts of the body and explain clearly the functions of bones and muscles.
- 192 Pupils further their knowledge of electrical circuits by building a test circuit and investigating the effect of different lengths and thicknesses of wires, the size and number of batteries and the number of bulbs in the circuit on the strength of the light emitted.
- 193 Pupils investigate chromatology with inks and filter papers witnessing which colours emerge and use their findings to predict the chromatology of *smarties*. They learn how filling similar bottles with different amounts of water and shortening and lengthening the strings on musical instruments can change sounds. Pupils understand that the shorter the string the higher the pitch.
- 194 Through visiting G. E. Healthcare, pupils learn that the ph scale is a measure of how acidic or alkaline a substance is. Through testing solutions on ph and litmus papers and mixing solutions in tubes with universal indicator solutions, pupils record their findings and place the tubes in order of the ph scale. They find that acids are found in lemon juice and vinegar and that alkalis are found in cleaning substances and understand that both substances can be hazardous to health.

Shortcomings

- 195 There are no important shortcomings in pupils' knowledge of science but they are not sufficiently involved in raising their own questions, planning and adapting their investigations and drawing conclusions.

Information 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

- 196 Pupils throughout the school use information technology skilfully. They are confident in using computers in their classrooms as well as those in the computer suite. The pupils show good recall of the skills they have previously learnt and confidently use the tools of familiar programs effectively to review and edit their work.

- 197 In lower KS1, pupils develop basic keyboard and mouse control skills well such as through using paint programmes and word processing. They use features such as brushes, fills and spray tools confidently and know how to edit their word-processed pages using appropriate menus and commands and how to print their work.
- 198 In upper KS1, there is evidence of good skills development. Pupils' access programmes from CD Rom, and where available the internet, confidently. They acquire an appropriate range of skills through operating a range of programs, including simulations and simple databases, and successfully transfer their knowledge and skills between similar programmes. Many older pupils confidently save, retrieve and print their work.
- 199 In KS2, pupils use word processing well to present a range of written work including posters and brochures, sometimes linked to visits they have made. Pupils use database programs to analyse and present information and successfully manipulate images and combine text and graphics to good effect.
- 200 In lower KS2, pupils use the internet to access information and answer questions, such as during a study of the seaside town of Porthcawl. The pupils confidently use search engines and hyper links to locate information.
- 201 In upper KS2, pupils enhance their skills through using a multi-media program, such as when creating presentations about the artist Kyffin Williams. The pupils use a range of editing tools when designing their slide sequences and successfully import pictures and audio patches to enhance their texts and configure their slide shows effectively.
- 202 Across the school, pupils enhance further their skills in information technology, such as through using a range of programmes to reinforce basic skills in literacy and numeracy and they also use the interactive whiteboard confidently during whole-class lessons. Pupils in the SEN classes, develop their skills well such as through collecting data and creating graphical representations of favourite foods.

Geography

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

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

Good features

- 203 Pupils in KS1 have a developing knowledge of place. Younger pupils compare the different features of their homes, identify the countries of the United Kingdom on a map and study the local environment through visiting the local Post Office and learning about the work of the postman, for example.
- 204 Older pupils further their knowledge of the school and the local environment appropriately. They draw simple maps well and know that symbols are used to represent features on a map. They learn to distinguish between physical and human features.

- 205 In lower KS2, pupils further their map reading skills well. They draw maps of the locality using appropriate symbols. They confidently identify human features in the village and recognise that land is used for different purposes. Pupils study contrasting localities in Wales, such as Porthcawl and Cardiff Bay, and consider the environmental impact of barrages both in Wales and in other continents.
- 206 In upper KS2, pupils confidently locate features on maps using appropriate map references. They further their knowledge of countries and places beyond Llantwit Fardre, such as through the study of village life in Pakistan and they draw comparisons with life in Wales.
- 207 In Year 6, pupils learn about the national parks in Wales. For instance, they study Snowdonia, consider how to keep safe in a mountain environment and develop a good awareness of the need for sustainable development and the impact of pollution on the environment.
- 208 Discussions with older pupils, and the scrutiny of previous work, confirm they have good recall of previous work. Pupils confidently use a range of geographical vocabulary well, such as to describe the processes of coastal erosion. They acquire a sound understanding of the relationship between man and the natural environment.

Music

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

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

Good features

- 209 The quality of singing in both key stages is very good. The pupils have a very wide repertoire of songs and hymns in both English and Welsh, and also from different traditions and cultures. They perform with enjoyment to different audiences and demonstrate very good attention to the dynamics required. Pupils of all ages and abilities enjoy music lessons and make good progress in the aspects of performing, composing and appraising.
- 210 In KS1, pupils understand how instruments make sounds and how symbols can represent sounds. They sit with very good posture and sing songs such as the *Coconut Song*, accurately tapping the rhythm with non-tuned percussion instruments. They follow the conductor, read pictorial notation and maintain the beat, and a silent beat, well in their performance.
- 211 Pupils confidently read the symbols for quiet, get louder and silence and successfully compose their own accompaniment by changing the pictorial notation. They listen to the sounds of a rain forest, make hand movements to match the volume and clap the rhythm of their names. They choose instruments to represent the characters in *Jack and the Beanstalk*, create simple rhythms to illustrate them and notate their rhythms pictorially.

- 212 In KS2, pupils build on their composition work using chime bars to create an eight bar pentatonic melody as an interlude accompaniment for *Old MacDonald*. Pupils recognise the harmony the voices create in the song *Day off*, discuss how the song writer uses his imagination and what tuned and non-tuned instruments would best compliment the voices.
- 213 Pupils create their own singing games, explore pulses and rhythmic patterns and perform them well with ostinato accompaniments. They discuss the term lyrics and how they can reflect the time and place in which they are written. Pupils write their own protest songs, developing them further with percussion and chime bar accompaniment.
- 214 Pupils sing simple rounds in two and three parts, following the conductor accurately and changing dynamics well. They perform partner songs including *Pease Pudding Hot* and *A Ram Sam Sam* with actions, keeping a steady beat and demonstrating clear diction in a harmonically pleasing way.
- 215 Pupils begin to recognise and use Kodaly hand signals singing *Doh a deer ...* for example, with enjoyment.

Physical education

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

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

Good features

- 216 In KS1, pupils engage in warm up sessions with energy and enthusiasm. They dress appropriately for physical education lessons, listen attentively to instructions, exhibit good body control and spatial awareness and show respect for each others space when moving around the floor space.
- 217 In lower KS1, pupils' perform a dance sequence from Finland confidently. They show good skills in interpreting the music and in performing simple sequences of movement with good expression and control.
- 218 In upper KS1, pupils learn a series of dance patterns extremely well, working first with partners and then in larger groups. In skilfully executing traditional Irish dance steps, they demonstrate a great deal of skill and concentration. Their retention of the instructions, their interpretation of the music and the quality of their dancing was excellent.
- 219 Pupils in lower KS2 create expressive sequences of movements using the stimulus of words such as creep, explode and spin. They utilised the floor space well when perfecting their movement patterns.
- 220 Pupils observe and evaluate each other's contribution thoughtfully; they show appropriate respect when making suggestions on how their peers could improve their work.

- 221 In upper KS2, pupils show good gymnastic skills. They create patterns and routines as individuals and with partners. They access apparatus appropriately and safely and follow the rules of use. They transfer their skills from floor to apparatus well showing good balance and coordination across a range of travelling movements including hopping, skipping and jumping from the apparatus
- 222 Across the key stage, pupils develop ball skills well in a range of after school clubs. They show very good control of small hockey and large rugby and netballs. They show good coordination when using tennis and badminton racquets and hockey sticks. Boys and girls show good teamwork and a healthy respect for the rules of games.
- 223 Across the school, pupils have a good awareness of the need for a healthy body and talk confidently of how exercise can help in maintaining fitness. In KS2, pupils learn to swim and the vast majority achieve at least the expected standard.

School's response to the inspection

- 224 The governors, head teacher and members of staff are pleased that the inspection team recognises that Maesybryn is a successful school and that at its heart there are some outstanding features. The inspection notes that the school has maintained good overall standards since its last inspection and identifies that we now need to improve on the flat trend in NC performance data.
- 225 It was pleasing that inspectors found that 82 per cent of the lessons observed were good or better especially as the WAG target is 65 per cent in this respect. The fact that all the subjects inspected achieved grade two, confirming there are no important shortcomings, was also appreciated. It was also pleasing to note that learners in both key stages achieve good overall standards.
- 226 The pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning were recognised as outstanding which is confirmation for us that the school is going in the right direction in these aspects. The progress pupils make in their personal, social, moral and wider development was also deemed to be good with outstanding features. The school appreciates acknowledgement of this. The school appreciates also the fact that suggestions were given by inspectors as to how the recommendations to improve certain aspects of the school might be implemented. The school now has a clear way forward for the future.
- 227 The school will produce an action plan in order to tackle the recommendations for improvement. The school will then implement the plan as soon as possible. The SDP for the coming year will include all the recommendations of the inspection report. The period following the inspection will give us the opportunity to concentrate on the development role of the team leader in particular. More responsibility will be given to younger members of staff and this will be reflected in their future team leader roles. Self-evaluation processes and more effective assessment procedures too will be given high priority in the next phase of our school's development.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Maesybryn Primary School
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Lancaster Drive Crown Estate, Pontypridd, Rhondda Cynon Taff
Postcode	CF38 2NS
Telephone number	01443 202928

Head teacher	Mrs Sheila Hughes
Date of appointment	December 1992
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Dr. R. Garwood
Registered inspector	Mr Michael T. Ridout
Dates of inspection	5 th – 8 th March 2007

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	55	47	46	35	41	25	39	36	324

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	14	3	14.0

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	1:28
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	1:13
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	1:2
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	28
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Autumn	90.7	92.8	93.1
Summer	91.1	90.8	91.0
Spring	89	91.4	92

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	5
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2006				Number of pupils in Y2:		44	
Percentage of pupils at each level							
			D	W	1	2	3
English:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	7	68	25
		National	0.4	3.4	13.1	62.7	20.3
En: reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	57	39
		National	0.4	3.8	13.9	54.9	26.8
En: writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	9	73	18
		National	0.4	4.9	14.4	68.4	11.8
En: speaking and listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	2	77	20
		National	0.4	2.4	9.8	63.4	23.9
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	64	32
		National	0.3	2.0	10.4	63.9	23.2
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	5	55	41
		National	0.3	1.5	8.6	65.5	23.9

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment				
In the school	90.9		In Wales	80.6

D Pupils who have been disapplied from the statutory arrangements
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006						Number of pupils in Y6		57			
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	N	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	61.5	30.8
		National	0.3	-	0.1	0.5	0.6	4.0	15.9	48.2	30.4
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.8	7.7	53.8	34.6
		National	0.3	-	0.1	0.5	0.5	3.2	14.4	47.5	33.4
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	65.4	26.9
		National	0.3	-	0.1	0.5	0.3	1.8	11.5	51.8	33.7

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)				
by Teacher Assessment				
In the school	84.2		In Wales	74.1

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
N Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

- The inspection team consisted of five inspectors and a peer assessor appointed by Estyn who worked for 12 inspector days (over four days) gathering first-hand evidence. In total, 46 lessons or parts of lessons were observed and standards and teaching graded. Inspectors evaluated the pupils' work.
- The head teacher took the role of nominee, ensuring effective communication with the inspection team. The nominee attended meetings with inspectors and contributed fully to the discussion of inspection evidence.
- Inspectors observed registration sessions, school assemblies and break-times. All teachers present were observed teaching. Discussions were held with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, representatives of the GB, parents and others, both during the initial inspection visit and during the inspection.
- All the available work and records of a representative sample of pupils from all year groups were scrutinised. Inspectors sought the views of a number of pupils in discussions with them.
- A large amount of documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection.
- No lessons in information technology took place during the period of the inspection. However, some pupils were observed using computers in other lessons. Further evidence is drawn from listening to learners, teachers' records and the scrutiny of pupils' previous work.
- The registered inspector held a meeting attended by 14 parents before the inspection and considered 75 parents' responses to a questionnaire.
- At the end of the inspection, the main findings of the inspection were discussed with the head teacher in her role as the nominee. A short time after the inspection, meetings were held with the head teacher, the staff, and the governors, to report the findings of the inspection.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr. M. T. Ridout Registered Inspector	Context Summary Recommendations Key question 1: How well do learners achieve? Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment? Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management? Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources? English; Geography.
Mr. Glyn Scott Team inspector	Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? Information technology; Physical education,
Mrs. A. Williams Team inspector	Assessment – part of key question 2 Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards? Science; Music.
Mrs. C. Davies Team inspector	Additional educational needs - part of key question 4.
Mr. C. Brentnall Lay inspector	Aspects of Key questions: 1, 3, 4 and 7.

Acknowledgement:

The inspectors wish to thank the governing body, staff, parents and pupils of the school for their co-operation, assistance and courtesy before and during the inspection.

The Contractor for this inspection was:
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